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## TALES OF THE TOWN.

**M**OST ugly girls have something pretty about them, and the few who know that they cannot claim even this limited endowment become pathetic to men of a generous mind, exciting pity, and we all know what pity is akin to under favorable conditions. I remember, says a writer in *Lippincott's Magazine*, a maiden of this stamp who secured a handsome and devoted husband by her very hopelessness of winning his preference, by the tender humility of her worship of himself. Living in the same house, the constant appeal to his chivalry became more powerful at last than all the varied charms of other women he might have won.

Ugly girls, however, generally carry their consolation with them in a blessed unconsciousness of their want of good looks. Have we not all seen them stand before a mirror noting the effect of a color or a new fashion, with an undisguised expression of admiration on their faces? very much like the ugly young man who ties his cravat and smiles at his image in the glass, with the comforting mental comment: "Not handsome, but devilish fascinating!"

The statement that "ugly girls are generally left to run to waste as unappropriated blessings" is not supported by evidence. Who has not met wives as ugly as an old maid in his list of acquaintances? It is safe to make the broad generalization that an ugly girl, all other things being equal, is likely to have fewer offers than a pretty girl, but quite as likely to receive the one offer which will make her a happy wife. It may be doubted whether a plurality of lovers is an unmixed advantage to a girl; one good lover, the elect man, attracted to her by affinity in its highest sense, is forever enough.

But all other things (save gift of beauty) seldom are equal between the ugly and the pretty girl; by the natural law of compensation the ugly girl has

either some inherent or some acquired quality that is lacking in the other, which asserts its charm as acquaintance progresses. Beauty only has the start in the race.

The ugly girl often has superior tact and finesse. Being obliged to study human nature closely in order to get the most out of it, she learns so well how and when to speak delicate flattery that she ends by convincing the man who scarcely noticed her on the evening when they were introduced that the lips which can utter such bewitching things are really beautiful; for somebody has said—I cannot give the authority for the quotation—that men are vain.

Propinquity often decides attachments of every kind. If a city man had to spend a winter in a Cape Cod village with a homely but pleasant girl he would be more likely to find himself in love with her by spring than with the pretty and pleasant girl he left behind when he went to Cape Cod.

An ugly girl has a firm grip, generally speaking. She is not sated with admiration or confident when she gets it that it will be perennial, so she does not let chances give her the slip after the fashion of many belles. When once married, she has plenty of grit, too, to protect her lawful property and to distance the pretty and unscrupulous flirts who would try their wiles on him.

It is questionable, after all, if a woman's beauty or homeliness makes much difference to a man after he has been married to her a year. Does he even know how she looks? He sees her inner nature, and the happiness of the couple is decided by the effect of their inner natures upon each other. Many a man with a pretty wife has been infatuated with the society of a very plain-looking woman, who possessed either intelligence or some power of adaptation he missed in his partner.

A friend of *The Home Journal* has

been making some calculations that may prove of interest. He forwards the following to the architect of the column known as *Tales of the Town*:—If a girl wishes to know how long she may venture to remain single without destroying altogether her matrimonial prospect she should investigate a table prepared by a mathematician who had apparently run out of anything else to figure on. Taking 100 as a basis, the figurer finds that the most women are married between the ages of 20 and 25, fully 52 per cent. of them. Only 14½ per cent. wed between 15 and 20, which seems to show that sweet 16, and even sweet 18, are no longer so fashionable or desirable in brides as they used to be. Between 30 and 35 the chances are 15½ per cent., a little greater still than it was between 15 and 20. There is material for hope in this fact, certainly. About 35, however, there is a tremendous drop. No more than from three to four girls out of a hundred marry between 35 and 40. The young woman who does not intend to finish her days single should therefore make haste to take a husband before she reaches the fatal age of 35. After a woman is 60 years old the chance is only one out of a thousand that she will ever marry.

To complete this analysis, one only needs the matrimonial temper tables prepared by Sir Francis Galton. One learns from them that among wives 53 per cent. are good tempered, while only 46 per cent. of all husbands are thus good natured. Among wives, moreover, only 6 per cent. are found to be "masterful." So that it is still safe for a man to marry.

The other day I was asked the meaning of the word "Siwash." I confessed my ignorance, but since then I happened to run across something that may enlighten others who are like myself in a benighted state. "Siwash" is the common name for the Indians on Vancouver's Island and in neighboring British possessions. It is nothing more

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