

Art of Talking

The Graceful Science is Almost a Thing Forgotten—Olden Conversationalists—Mrs. E. Lynn Linton Tells How the Faculty May Be Revived.

A thoroughly satisfactory conversationalist is as hard to find as a writer of perfect English or a draughtsman whose lines are absolutely true. Most people think too much of themselves and too little of their interlocutor to be conversationalists of the first rank, writes Mrs. E. Lynn Linton, for rampant egotism spoils manners as much as it contracts the intellect and debases morals. As we are all tarred with the same brush in varying degrees of intensity, and every mother's son of us wants his own mind, to talk with one whose great "I" stands like a verbal Eiffel Tower, overshadowing everything, is at once fatiguing, humiliating and exasperating.

This rampant egotism takes many forms. Sometimes it appears as contradiction—that universal "otherwisemindedness" which cannot be appeased even by assent. Say to one of these that more closely you study Shakespeare the more stupendous you find his intellect—incontinently he flings into your face, as mocking defiance, the collective learning of the times and the grandeur of the Elizabethan dramatists generally, and cites Marlowe's "mighty line" as shoulder high with Shakespeare's. Agree to this, quote that magnificent passage in "Faust," and the name of Spenser, Bacon, Ben Jonson to the roll call of high wits molding the thought and enriching the literature of the age; before you know where you are, you are snapped at as a dullard, and irrelevant at that; told that none of these men approach within miles of him who wrote "Hamlet" and "Macbeth," and finally snubbed into silence by the mere uselessness of remembrance. These otherwiseminded folk can never discuss. Discussion means fair give and take, the flint and steel, bright interchange of thoughts and views; the playing round or deeper probing of a subject—which is conversational in its highest sense. But a contrivance of assertion that reduces all talk to a mere game of noughts and crosses, where his cross scores out your nought. Twin brother to this is the conceited person who can solve all doubts, settle all disputed questions, catch by the hair and bring under the scalpel all those cosmic mysteries which have baffled the wisest to explain. Your omniscient interlocutor is never baffled. He can even dispose of the First Cause, which he tucks up comfortably in a little parcel, labeled "Inherent," and when he says this he has found a floor for his tortoise to stand on, and the explanation is complete. But he cannot converse. He can only lay down the law on these great cosmic mysteries, as well as on political difficulties, the state of Europe, the exact time of the day, the whole subject of monometallicism and free trade, how to make a plum pudding and how to behave should be rendered. He will not discuss any subject whatsoever. "I have gone through all that twenty years ago," he says, his nose in the air, and shuts up your thought, as it were a Jack-in-the-Box, with the lid slammed down. No conversation, properly so called, is possible with one who conducts himself in this way. He is a mere monologue, contriving to bring the talk around to his own feelings, his own experience, his personal knowledge—which always goes beyond yours. You can tell a good story, and he takes off the edge by another which reduces the worth of yours, as the plain likeness of a pretty girl lessens the supremacy of her beauty.

What kind of conversation is it when you hold with those notes of interrogation who are always putting you in the witness box and asking questions, the answers to which you are obliged to give, do not care for the answers, but are created in their own minds to office of universal reformers, they controvert all you say—not in opposition so much as showing a more developed knowledge of changes while it enlarges your thought. They seek to be the angels leading you on the way by hand and guiding you on the way by word. They are always a step beyond you—a step higher in the world of thought and truth; but they are generous and will share their advantages and impart instruction as freely as the skies shower down sweet summer rain. Argumentative and superior, they treat you as a benevolent school master might treat a woolly-pated lad, lamentably deficient, but not wanting in good will. But superior bars conversation; and to be taught and preached at is not the same thing as talking with a companion.

When, however, we do get hold of some one who does understand the art of conversation, as Madame de Sevigne and Horace Walpole understood that of letter writing, what a charm it is! "Glad at the uplink," a good talker is like an adroit fencer, quick to parry, light and rapid in thrust, lunging with grace, courteous in salute. He sees all the advantages given him by his interlocutor, and utilizes them, but with unfailing good temper, to match his readiness of riposte. Without insincerity or shallowness, he never lets the talk drift into polemics; and even those whose passions are roused as easily as the wild balsam is made to shed its seeds, even those can find no occasion when they can legitimately "fly." He has the art of diverting from dangerous channels as from dull dead trenches the pleasant stream which he causes to meander through the flowery fields of now philosophy, and now art and literature, now metaphysical speculations, and again the last new play, the latest novel, the new exhibition, the political outlook and the latest games of science. Whatever he touches he beautifies, and always adds a little nugget of gold to the cairn of thought and knowledge.

When he instructs he neither bores nor humiliates; when he opposes he does not offend. He brings into the conversation just so much of his own personality as gives it point and vitality; just so much criticism as sharpens the flavor and takes off sickliness; just so much learning as heightens the scale without pedantry; just so much of his own peculiar "shop" as interests and instructs without nauseating. With him all is duly proportioned, and he leaves on you the sense of harmony and smoothness, lightness and brilliancy. There has been no coarseness in the gliding—no excess in the shadows—no display of fireworks blinding as they flared and ending in smoke and a charred stick. He has not interrupted you nor pressed on his own account; nor taken your best stories out of your mouth; nor mended your grammar; nor rectified you as to your dates and facts on four equal legs; nor played the superior schoolmaster anyhow. He has made you pass one of the pleasantest hours in your life with his mingled web of anecdote and epigram, keen flash of wit and glimpse of deeper thought, good-tempered retort and subtle sense of humor, the tossing up of iridescent bubbles and the uncovering for an instant rare precious gems. And if the sex be changed, and it is a woman who has discoursed thus divinely, you will probably kiss her hand when you leave her, and wish the gods

HINTS FOR HOUSE HUNTERS.

