

## "AS OTHERS SEE US."

Another thing is to use water about the same temperature as the room, to prevent undue shock, and always give at each application a thorough soaking. Driblets are harmful, and water should not stand in the saucers in which the pots are placed. Towards the end of summer a little liquid manure, or some approved fertiliser got from a neighbouring florist, will give vigour to the failing plant, due to the strain of a long season of flowering.

Avoid cold currents of air, and above all things, in the case of smooth, leathery-leaved plants, sponge the surface every other day, or at least every week, to remove dust.

If plants are not properly cleansed, disease quickly attacks them, the pores of the leaf get choked up, and death results. In genial summer weather they are much benefited by gentle showers of rain to free the surface of all impurities.

When sponging take great care not to bruise the leaves, and don't brush against them in moving about. This is the chief reason of palm foliage dying off at the tips. Handle the plants tenderly: they possess life.

The ardent amateur gardener is always at work. Days are short, the outside garden as bare as a desert, but many pleasant hours may be filled up in preparation for summer. Every bulb in the house should be planted when the weather is kind, and a few potted up to make the windows gay.

Writing of bulbs, reminds me of the Tulip, which is the pet flower of shoemakers, tailors, colliers, and weavers. One shoemaker at Wakefield has a little shop in the corner of his garden. The tulip beds run up to the door, so that he can pop out at all hours of the day, spend a few minutes with his pets, and go back to his last.

Hyacinths in glasses are very welcome in early

spring when one yearns for flowers, but cannot enjoy them in the open air. Roses, Primroses, Wallflowers, Daisies and Snapdragons may be planted when the soil is in suitable condition. Plant also good hardy things, such as perennial Sunflowers, Phloxes, and a hundred other kinds that might be named. A catalogue from a good nurseryman will prove helpful. The weather, however, is mistress of the situation. Snow may throw a soft mantle over the ground or the air mimic the genial warmth of merry May, inviting the amateur to indulge his hobby to his heart's content.

Geraniums for planting out in late spring must be kept almost dry, and decaying leaves picked off. Fruit trees of all kinds may be planted in suitable weather.

Raspberries, Gooseberries, and Currants are the best kinds for small gardens. If there are a few clumps of Rhubarb in the vegetable plot, cover as many as desired with an old crate or box. Heap manure about it, and juicy Rhubarb will be got for pies long before it is ready naturally.

The best variety for a small garden is Hawkes' Champagne, which is far better than the big-stalked kinds, as a rule, utterly flavourless. It is slender in the stalk, deep blood red, and of delicious quality. Get out a small list of vegetable and flower seeds for sowing in spring.

Keep plants in rooms away from the window at night. At this season it is important to have a seed bed, which may be easily made by digging out a trench three feet in depth, which must be filled with fresh manure. Over the manure put an eight-inch layer of soil, and on this bed place the frame. Nothing can be simpler, and seed will germinate readily with warmth from the bottom, whilst cuttings of all kinds may be struck.

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THE COLONIAL.

SOME motherless girls of our acquaintance possessed a wonderful parrot. She had a queer fashion of practising her speeches in a whisper, and not giving them to the world until she knew them perfectly. The effect was sometimes startling.

Two of the sisters appeared in walking dress one morning, and the third rose to accompany them to the door and give final messages and commissions.

The parrot burst forth with, "Yar-yar-yar, quang-guang-guang, pow-wow-wow, sis-sis-sis, yes, all right, good-bye—whoff!" This last sound resembled so closely the banging of the front door that the

girls burst into laughter, in which the bird heartily joined, running up and down her perch with delight at the sensation she had caused.

"We always say, 'All right, I am certain,'" said one sister.

"Yes; and fancy how we must gabble at each other, if we sound like that;" said another. The girls had a lesson, which "as the parrot heard them," was not soon forgotten.

We do not often get such clear glimpses of our tricks and manners, but now and then we have hints. Mr. Howell's diverting sketch of the Englishman in America, who begins every sentence with "Ow," may have called the attention of some of us to a frequent habit, while the British habit of laughing at a joke five minutes after its utterance, when the conversation has sailed to a fresh subject, is a new light to us on the dulness of our insular wit. Children give sometimes a useful hint by their travesty of a small absurdity





"ALL RIGHT, GOOD-BYE—WHOFF!"

of manner and an affectation of speech, and those who are wise take heed thereof, and amend.

