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MABEL'S CHITCHAT

What to Do With Relatives That Get on One's Nerves.

OLD PLUMES TRANSFORMED.

Fashions For Spring Are the Wildest and Freakiest Since the Invention of the Needle and the Discovery of Silk—Some of Their Vagaries.

Dear Elsa—I know how perfectly horrid it is to speak disparagingly to outsiders of one's relatives, but the truth is ever since the holidays we have been fairly inundated with a steady stream of relatives staying in the house with us until these visitations have worn my poor nerves almost to the proverbial frazzle. Some of the guests I liked extremely for the first week or so after their arrival, but before their departure I almost went the length of loathing these same good people. All my fault! Possibly, but that only makes the situation a degree worse if anything.

Do you know, dear, I think if there were only seven jokes in the world certainly the witicism concerning the uncongeniality of relatives would hold a conspicuous place among them, for ever since time immemorial undisciplined men and women who have lived under the same roof—and most of us are undisciplined—have wrangled and bickered and quarreled to a greater or less extent, I heard recently of a canny old Scotchman who seems to have pretty clear ideas of the relation problem. He invited his married daughter and her husband to spend the first year of their married life with him. But after six months he built a small house for her across the street. "It is best to let the wind blow between relatives," he wisely remarked.

My idea is that when the strain becomes too great it is best to make a change before something decidedly unpleasant happens. One's sentiment suffers, to be sure, but that is much better than having one's disposition ruined and one's nerves worn to a frazzle. The solution of many a family unhappiness and many a quarrelling household could be found in trying a different arrangement of melange, for the old Scotchman was right, and probably the wind that blew between his house and his daughter's home was a soft and gentle one.

"Now," as the wairus said, "is the time to talk of other things" and to be further bromidic in my quotations. In the spring a woman's fancy turns to thoughts of her new clothes and particularly her new hats, for these are the first barbingers of warm weather.

Well, dear, you must prepare yourself to look like an Indian princess as to headgear and a Balkan, Servian or Russian woman in the rest of your costume, for we are modestly caught up in the eastern war cloud, and all sorts of far eastern oddities are to be our fate next spring. Hats are like Chinese lateen sails, trimmings like scimitars and skirt draperies like Chinese laundry tickets.

Well, maybe I am exaggerating a bit, but we are going to be most all these things in our new togs. Speaking of hats, a friend of mine recently returned from abroad said to me, "See my new hat with seven ostrich feathers!" I looked and beheld a very tiny chap of satin with the new point at the back brim and at one side of the hat a small, rather depressed looking ornament, which appeared to be a limp quill made of silk threads.

"There are seven long, handsome ostrich feathers in that wisp of a thing, my dear," asserted the late arrival from Paris.

"I know it is incredible, but that despondent looking quill is one of the

most chic and expensive hat trimmings in Paris at this minute. It is called scraped ostrich, and the stems of seven plumes were scraped clean of feathery plumage and mounted again on a central stem to make the quill."

This ornament is not a bit funnier than the new spring flowers that are to adorn hats, which are made of tiny feathers dyed in realistic colorings and formed into roses, pansies and all kinds of millinery flora.

But, to come back to feathers, I know how disappointed you were after saving up your pennies for months to invest in a stunning willow plume, and right after your purchase Dame Fashion had the unkindness to call them off the list of things modish.

Affliction has always a grace if one can find the way. Enter with me into the charmed portal and let the fashion alchemist transform your de mode willow plume into a wreath of approved beauty, the curled French feather, which leads the sartorial van just now.

This is the way it's done: The ends are clipped from the willow plume just above the knot, and the shortened plumes are curled up evenly. This makes a rather narrow but fluffy wreath of feathers, and these narrow wreaths are laid flat within the curl of the wide hat brim, but not poised against the crown.

One of two small and not too expensive French tips curling over the brim at one side near the back complete a perfect up to date hat, and the number of these ostrich wreaths seen on the new millinery demonstrates that something has been done with the hopelessly passe willows, after all.

Having scattered these crumbs of comfort in your direction, I will recall myself to the kitchen, where I will scatter a few more over the top of a brown betty pudding, which is in the process of making for tonight's dinner.

Devotedly,
MABEL
New York.

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A Tradition Shattered.
The lady had no experience, but she had a lot of sense and determination. So when she entered the market she was as good as the next person. She approached the stall of a butcher and felt of the breastbone of a fowl. Then she said:

"Is this a good chicken?"
"Yes, ma'am," said the marketman confidently, as was his wont.
"Then the old saying is wrong," said the lady.
"What old saying?" demanded the marketman.
"The old saying that 'the good die young!'"—Cleveland Plain Dealer.

Blaine's First Stump Speech.
James G. Blaine made his first appearance on the stump in the canvass in Maine in 1856. He went to Farmington to hear Senator William Pitt Fessenden speak and with no intention to speak himself. But Mr. Fessenden did not arrive on time, and some of his Augusta friends put Blaine forward to take the platform. He likened his situation to that of a farmer who had a horse for which he asked \$500. A horse trader offered him \$75 for the animal. "It's an awful drop," said the farmer, "but I'll take it." The story, took and so did the speech that followed.

The Voice of Experience.
"Demosthenes put a pebble in his mouth when he arose to make an oration."
"Oh, you never can tell. Maybe it was just a lozenge, to keep his tongue from getting as dry as a piece of leather. I've tried to do some public speaking myself."—Chicago Record-Herald.

Criticised.
Uncle Ezra—They have just discovered that the bank cashier has had a weak heart for ten years past. Uncle Eben—There's government supervision for you! Bank examiner has been coming here all this time and just found it out.—Judge.

Newly Discovered Evidence.
"Why do you want a new trial?"
"On the grounds of newly discovered evidence, your honor."
"What's the nature of it?"
"My client dug up \$400 that I didn't know he had."—Louisville Courier-Journal.

The English of It.
He—You have had a week now to think of my proposal of marriage. She—Yes, and the more I think of it the less I think of it.—Cincinnati Enquirer.

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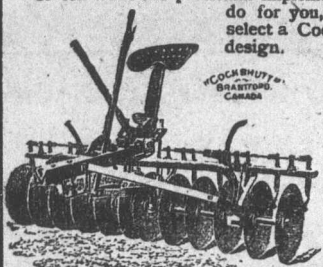
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