

Something More on Marriages.

By FLORINDA TWICHELL.

Happy marriages would, I believe, bear more or less scientific investigation. Unconsciously to themselves, perhaps, the contracting parties have observed the physical and psychological rules of affinity.

The mysterious attraction, we may call it, which draws young people together, may be largely physical, and though it is not an infallible guide, it is an indispensable one to a really happy marriage. There is this difference between this kind of a marriage and where the choice is merely an intellectual one. Though the husband or wife, who finds that he or she has made an unwise choice, in the latter case, may through a sense of duty, be true to their contract, it can not stand the test of the first. It is not the love that clings to an unlovely companion through the changing vicissitudes of a life of hardships and toil, that brings the husband and wife down to old age true and faithful to each other.

There always will be a difference between the lover and the husband, that every young wife, with more or less heartache, has to adjust herself to; and her early training ought to fit her for this, and if she can not see in the lover the possibilities of a good, practical, industrious husband when the sentimental illusions of courtship days are over, she had better not marry him. Most good lovers are good husbands. So the sooner the great struggles that come to the young married woman, who has idealized her husband, finds that he is not going to measure up to the ideal, the happier she will be in the future years. Especially do young girls, brought up without brothers, look for finer sensibilities and sentiments than men, as a rule, possess. A great deal that they have imagined that their husband possessed never existed, save in the ideal. Yet the disappointment is often almost tragical in the heart struggle that follows the awakening. But the sooner it is over the better, and the couple may be congenial after all.

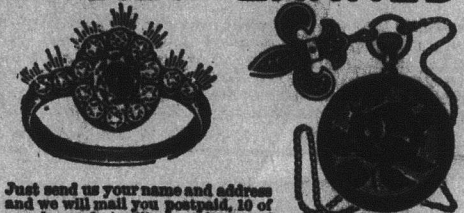
While exactly opposite physical types are drawn together by this physical attraction, it may attract those of such opposite tastes that happiness can never follow, after a longer acquaintance. Just here to the point of what I want to say. I believe in early marriages, not of immature boys and girls; but I do believe in long acquaintances. The man and wife who have no intellectual pleasures, no tastes in common, can never understand each other, and there is little hope of a happy life. The young girl raised in a refined

Christian home makes a chance acquaintance with a young man. He is gallant and handsome. He has a physical influence over her, but he belongs to a profane, coarse family. He cares for nothing that she cares for. It would take generations to bring him up to her level, intellectually and morally. Her life is one long disappointment. The children are hard to bring to the code of morals. People wonder that they are not like her, so carefully have they been reared. She may entertain a vain hope of revolutionizing her husband's nature; but life is too short, yet I would encourage the effort.

There is a congeniality of tastes to some extent. Possibly not a material way, though I once knew a couple whose incompatibility came in this way. She, from religious scruples, would eat no sugar; he, from a professed preference, would eat no salt. Other members of the family eat both, so the matter was, to say the least, a very great source of inconvenience.

Someone had criticized a young wife for not seeming to be in love with her husband. She replied, "I like him very much. I never tire of his company, he always interests me. That is why I married him. We are great friends." Here is the secret of happiness, comradeship. People of different temperaments, different pursuits, yet there is added to a real love a comradeship that makes their married life a safe business venture. Advancing age does not alter this relation. It is indeed beautiful to see an old couple, whose lives are more and more linked together as years pass, and they come to speak alike, look alike, and sometimes I think when one goes the other of necessity must soon follow; and it seems to me they have been getting ready to live together through all eternity.

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