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EMININE FADS AND FANCIES

TAKING LIFE TOO SERIOUSLY

How difficult it is to arrive at the "iuste ' even in the ordinary affairs of life! Not long ago we were accused of taking ife too lightly. "Too much chaff, too much laughter," said the solemn ones. "Will no one stop a moment to be serious?" "Life is real, ife is earnest. Why so much pretence that is anything else?" Now another spirit is in. We discern it not without misgiving. the air. backward swing of the pendulum has set in, which, if permitted to gain too much impetus will lead us into worse plights than were ever brought about by our old method of insouciance." But was there not some virtue in the assumption of light-heartedness, whether we possessed it or not? Was there not unselfshness in hiding our worries and keeping silent about our feelings and inclinations when they were not of a cheerful nature? Were not miles better than frowns? Were there not times when a little frivolling was ten times more welcome and did a great deal more good than ultra-seriousness? To take things easily, carelessly, is an art not nearly so easy to come y as the naturally light-hearted imagine. We English have brought the art to absolute perfection. The British "sang froid" for which we are famous, is part of it. Let us pause ere we exchange this role for any other. The new lamp may not burn so brightly as the old. A symptom worthy of notice is the curtailment in some quarters of what we call life's playtimes. There are houses in society at which, should we drop in about the hour of tea time, that pleasant part of the day when laughter and friendly chat were never looked for vainly, and sparks of wit were wont to fly about—disappointment will be our portion. What do we find instead? Drawing-room and boudoir invaded by a black-coated lecturer, who, with a blackboard borrowed from the schoolroom, is holding forth to rows of listen- arate than to mould the ing ladies, their pretty forcheads wringled with lovely Princess gowns. the efforts of attention. Another afternoon dissipation is provided by meetings for the study of the occult. Fatal this at such an hour. It is impossible to dabble "in spooks," signs and portents, and still preserve an atmosphere of gaiety. Very high spirits are not the kind" that psychic friends encourage. Why should all of us be so anxious just now to improve each other's minds? If we are honestly on improving our own, can we not do it less ostentationsly by reading or going out to lectures, delightful at the right time and place? When women set up to be learned, they always take themselves with much more deadly seriousness than do men. Men play with their subjects, find jokes in all the 'ologies, and will write comic verses in the midst of brain-splitting mathematical problems. This is one of the things woman cannot compass. Sometimes she admires it, sometimes she is rather shocked. But, she cannot do the same herself. Man is still, as a rule, the bread-winner, and worker. Can we wonder that, when he

of the skirt. Numbers are arranged with wide pleats, and the tailors are very taken with the models which are made with a front panel cut with tabs at the side, which button over a group of pleats upon the hip. Striped materials are trimmed with small panels or bands cut horizontal-wise, and all sorts of ingenuity is shown in buttoning corners of material across the front of the skirt, like an envelope. Many smart women wear a sort of princess gown with coats to match, instead of a coat

and skirt, but English women, and Americans, too, are just as keen as ever upon their beloved suits, and show no intention of giving them up. I saw one of my most admired acquaintances recently in a fine blue serge. The skirt was made with large pleats, each with a soutache motif worked at the base. The coat made with a tuck seam, fastened at the breast only, and had a Napoleon collar of black satin, and in the front the wore a large black satin tie. The braiding on the skirt was echoed by some pretty whitigigs carried over the shoulders, and by the elaborate Brandenburgs and buttons, which effected the fastening. When she took off her coat for lunch I observed the very neatest dark blue blouse of satin-striped silk voile, set in tucks, which were caught here and there with a black satin button, and upon her head she wore a mauve straw hat wreathed with finest pale hyacinths, and one little posy of close pink roses. Still there are plenty of schemes which one can think out in green, brown, mauve, and grey.

French women are wearing the smart afternoon tailor coat, and skirt with a certain amount of length at the back of the jupe, but it is the complete dress which has carried all before it, for receptions and grand occasions. The semi-Princess style is immensely popular, and there are many reasons which will account for this. One is the fact that it is much easier to cut dresses with the skirt and bodice separate than to mould the figure into one of the

THE ART OF LEAVING

There is sometimes a difficulty in knowing the exact moment that is considered correct to arrive at such functions as a lunch or a dinner, or evening entertainments, and I have ere this written on the subject.

I was talking about it to a friend the other day, and she suggested that the right moment at which to take one's departure also presents equal difficulties to the nervous, or to the tyro in social matters, and that it would not be quite out of place to give a few hints on the matter.

So I have bethought myself, hence this week I shall give a few hints and examples, which may be of some use to some of my readers.

