

—my present allowance—I must chose the former. In the circumstances I should be a cad to do anything else. At the same time I'm very sorry to upset your apple-cart, for you have always behaved like a brick to me. Good-bye, dad!

"Always yours affectionately," "Dick."

There's big-headed obstinacy for you, and selfishness too! Fancy a young fool thrusting aside parental affection and his bread-and-butter, all because he must have his own way! Well, he had it. It cost me many a pang, but I did my duty—I shut Dick out from my berth and thrust him from my mind. I never—or very rarely—thought of him at all.

September 1st, 1884.—About six months after I had closed accounts with Dick, and some three after my seventieth birthday, everything began to go wrong. The gout in my right leg became positively excruciating, the village swarmed with poachers, there was swindling going on in the stables—which I could not get out to see after—and the servants got stupider and stupider, and selfish and obstinate beyond all belief.

Nobody reminded me of my medicine or tried to amuse me. It was like being buried alive. I tried to mend matters by engaging a private secretary—in fact, I had a succession of them—but they were either fearfully slow and dull or pig-headed and bent on having their own way; and I sacked them one after the other.

After this I got a notion that I should like a young-lady nurse and companion, and mentioned the matter to the parson. I made sure he would have a fit. His eyes crossed, his sherry went the wrong way, he became purple—indeed his symptoms were so very alarming that I felt justified in slapping his back; and I did it so well that I slapped him clean out of his chair.

When he was better, he gasped out that he was afraid he could not help me; and then, when I glared at him and asked him "Why not?" he stuttered out—

"I—I—I don't think it would be proper."

An old "buff-head," as Dick used to say. But that's the world all over—hard, censorious, cold!

My other neighbours were just as silly, and all agreed that, if I insisted on being waited on by a young woman, I must get an old one into the house as well.

So I sent for Maria. Maria is a second cousin of mine; she is almost stone-deaf, and cannot see without her spectacles, which she is always losing. She never comes down to breakfast until lunch-time, and always goes to bed at dinner-time; consequently she does not bore one much.

When she was fairly installed with me and had begun to feel at home and lose her spectacles, I advertised for my young-lady nurse and companion, avoiding any disclosure of my sex by merely describing myself as an invalid. I arranged that Gould, the bookseller at Stanbury, should receive the answers. They came in shoals, for the salary I offered was good; and in cases where I thought the girls might be nice I sent for them to come and see me and paid all expenses. Gould seemed to think all was not as it should be, and looked quite frightened every time I saw him on the subject.

The sixth maiden that came was "Miss Right," and I chose with her off-hand. She brought only two letters of recommendation; but one was from a Cabinet Minister and the other from a Bishop. She was "the sort of thing to sit next," as Dick would say, with small fine features, large earnest eyes, a delicate yet not unhealthy colour, nut-brown hair, and a compact little figure. She was in all respects a lady, had a sweet low voice, and made no pretence of being anybody in particular—by which I mean that she did not tell any yarns about aristocratic connections, sad reverses of fortune, &c. &c. I do not believe she would have come if Maria had not been with me. Her name, she told me, was Constance Denham. She came down here with her traps about a week after we had arranged terms, and fell into our ways at once.

It was just about tea-time when she arrived, and, on hearing that tea was nearly due, she wiped off her wraps in a twinkling, and came down from her room in time to make it. And she made it just as I like it made. Maria was rather stiff with her at first, but she managed to make the old lady hear without squealing or roaring at her, and that placed Miss Denham on a pinnacle from which she never afterwards fell.

I never knew a girl to fit into one's life as she did. She always remembered my medicine and my gouty leg. When one wanted to be quiet, she would bring out some rags of work and sit as still as a mouse, or, if cheerfulness was at a premium, play and sing until the "blues" were put to flight. And one of the most extraordinary things about her was that she knew all Dick's favourite songs and sang them perfectly.

It was a goodly sight to see her scratching about among the flowers before breakfast in her deliciously fresh trim morning-gowns, attended by a retinue of enslaved and devoted dogs, and singing bright snatches of song to herself. Equally pleasant was it to have her sit by me on the terrace while I read the day's lesson from the *Times*, and to note the ingenuity with which she extracted amusement from that somewhat solemn journal. She often accompanied the most ponderous leading articles with quaint little moralisings of her own.

(TO BE CONTINUED.)

Enclosed please find my subscription for 1888. You owe me nothing. I get more than my dollar's worth. G. F. FRANKLAND, Toronto.

The Household.

Virtue in Onions and Beef.