It is, however, from Americans and Colonials that we most frequently get the knowledge of our present-

ment of manners; Americans let us know by precept and example how much we are wanting in adaptability, in handiness, in sociability. It takes us so long, they say, to benefit by a novel invention, to make a fresh friend, to pick up new ways in the smallest things; while Colonial visitors are always struck with the amount of waiting upon we require, and the folly of it, when we find so much difficulty in getting good servants. The perfection of service, even in our middle-class homes, strikes them first of all. How often we ring a bell and send the answering "Mary" for something it would really be no trouble to fetch for ourselves; we "require almost to have our meat put into our mouths," as I heard a young Australian lady remark once. To our French friends we seem dull and heavy, while to the Germans we appear altogether too light and frivolous. To the straightforward Dane we are steeped in affectation, if not deceit, while the Italian considers us utterly wanting in tact and the pleasant plausibilities of social intercourse. Colonials think us (we gather) unsociable, inhospitable, priggish, dull, slow, while we find them flippant, unintellectual, wanting in reverence, and entirely without sentiment. It would be surely well for us to "give and take" in the matter of seeing faults, and impress the lessons on our minds.

The dear ones in our homes so often see us as we know we are not. They think us hard, severe, or unloving when our hearts are brimming over with affection, and we lack only the manner which would make it evident. If young, we are shy with our elders, and our want of "gush" is taken for sullenness, or discontent, or perhaps cold-heartedness.

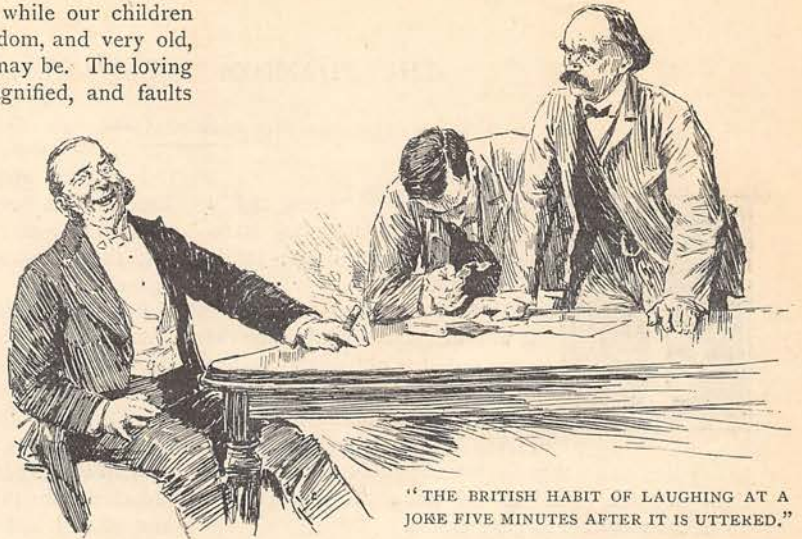
The adoring lover sees the beloved through a rose



"TO OUR FRENCH FRIENDS WE SEEM DULL AND HEAVY, WHILE TO THE GERMANS WE APPEAR ALTOGETHER TOO LIGHT AND FRIVOLOUS."



coloured glass, flecked with glory, while our children believe us to be mountains of wisdom, and very old, whatever the number of our years may be. The loving husband or wife sees virtues magnified, and faults correspondingly diminished, in the life's companion. The fiction of appearance kept up for the sake of others is not always to be deplored, for the fact of striving to live up to the ideal formed by those who love us often brings about a realisation of the image. Nor can we persistently traverse the belief in our goodness and worth. We *must* make ourselves justify it.



"THE BRITISH HABIT OF LAUGHING AT A JOKE FIVE MINUTES AFTER IT IS UTTERED."

If we could hear our servants talk of us, we should gain useful information. "*She'll* get a new one d'rekly, and say nothing," would be a good hint to a young housekeeper if she heard the cook make the remark to a careless housemaid who has had a smash of crockery. "*She's orful mean!*" would lead a matron who is obliged to study economy to explain a little of her reasons for inquiring about the stray dishes that have so odd a fashion of disappearing when carried into the larder, if she heard the cook and kitchenmaid say it. If they knew it was necessity, not choice, which made their mistress so

careful, they would probably try to help instead of hinder her.

To try to see ourselves as others see us, to try to let others see us as we are, are two lessons we may go on learning all our lives, and the happy person who acquires them best may feel certain that he helps to oil the wheels of the heavy chariot of life's burdens which each one of us must drag till he reaches the Portal of Death.

IVOR MERLE.



"SHE'S ORFUL MEAN!"