It is not, of course, possible to name the exact moment when a guest should arise and take her leave; so very much depends upon the occasion and the circumstances of the case. But there are, nevertheless, several recognized of the bygone days! Memory plays one false customs, in these matters, which it may be as the years roll by. What would one not helpful to mention For instance, the guests at a luncheon are supposed to leave at 3 o'clock, or as near that hour as is convenient; it may of necessity be later, should the party be a large one, one of those formal affairs, where the meal itself lasts till that hour. The ordinary luncheon party, however, even if it does not commence till 2 o'clock, should be over well before three, and the guests, after allowing a short time to elapse, would leave as near that hour as possible, while when the beginning is 1:30, 3 o'clock would be the very latest time to leave, and a little earlier is fraught with eternal significance. quite permissible, in fact better form. The usual time of departure after an ordinary dinner party is 10.30, though where early hours are kept, 10 o'clock is not considered any too soon Dinner guests have a way of leaving in a body, a somewhat tactless proceeding, it seems to me, in a small establishment. Where bridge is to succeed the dinner, or it is known there will be music, it is not so easy to specify the exact hour of departure, and without any such help as previous experience, it is difficult to know the right morecorded. ment at which to order one's conveyance. The best way is to ask the servant on arrival, and if that is not successful, the only way is to draw a bow at a venture and say 11 o'clock. It is far better to order it too soon

It is not imperative for the guests to stay till the "happy" couple leaves, and pressing engagements often oblige an early departure, but as a rule it is part of their duty to give them a joyous send off, more or less demonstrative.

THE VICTORIA COLONIST

These seem the chief social occasions when the departure, and the moment of it, seem to be important.

At an ordinary afternoon call, I always think a good moment to choose is the arrival of a new guest, as one can say farewell to one's hostess without interrupting her conversation with someone else, and at the afternoon call one must say farewell to her, however much one may neglect that duty at parties.

It is always polite to say good-by to one's ostess, even at a very large function, but it is perfectly correct and not considered rude not to do so, especially if you leave before the end of the entertainment.

You should, however, never on any account neglect to go to your hostess immédi-ately on arrival at the party, before you attempt to converse with anyone else, but this is connected with arrivals, and I seem to have got off my subject completely, so must come to the conclusion that I have mentioned the principal occasions when leave-taking is not merely a matter of course, but a matter of etiquette.

THE DIARY-AND HOW TO KEEP IT

One of the good resolutions with which many of us are at times, even other than the New Year, inspired, is that of keeping a diary. After much deliberation, we choose one out of the large variety offered by the retail dealers, deciding, probably, upon space within, in preference to handsomeness without, and having done this we commence, be it on the first of January or some other date, to fill its virgin pages.

There is no difficulty whatever in starting. The paper is delightful to write on the foun-tain pen just ripe for comfortable use; thoughts crowd upon the brain; there is so much to say, so much to record, that the page is all too short!

Zest for the new labor endures, perhaps, for a week, or even two, and then we begin to,

flag. A day comes when nothing happens and the brain is dull, there is effort in filling up the page of the journal. It seems stupid to write, just for the sake of writing, yet it also seems a pity to turn the page and leave it-blank. But before many days have passed, page after page is turned without inscription !

We forget, or we are indolent, and by the end of the first month the book remains in desk or drawer untouched!

Life is too short, too full, too busy for time to be found for such futile records. What will it matter to ourselves or to anyone else ten years hence what we did, or said, or felt in April, 1909? Yet, when life's setting comes, how often one regrets not having kept a record give now and then for some slight history of " minded of one's existence from time to time, or

is glad to forget, painful events, that only

time's soothing balm enables one to survive,

and incidents like these are better not to be

But the days of happiness that flee so swift-

ly away, the gentle deeds, and kindly acts,

the words of fun, of tenderness or of wisdom,

tance separates the little flock.

omit that daily task?

she might not otherwise learn. She may see wherein she has failed in charity, or duty. She may note self-indulgence or faults of thoughtlessness revealed in her actions, she would . to decide whether they like your entertainhave never detected otherwise.

A diary may be very interesting and valu-able without containing any record likely to cause pain to others, or shame to the writer. The old maxim, "Write kindness in marble and injuries in dust," is as good a motto in writing a diary as in ordinary life. Not to be morbid or uncharitable; not to glorify self or depreciate others, to be sincere, accurate and yet natural and at ease in writing up the journal-these are counsels of perfection for the diary-keeper.

If the writer cannot avoid spitefulness or self analysis or sentimentalism, then it would be better, indeed, to close the book, and let it be one more added to the journals begun and never continued-of which the number is

To begin a diary is one thing—to continue it, another, but to begin by writing page after page is a sure sign that the journal will not last out the year—that is my own experience.

"Society is really very hard work," said a friend of mine the other day, and I cordially agreed. Especially hard is the work of 'keeping up" one's acquaintances.

