

But there was nothing to be done but sit still, and smile, and fall in cheerfully with the conversation which her father and Arthur kept going at a brisk pace. Floyd's good-breeding and admirable tact made it appear as if he had never eaten a dinner with more relish in his life; and as the second course was a dish of excellent salad for which Florence had prepared a Mayonnaise dressing early in the day, her spirits revived a little. The dessert, too, was unexceptionable, for in that department she had already had considerable practice; but when it came to the coffee, the last straw was added which broke the back of her tottering resolution. She had made it herself before coming up, not daring to trust Christine; but somehow or other it wouldn't clear as other people's did, and in her agitation she had been too generous with boiling water, so that the beverage which she handed to Arthur was a villainous compound, at once weak and muddy. As soon as she decently could, she withdrew from the table, on pretense of going to see her mother, but in reality to rush up to her own room and throw herself on a lounge in a passion of sobs and tears to which her experience furnished no parallel. Here her father found her a few minutes afterward, and vainly tried to comfort her.

"It's of no use, father—I've disgraced myself utterly! I never shall get over it in this world. Oh, no, sir; I can't go down stairs again; tell Mr. Floyd anything you like—tell him I have to stay with mother, or that I have a headache—(I'm sure *that's* true enough); but don't ask me to show myself again this evening to anybody." All this interspersed with sobs and gaspings enough to have melted the heart of a sterner "patient" than Mr. Milnor.

"Well, well, you'll soon get over it! Go in and see your mother. She wants you. And I'll send Floyd off with Bessie to the concert. Come, don't cry; there's a good girl."

A little judicious motherly soothing and petting restored the agitated girl to composure, and after a while she could even laugh over her mishaps and entertain her mother with a humorous account of them. Her eyes had recovered their brightness, though the swollen lids bore tokens of the struggle she had been through, when a ring was heard at the front door.

"Who can that be?" said she. "I thought everybody in town was

at the concert." The servant came up and announced Mr. Floyd.

"Something must have happened to Bessie!" was her first thought, and she flew down stairs, forgetting herself and her troubles in the new feeling of alarm.

"What is the matter? Has anything happened?" she asked, hardly waiting for a greeting.

"Why, no; but Miss Bessie found a party of her schoolmates that she wanted to join, and as I saw they didn't need me, I thought I'd come back and see how you were. Your father said you had a headache."

"I shouldn't think you'd ever want to see me again," said Florence, her lip beginning to tremble, "after my experimenting on you as I did to-day at dinner. I'm sure it's very good-natured in you to come."

"I wish you would experiment on me three hundred and sixty-five days in the year," said Arthur, bending toward her and looking earnestly into her face. "I'll promise not to be as troublesome as your brother Tom is. Won't you try me?"

Apparently he did not see any negative in her eyes, for he ventured to take her hand; and then she burst into tears, and then—and then—

But why waste time in describing what everybody knows by heart already? When Bessie came home that evening, not only was it all settled between the young people, but even papa and mamma had given their consent.

It would be hard to find among the young married ladies of Chicago, or any other city, a more exquisite and thoroughly competent housekeeper than Mrs. Floyd. And now, when she hears young girls announce with satisfaction that their education is finished, she smiles quietly, and wonders whether they have ever tried to prepare a real, *bona fide* dinner.

NOBLE WORDS.—Dr. Chalmers beautifully said, "The little that I have seen in the world and known of the history of mankind teaches me to look upon their errors in sorrow, not in anger. When I take the history of one poor heart that has sinned and suffered, and represent to myself the struggles and temptations it passed through—the brief pulsations of joy; the tears of regret; the feebleness of purpose; the scorn of the world that has little charity; the desolation of the soul's sanctuary, and the threatening voices within; health gone; happiness gone—I would fain leave the erring soul of my fellow-man with Him from whose hands it came."

TALKS WITH WOMEN.

LETTERS TO MY DAUGHTER.

BY JENNY JUNE.

THE ART OF PLEASING.



HERE is a general impression that our ordinary education is deficient, mainly because it sacrifices solid attainments to the superficial acquisition of mere accomplishments; in other words that girls are taught the art of pleasing, but nothing else.

If this truly is the aim, and it certainly seems to be, of modern boarding-school education, then it has certainly failed of reaching even this partial object.

Modern young women sometimes amuse by their airs, sometimes disgust by their affectations, and occasionally win admiration by their prettinesses and accredited graces, but they rarely possess that charm of presence and bearing which springs from sympathy with others, to forgetfulness of self, which all feel who come within the sphere of its influence, and which is as much a part of the individual as the fragrance of a flower.

