

How Girls Can Learn to be House-Keepers

Begin with your own things and your own place. That is what your mother will tell you if you rush to her enthusiastic with great intentions, and offer to relieve her of half her house-keeping. Don't draw that little bucket of cold water to have it poured back upon your early zeal. Reform your upper bureau-draw; relieve you closet-pegs of their accumulations of garments out of use a month or two ago. Institute a clear and cheerful order, in the midst of which you can daily move, and learn to keep it. Use yourself to the beautiful—which is the right—disposing of things as you handle them, so that it will be a part of your toilet to dress your room and its arrangements while you dress yourself, having the draperies you take off as lightly and artistically hung, or as delicately folded and placed, as the skirts you loop carefully to wear, or the ribbon you put with a soft neatness about your throat. Cherish your instincts of taste and fitness in every little thing that you have about you. Let it grow impossible for you to put down so much as a pin-box where it will disturb the orderly and pleasant grouping upon your dressing table, or to stick your pins in your cushion even, at all sorts of tipsy and uncomfortable inclinations. This will not make you "fussy"—it is the other thing that does that—the not knowing, except by fidgety experiments, what is harmony and the intangible grace of relation. Once get your knowledge beyond study, and turn it into fact—which is literally having it at your fingers' ends as I told you, and order will breathe about you, and grace evolve from commonest things, and uses, and belongings, wherever you may be, and "putting things to rights" will not be separate task-work and trouble, any more than it is in the working of the solar system. It will go on all the time and with a continual pleasure.

Take upon yourself gradually, for the sake of getting them in hand in like manner, if for no other need, all the cares that belong to your own small territory of home. Get together things for use in these cases. Have your little wash-cloths and your sponges for bits of cleaning, your furniture brush and your feather duster and your light little broom and your whisk and pan; your bottle of sweet oil and spirits of turpentine, and piece of flannel, to preserve the polish, or restore the gloss, where dark wood grows dim or gets spotted. Find out by following your surely growing sense of thoroughness and niceness, the best and readiest ways of keeping all fresh about you. Invent your own processes; they will come to you. I shall not lay down rules or a system for you. When you have made yourself wholly mistress of what you can learn and do in your own apartment, so that it is easier and more natural for you to do it than let it alone—so that you don't count the time it takes any more than that which you have to give to your own bathing and hair-dressing—then you have learned enough to keep a whole house, so far as its cleanly ordering is concerned.

A barefooted little boy stepped on a bee, and soon after said to his mother: "Ma, I didn't know that bees had splinters in their tails!"

A Daisy's Prophecy.

"This year, next year, sometime, never."
From the daisy's golden heart
One by one a lover slowly
Plucked the snowy leaves apart.
"This year, next year, sometime, never,"
And his voice grew soft and low
As he paused and said, "Ah! daisy,
You will say this year I know."

Close beside him stood a maiden,
Shy and sweet, with face so fair,
While the sunbeams danced and flickered
On her wavy golden hair.
Thus with small hands idly folded,
And her fair head drooping low,
Listening to the words repeated,
Waited she her fate to know.



THE FICUS PARCELLII

Two more leaflets, "This year, next year,"
So the last leaf fluttered down.
To the maiden's cheek the color
Came like roses newly blown.
"Next year, darling, 'tis the fortune
That the daisy tells for you;
Tell me sweetheart, do you love me?
Shall we make the fortune true?"

"Won't you tell me?" still he pleaded,
As his dark eyes searched her face—
And he read there for his answer,
Love, death only could erase.
Ah! but daisies prove false prophets,
Death may break our fondest vow,
And we weep o'er fallen idols
When in dust we lay they low.

Next year came, but when the daisies
Bloomed again in light and shade,
Sunbeams cast their golden splendor
O'er a grave but newly made.

Ah! fair daisy, not a marriage
But a death you then foretold,
For the maiden fair is sleeping
'Neath your blooms of white and gold.
EDITH G. WINANS.

Refinement.

Refinement is not fastidiousness. It is not luxury. It is nothing of this kind. It is far removed from excess or waste. A person who is truly refined will not squander or needlessly consume anything. Refinement on the contrary, is always allied to simplicity and a judicious and tasteful employment of the means of the good and happiness which it has at command. It seeks to divest itself of superfluities, and aspires continually to the utmost possible purity. Refinement leads to personal cleanliness and elegant neatness, good taste and simplicity in dress. All "loudness" or flashiness is repugnant to its spirit. In its home and surroundings, the same chasteness and natural grace are maintained. The abode of genuine refinement and a mere pretending to it are very different. In the former you will find no excess, gaudiness or false glitter; but the latter abounds in them. In personal manner, refinement is most conspicuous. A man of refinement is always polite without effeminacy, and considerate without stiffness.—*Southern Industries.*

The Ficus Parcellii.

We are pleased to show our readers the representation of any new and beautiful plant, such as they cannot yet see in their own windows or gardens. In a few years, when the plant becomes plentiful, many of you will have them. This is a species of coleus, a native of Australia. It is introduced in England by Messrs. Veitch & Son. It is now being introduced on this Continent. The leaves are a bright green, irregularly and profusely blotched with cream white and dark green. The plant is said to be a full grower maintaining its splendid variegation throughout, and is said to be a very fine decoration, and has excited admiration wherever it has been exhibited.

DRIVING IN EGYPT.—All the carriages and harnesses are of European manufacture, while among the horses stately Arabians are numerous. The grandest equipages have both a driver and a footman upon the box, while in front of the horses the nimble *seis* runs to clear the way. These runners are dressed in white, the skirt reaching only to the knees and the sleeves large and flowing. An embroidered jacket, with the tarboosh, or fez, as a head covering, completes the costume. The lower limbs and feet are nude. The staff of office of the *seis* is a slender stick about one yard in length, which he carries in a perpendicular position. The grace, speed and endurance of these runners are most remarkable and interesting. Some carriages have two, and those of the khedive and his family often appear with four, two running abreast. The many equipages of the khedive, his sons and his wives, are all imported, and in addition to a full number of the servants already described, each has two or four cavalry-men accompanying as a body-guard.