"SOCIETY"

Where money is no object, and unlimited hospitality can be indulged in, the difficulty ceases to exist, or at any rate is very much decreased; but to the comparatively poor woman this is a very serious matter, involving un-ceasing effort and consequent fatigue.

For it is a fact that a large circle of acquaintances does not keep going of itself. Not only must it be continually extended, and the constantly recurring gaps made good, but its existing members must be kept going, "kept up"—that is to say, they must be re-

rom time to time, it may teach her lessons from returning hospitality because you cannot do things on the same scale is a foolish kind of pride.

Do the best you can, and leave your guests ment well enough to come again!

In speaking just now of those fortunate beings who are sought out for themselves alone, omitted one very important class. Few hostesses are so naive as to expect the young man to make any return for the hospitality he receives.

Of course, he may do so, but it is not to be counted on. As a rule his presence is considered quite sufficient return, so spoilt by society is that terrible creature, Man!

HEALTH NOTES

Nerves-and the Eyes

We are constantly told that the many ailments of decidedly nervous origin from which men and women suffer so much in these days are the results of the onward trend of our civilization, and some philosophers say that if this is so, it were almost better that we were not even so civilized as we are, and that we certainly ought not to develop any further!

Tea, coffee, and other stimulating beverages of modern times, highly seasoned foods, and the many dishes that go to make up our daily dietary over and above what is absolutely necessary to maintain our health and force, are all blamed in turn, with bridge, theatres and late nights, as causing a form of functional excitement that usually ends in chronic dyspepsia and severe nerve troubles.

Now an eminent oculist has discovered that one of the chief causes of this commonest ailment of the people today, "nerves," is overstrained eyesight.

Our eyes are constantly at work, one way or another, from morning till night, and, all too frequently, we work, read, write or type in a bad, or at all events, indifferent light, or else in a light that is so brilliant as to make a marked difference between itself and the natural light of day; and the over-taxing of the eye nerves by one or other of these conditions. reacts on the rest of the nerves of the body, and lays the foundation of nervous prostration, which leads to many other troubles which detract from health as well as beauty. When the eyes have been used all day at work of any kind, no close reading, and certainly no fine needlework, should be attempted in a fading light, nor in artificial light of any sort whatever, for this tends to over-strain them, to make their rims inflamed, to depress the nerve-tone, and eventually to weaken the eyesight. But if the eyes must be set to work again in the evenings, they should first be rested by being shut in a darkened room for at least twenty minutes. Then they should be bathed with a thoroughly good eye lotion, and in addition to this it is an excellent thing to massage the muscular tissues that extend from their outer angles across the temples with a few drops of oil. A drop or so of this should be taken on the first and second fingers of both hands and rubbed into those muscles with a circular movement. The bathing with the lotion will cool, refresh and brighten the eyes and be in every way beneficial to them; it will also tend to prevent headache, especially of the nervous Whenever it is possible to lift the eyes from any work on which they are engaged, it is a good plan to rest them, first changing the focus, by looking at some object the furthest distance in front, and then shutting them for a second or two. This will prevent the excessive weariness and hot, irritable ache that so many strenuous workers feel, and will also help to prevent nerve-strain and loss of nerve-

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ntellectual? The bow cannot always be kept taut, that is the way to rob it of its elasticity.

comes home, he prefers to find a holiday at-

mosphere, rather than a heavy one, however

"Mild heav'n a time ordains, And disapproves that care (though wise in show), That with superfluous burden loads the day."

It is a fine thing to be learned, and no person is so boring as one who is never serious. All the same, we must not let a reign of dulness begin. Far better keep our homes cheerfulpalaces of rest and smiles and simple happiness.

GOWNS AND GOSSIP

It is an annoying period of the year, for the temper is tried in many little ways! I thought I would take an interest in my personal appearance and bought a new hat, so immediately the weather turned dull and rainy, and only once has the said hat emerged from its covering of tissue paper! The wind, too, never quite a soothing element, for it is always so unexpected in its movements, and nothing gives me a greater trial than a sudden breeze, which carries away my hat, or causes t to tear at its hat-pin moorings. However, there are consolations, and one is seeing to a spring and early summer wardrobe, and there is no time to waste over the weather or any other discomfort. We feel quite smart, until a fine day when the sun blazes out, and we are shown so many defects in coats, skirts and gowns, that tempter suggests an elaborate outfit at once, if we are to do any sort of justice to ourselves and our families! A rapid consultation with a bankbook is, however, apt to temper our ardour with discretion and we probably diminish our aspirations to the extent of purchasing one new coat and skirt

and at all events, one new gown. First of all, what shall we choose for coats and skirts of the every-day, useful description?, imperative, or else they do not find anyone am very much enamoured of the French fine serges, and cashmere suitings, for they are a contrast to the coarse grained cheviot, which we have worn all the winter. And I see nothng more attractive than the brownish mole ades, and the new soft, dull mauve tones, hich look as though they had been dyed with another color which I love in the spring time, and it looks so well with a mauve hat,

a brown straw massed with mauve flowers. he tweed and serge coats are all made with yoke over the hips and down the back and that is to see the guests go!

they should not be noted, so that, at will, one than too late, as few situations are more emmay live over again those passages in life that barrassing for all concerned than when one one is thankful to remember. guest outstays all the rest because her carriage has not arrived.