This, it may be said, is a gift, not an acquirement, and young women are not to blame for its non-possession. But, like all other powers and faculties, it is capable of cultivation, and it is desirable for young women to cultivate it for several reasons: One is that they are more at leisure, usually unembarrassed by the cares and anxieties which afflict older persons, and being constantly in the receipt of personal favors from those around them, would naturally repay them by the doing of kindnesses and the endeavor to make themselves personally agreeable in return.

Now, I am not going to discuss the question as to whether this is best or not; whether it would not be better for young women to earn what they spend as young men do, and be independent of this necessity of wearing the perpetual smile, and dancing perpetual attendance for the bread they eat and the clothes they wear; this is not now the question; it is our business to take the facts as they are, and meet them in the best way we can.

The facts then are, that while in

the absence especially of any other distinct occupation, it is the business of young women to be pleasing in person and manner, they very generally fail, excepting in cases where they are prompted by selfishness, and think it worth while to make special efforts to the contrary. Young women sometimes have it in their power to put another woman in a very humiliating and embarrassing position, or relieve her from it. How often do they choose to do the latter?

A little example will illustrate my meaning. A young married gentleman and lady were invited last summer to spend Sunday with friends at their home in the country. The young couple had a baby, which of course was taken along. On reaching the landing they were met by a pretty girl, the daughter of their entertainers, to whom the young Benedict proceeded to devote himself with quite unnecessary ardor, walking off with her up a steep hill, which had to be ascended, and for which there was no conveyance, and leaving his wife to carry her infant, a heavy satchel, and other belongings, and follow him as best she might.

As I was an involuntary spectator of only part of the proceedings, and received the rest of my information second-hand, I cannot state with accuracy what the wife thought of the conduct of either the husband or the young lady, but it was evident she was a lady herself, and very much embarrassed by the position into which she was forced, and though the husband was to blame for the indulgence of his vanity and selfishness, yet if the girl had not been equally selfish and thoughtless how much pain she might have saved, and in how fair a light might she not have placed herself. A dozen examples might be given from watering-place life, but one or two must suffice. One was that of a lady who had been married some five or six years to a man still young, and decidedly distinguished in his personal appearance; but who had been attacked with a slight lameness, which promised to be only a temporary affliction, but for the time being prevented her from taking part in the rides, walks, excursions, evening dances, and frolics of the house. Of course no one expected the husband to deprive himself of outdoor or indoor pleasure on his wife's account, and she would have been the last person to desire him to do so; but it was not necessary nor kind either that she should feel herself wholly neglect-

ed. It was not pleasant to see him pounced upon immediately after tea by young women who, slovenly, cross, and engrossed with their own whims and fancies through the day, appeared exquisitely dressed, charming, and perfectly willing to expend their fascinations upon any man who would be caught by the bait in the evening. Intelligent and brilliant conversationalist though she truly was, it was not pleasant to sit at the mercy of any bore until ten o'clock, and then retire slowly and painfully, knowing that she must wait in her solitary room until twelve, at least, for her husband to finish his game of chess with Miss B—, or their confidential promenade on the piazza.

Yet these things were done without exciting unusual remark; and if the wife had complained, tremely jealous, disagreeable person. Of course the wife's assured position gives her a permanent advantage over her would-be rival, and renders "flirting with married men" folly, as well as wickedness, but this does not save her from suffering cruel mortification and bitter pain in feeling herself neglected, and persons in all essential respects inferior to herself, preferred to her.

From all such suffering, loyalty and magnanimity in their own sex would save women. Men cannot carry on such little games alone, at least one half of them would not begin them if the opportunity was not made and presented, and the other half would be shamed out of their treachery and hypocrisy, by the tacit refusal to be a party to such wanton disregard of sacred ties, and an exhibition of right principle, on the part of young unmarried girls.

Undoubtedly the knowledge of the art of pleasing is a duty, but it must be uniform and universal in its ministrations. It must be exercised from a generous desire to add to the happiness of others, not selfishly add to one's own at the expense of others. The desire to please is at best but a secondary motive. It is never a high or ennobling one, except as it becomes so through the elevation of the object, it is not so in itself. This renders it highly important that women who are taught that it is the business of their life to please, should recognize also that it is never right, never wise to sacrifice a principle to it, this would be sacrificing the higher to the lower, and we cannot do a moral wrong of this kind

without suffering ourselves and making others suffer.

We forgive much to the ignorance and inexperience of a young girl, but the majority of young girls now-a-days, are neither ignorant nor inexperienced—on the contrary they plume themselves much on their knowledge of the world, and its ways, and extinguish many dear little women, whose shoes they are not fit to tie, in the shape of their skirts, or the mysterious folds of their bunched-up drapery. For there is no more abject slave to fashion than an intelligent, refined, but rather inexperienced man. To him a woman, and especially a young woman got up in the latest mode is a charming mystery. She dazzles and bewilders him, and if she appears willing to please him, her condescension at once flatters his vanity and proves (to him) her own goodness and amiability. Theoretically he admires her opposite, practically he surrenders at the first touch of her white and jeweled finger.