What is the most strengthening food for a convalescent? Well, you know, the beef tea theory has been exploded. The most life-giving and digestible food that can be given to one just recovering from an illness is chopped beef. Just take a pound of the finest round of raw beef, cut off all the fat, slice two onions, and add pepper and salt. Then chop the onions and meat together, turning them over and over until both are reduced almost to a pulp. Then spread on slices of rye bread and eat as sandwiches. People talk about celery being a nervine, but let me tell you that there is nothing which quiets the nerves, without bad results, like onions. The use of them induces sleep, and much strength is obtained from them. That is my ideal food for those convalescing or for any one who is in a weak state of health.

A Mistake of Young Married People.

It would be amusing, were it not for the serious aspects of the matter, to observe the complacency with which many young married people set out with the undertaking to reform each other, in regard to more or less serious faults and habits. "He loves me," says Mary to herself, "I am sure he will give up that odious habit for my sake." And, "She loves me," says John in his heart, "I am sure she will heed the very reasonable request to give up such a practice." Poor little innocents! And so they set about reforming each other. They meant to be very kind and tender and win the point by love alone. They use caresses and honeyed words and tender pleading, but down deep in their hearts, whether they know it or not, is an iron determination of each to bend the other to his will.

Out of regard for Mary's wishes, John may stop smoking for a week or a month; but the habit is strong, because it is a part of himself now, and so he goes back to it, trying to appease his conscience with the reflection that if Mary had due regard for him she wouldn't require such a sacrifice of his pleasure. And it is the same on the other side. Perhaps Mary isn't as neat as his mother, and he talks to her about it; but if she keeps the kitchen apparently clean for a week, he'll find dirt lurking in the corners—and she is no easier to reform than he. She begins to think that John needn't be so particular, and that it is cruel to compare her to his mother. If a woman has it in her to be slovenly, the chances are that she'll be slovenly to the crack of doom. But, not content to drop these matters as a kind of moral stone wall against which there is no sense in butting their heads, they begin to reproach each other, and the ball is open for bickering and fault-finding, and perhaps quarrelling, which are only too well known in some families. No man or woman need marry with the idea that he is going to reform the partner of his joys in any respect. The only way is to study and decide beforehand whether one is willing to take a certain person just as he is, without any mental reservations regarding reform in any particular. When he is of a marriageable age, his habits and manners and convictions are so much a part of himself that he cannot change without "pulling himself up by the roots," and such an undertaking on the part of anyone else is always resented. To make some people over into what they ought to

be, would require not only that they should be borne again, but that they should be brought up again by more sensible parents. It is probable that a slow development of the better side of our nature during time and eternity will eradicate all these bad things and bring us to perfection; but during the short span of this little world, those married people will, in general, be happier if they accept the situation without attempting very much in the making over line.

Silver Weddings.

I see that some one wishes to know how silver weddings should be conducted, also how invitations should be issued. I will tell what I know about it. The invitations issued for this wedding should be on the finest note paper, printed in bright silver, with monogram or crest upon both paper and envelope in silver. They may vary somewhat in the wording, according to the fancy of the writer, but they are all similar. They should give the date of the marriage and the anniversary. They may or may not give the name of the husband at the right hand side and the maiden name of the wife at the left. What the anniversary is should always be indicated. The following form will serve as a model:

1863-1888.
The pleasure of your company is requested at the
SILVER WEDDING RECEPTION
of
MR. AND MRS. CYRUS JENNINGS.
On Thursday evening, June 18th,
at nine o'clock.
R. S. V. P. 25 Jackson Avenue.

A proper variation will make this form equally suitable for any other wedding anniversary.

If presents are offered by any of the guests, they should be of silver, and may be the merest trifles or expensive articles, according to the means and desires of the giver. If no presents are wanted, enclose a card, "Preferred that no gifts be offered."

Happy and Home Loving French.

I assert that, to those who will look at them without bias, they must appear in their true light the happiest and most home loving people among modern nations. That provincial life in France is narrow, I have admitted, but what a very dove cote is almost every home! If the time to be happy is now, and the way to be so is to make all those around us happy, then are the French the most enviable people on earth, for they put that theory into practice. In what other land will you find so many households whose members are of three or four generations? Parents and children cling together to the exclusion of all the world outside. Not a boy is brought up with a view to emigration. The thought of the young birds leaving the nest is dreaded. I know girls who have refused splendid offers of marriage and preferred humble ones because the latter gave them a chance of living near papa and mamma, and parents who have put themselves to any amount of inconvenience to make room for daughters-in-law rather than part with their sons.

A French father would think you mad if you told him that you left your family at 7 in the morning to return to them at 7 or 8 in the evening, as so many Americans do; and that on Sunday, your only day at home, you were too exhausted to enjoy your children's prattle or to take a walk with your wife. The little French provincial tradesman, who locks his shop door while he spends a joyful hour at dinner with his family, has come nearer solving the problem of happiness than the Anglo-Saxon jockey in the race for ducats.