The question when to leave day or evening , have a record of family life. A mother's jotparties, dances, etc., is not at all important; tings from day to day of her children's sayings and doings, illustrating the development guests suit their own convenience, and often of mind and disposition and preserving the enter at one door to leave immediately at anunity of life, her estimate of character, her other, having merely shown themselves, either prognostications; how deep the interest of because other engagements have made haste those chronicles in after years when the fam-

else they know and do not care to face the awkwardness of a lonely wait, on the chance of a friend appearing-and nowhere does one feel more lonely than in a crowd of strange faces!

Guests at wedding receptions are generally expected to see the bride and bridegroom leave, purple and grey and mixed together. Green and then depart themselves. No formal leaveand womanhood. taking of the hostess is expected; if she happens to be in the hall, well and good, a few words of farewell may be said; but on these occasions the hosts, especially if they happen short skirt. Some have the new swallow- to be the bride's parents, have only one wish,

events, the memory of which is but a blur? they will gradually drop off and forget all How, or why, or when did that connection or about one.

That is the way of the world. Unless you that separation begin. The sorrows, the joys, the pains, the gladness that came and went, are something out of the common, or have shaping our course, moulding our character, some distinctive position of your own, people will not go to your house or ask you to theirs, filling our hearts, deepening or hardening feelings-what were they Were they real? Were they worth what we thought they were? if you make no effort to attract them, or to return their civilities: Of course to this, as to most rules, there are exceptions. No doubt Gladly would one remind oneself from you know, and so do I, certain among our actime to time of the things that are past, calling up incidents, trivial in themselves, yet quaintances who are always welcome, always ought after, and yet who seem to make no ef-When we ask the companions of those days fort to return the hospitality they receive.

If, however, you observe these exceptional for their remembrance of them, they cannot persons, you will find that the reason lies in help us, for either they, too, seem to have forgotten, or their recollections differ from ours. the fact that they are exceptional, and the reseem precious now. Why-ah, why?-did we turn they make is something in themselves which they give out-it may be some talent, it. may be that indefinable quality which we call There are reasons, besides those of carelessness and indolence, to account for the failure charm-in any case it is something which you to keep a journal. Many people object to doand I, reader, may not possess, so we must be "up and doing," if we wish to keep the attening so because they have a horror of fostering self-consciousness.- True, there are scenes one tions of our little world.

Many people, I know, disdain these social arts: They say, "We want friends, not acquaintances, and we do not care for the sort of people who only want to eat our food, and who only come to see us when we provide some entertainment for them."

That is all very well, but your friends must all begin by being acquaintances.

that are so soon forgotten-it is a pity that Moreover, friends have a way of passing from our ken with the passing years, and the older we grow the more difficult it is to make Especially, one thinks, it is pleasant to fresh friends.

The man (or woman) who restricts his circle to a few intimate friends will awake one fine day to find himself all alone. But among many acquaintances new friends may be found quite unexpectedly.

So I think a large circle is desirable, and therefore worth a little trouble to keep, and ily is broken up and marriage, death or disreally a little trouble will often go a long way.

Some people are much cleverer at this sort. Girls, especially, often regret not having kept a slight chronicle of their lives, for they of thing than others. They have a way of making the modest little tea-party quite a delightful success, and they send their guests are fonder than other members of the family away feeling as thoroughly pleased with themof the "Do you remember" links of happy selves and with their hostess as if they had childhood days, linking childhood to youth been attending a large and fashionable func-

One would not encourage them to fill pages That seems to me to be the secret of social their journals with descriptions of their emotions, nor to record frivolities; but the success, to make your guests spend a happy recognition of the value of life, which makes daily life worth remembering is fostered. time, and this can be done in a modest way as well as in the mansions of the rich. It always seems to me that to be deterred what is more precious-sight. And perhaps, as the writer scans her record

If ever the words of a book seem to be out of alignment, or in the least blurred or indistinct, the earliest opportunity should be taken of consulting a first-class occulist, for the sight of over-tired eyes will be saved by the timely wearing of properly prescribed eyeglasses fixed into suitable frames by a really reliable optician; and the saving of the eyestrain there will also minimize the risk of a bad nervous breakdown in the future.

One more word about glasses, be sure to go to a thoroughly well-known and reliable optician; the best is the cheapest in this case, as it is not a saving of money, but a saving of