



## On Thumbs

**T**HUMBS have not had a large place in our polite literature. In fact they have been shamefully neglected. And like the brave old tip-top knights who used to fare forth on quests of derring do, rapping rich old monks and barons over their aristocratic pates and dividing their spoils with the down-trodden yeomanry, I am herewith coming out in defence of thumbs.

Were I a real novelist I would write on fingers, not thumbs. They always do. Every heroine in the novels you may find in my lady's work basket has long tapering fingers. The hero usually has square, honest fingers, but even they may taper if he be artistic. At any rate they are strong, and on occasion they can fix themselves like traps of steel on the throat of the villain. Yes, even the villain has fingers, though they do twitch, to be sure.

Oh, everyone in a story has fingers. But thumbs? Lord! love you, wherever beards of thumbs in a novel! For aught we know to the contrary book folks are a thumbless race. True, thumbs crop out in detective stories in the freshly "busted" safe or that Sherlock Holmes may deduce from the crook's in-turning thumbs his thieving propensities. They are also used by W. C. T. U. writers as sign boards on which employees find cigarette stains, previous to denying the prospective clerk the desirable clerkship. But these two exceptions merely prove the rule, that thumbs are not desirable in the anatomy of a "character."

But, despite the slight which have been heaped upon thumbs by our writers, they are tremendously useful appendages. I can speak with authority, not to mention fling on this subject, for last week I cut the thumb on my right hand and had to carry it in a sling. It was then that I found out how useless would be a thumbless farmland. For instance, you have often heard people speak of screwing a nut on to a bolt with their fingers. Try this for yourself and you will see what an important part is played by the thumb. Try putting a new tire on the Ford, with your thumb acting as a mere spectator, or try opening a sack of gluten feed, or untie "hard knot" with your "fingers." You will likely decide that it's not so bad to cut a finger. You have plenty of others to take its place while it convalesces, but a thumb is different. An absent thumb is like the vacant chair which never, etc. I will admit that a thumb is not built for style, but it's awfully handy—for it is set opposite to the fingers.

There's the point. It is opposite. Do not imagine that I can see no good points in fingers. I have the highest respect for them. While a band of fingers is not up to much if your thumb is out of order, on the other hand, you might have a dozen thumbs and if your hand were fingerless, you would be in a sorry plight indeed. Both have their place, and their place is opposite each other.

Have you ever noticed how quickly a tree is felled by two choppers, one right and one left-handed? They get along well because their gifts are opposed. The same is true of friends. In looking over my little circle of intimate friends, I find that they possess many characteristics in common. I find also that those characteristics are set to be found in my makeup. In fact, in almost every instance my friends are my opposites. They see the more tragic side of life; they think deeply before they speak; and, as for looks, why, Venus or Adonis have nothing on them—while I am opposite in every way—and, must I confess it gentle reader, as homely as a rail fence.

It is not that one deliberately

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