These contradictions are a stumbling-block to many women who wish to do right, but who really fear that such adherence to principle would be unappreciated, or an obstacle in the way of their own advancement. They would dress plainly and expend their strength on useful work, if they could marry as well by doing so, but they have obtained the impression that men prefer idle, useless, showy wives, because these are the kind of women who come to the surface in society, and who exact and, therefore, receive the most attention.

But they are not the kind that desirable men prefer to marry—even if marriage were the first object, which it should not be, of a woman's life. There are plenty of showy girls fast drifting to old maidenhood, whose possible use in life was actually and deliberately sacrificed to the expectation of a rich or fashionable marriage. They were dressed for that, taught to bow, and smile, and play off certain airs and graces for that—and now it has failed and left them stranded, wretched, without object or purpose, a burden to themselves, and to those upon whom they have a claim.

There are others, working-girls, whose time was spent in a shop, not particularly intelligent, and in several instances extremely unattractive in personal appearance, who, in common parlance, have "married well," because of late

men begin to feel that a showy wife is too much of a luxury—that girls who do nothing but dress and flirt before marriage, will not be likely to turn into thrifty wives afterwards, and moreover, that they are too desirous of pleasing, and have too selfish an object in marrying, to admit of doing so without suspicion as to their motives.

It will be seen, therefore, that "pleasing" as a profession, does not even pay pecuniarily, it is only when it is spontaneous, and subordinated to a higher principle of life, that it becomes a charm which few can resist. Every one has seen girls, bright, attractive in society, who were dull, listless, selfish, and even sullen at home. Father, mother, brothers, sisters, possessed no power to draw them out of their cloudy humors. But let a gentleman call, especially a young gentleman, whom the young lady was desirous of fascinating, and the mist would disappear as if by magic. Smiles and gay repartee would take the place of ennui, and indolence, and the visitor would consider a house fortunate in being inhabited by so bright a spirit. A more experienced judge of human nature would suspect a nature capable of such brilliant efflorescence. A person good and pleasing from instinct and habit, and above all, conscientiously so, is more uniform in conduct, and even in temper, and bearing, and while they rarely create so favorable an impression at first, yet it grows the more we learn of their truth and sincerity of character.

The desire to please has been the rock upon which many women have wrecked their happiness in the present, and their hopes in the future. It is never right and never safe to please at the expense of the least atom of self-respect. It is an excellent test for girls to apply to young men, who not unfrequently "fool" them as the phrase goes to the top of their bent, and despise them for it afterwards. Men rarely marry girls they have learned to despise, even though the fault was their own, and are better pleased at being denied familiarities incompatible with maidenly dignity and discretion, than at having them granted through a silly fear of losing the hold upon their interest and affections. The standard of morality for men is not so high as it is for women, and women may be proud that it is so, and instead of doing anything to weaken the barriers,

should jealously guard against approaches which leave them defenseless, and in yielding which they lose all, and obtain only fear and remorse. The art of pleasing is a beautiful faculty if rightly used; that is, employed in brightening the home, in relieving the anxious and over-burdened of care and sorrow, in showing sympathy for suffering, in carrying sunshine into shady places, in diffusing warmth and comfort in the quick recognition and appreciation of what is good and true, in spreading the mantle of sweet charity over offences, in fine, by "being happy, and the cause of happiness to others."

THE PROPOSAL.

BY EMMA SCARR LEDSHAM.

SWEET, if you knew how I love you,
If only you knew
How the heart that among all life's
millions
Regards but a few—

AS only a handful of sterling
Good friends on the earth—
Bows low in devout adoration
Beholding your worth!

NAY, hear me; go not, I entreat you!
The door is too near;
Let me close it. So long I have
waited
To gain your fair ear,

AND pondered how I should address
you,
What eloquent words
Should ravish your mind like the
trilling
Of musical birds!

FOOL that I am! now the moment
So longed for has come,
My soul, overwhelmed by its pas-
sion,
Lies motionless, dumb.

MY lips in their duty have failed,
love;
They cannot portray
The feelings long kept in my bosom,
Close locked from the day.

THOSE beautiful eyes that upon me
Now tenderly shine,
Embolden me, darling—nay, shrink
not:
Say, wilt thou be mine?

THE star of my guidance forever,
My own faithful wife?
Thank God! thou art won: and how
blissful,
How precious is life!