How a Model \$1,000 Suburban House Can Be Provided.

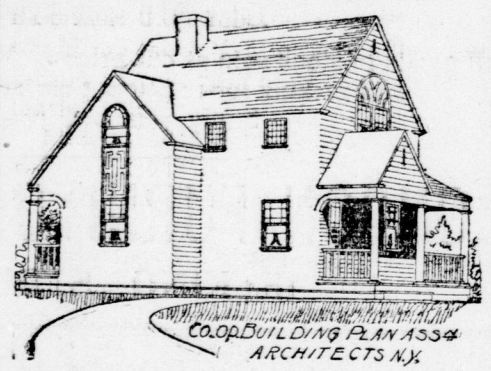
(See this column next Saturday for a lakeshore or mountain cottage for \$1,800.)

(Copyright, 1895.)

During the past few years the proportion of families who own their homes has been increased, owing to the multiplication of building and loan associations. It is no longer necessary that a man should be possessed of a snug capital before he can transform himself from a tenant into a householder.

There is a mistaken idea very prevalent that a small house that shall be attractive enough for a man of taste cannot be built for less than two or three thousand dollars. Less than half that sum is sufficient if it be judiciously expended. Any amount of money can be squandered in non-essentials and in decorations that are as useless as artistic. In the main we only require from a house, as from a man, that it perform its duty well, and do the things it was intended to, in the best way and be pleasing and graceful in doing it. A model home, if it be skillfully planned, can be erected for a surprisingly small sum in these days. The inventiveness of Americans which has devised all sorts of machines for joining and carpentering to replace the expensive hand work has made this possible.

Wise men who look to the future are gradually availing themselves of the present conditions. The near-by suburbs of all cities are being built up with inexpensive homes, and the effect will soon be felt in the problem of municipal reform. The assertion does not need proof that the householder is a poor citizen in that he is more keenly alive to the administration of affairs, than the dweller in a rented house. He feels that it is not a mere privilege, but a duty as well, to exercise the franchise and to give keen scrutiny to the acts of the public servants; he has a personal interest in the affairs of state, and a householder and a taxpayer; when he speaks of home, a veritable "home," in his eye he has pictured a perfect cottage, something like the one below.



To build this house would cost about \$1,000. General dimensions: Width through dining-room and kitchen, 23 feet 6 inches; depth, including veranda, 33 feet 6 inches.

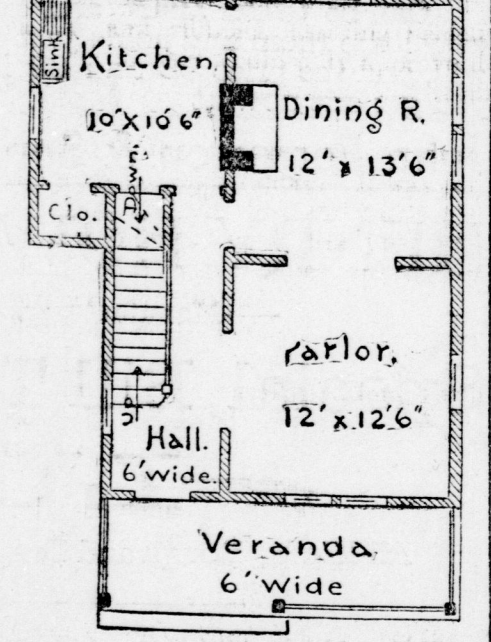
Heights of stories: Cellar, 6 feet 6 inches; first story, 8 feet 6 inches; second story, 8 feet.

Exterior materials: Foundation, stone and brick; first and second stories, gables and roof, shingles.

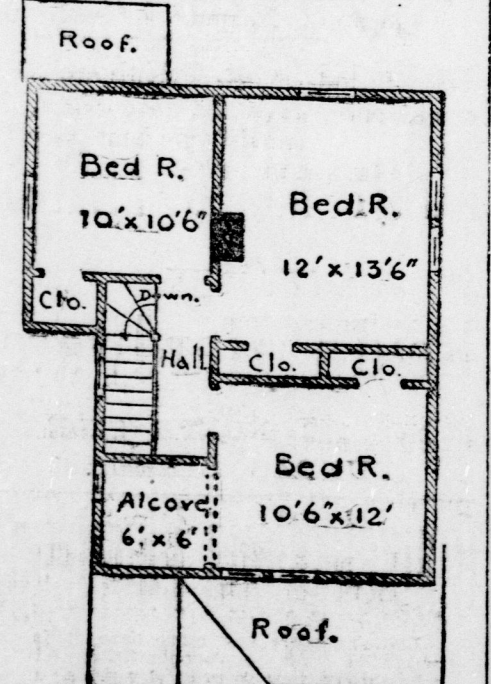
Interior finish: Two coats plaster; soft wood flooring, trim and stairs; inferior wood work painted colors to suit owner.

Colors: Body, all shingles dipped and brush-coated in oil; trim painted white; roof shingles dipped and brush-coated red; sashes painted bronze green; blinds colonial white; veranda, porch floors and ceilings.

The principal rooms and their sizes, closets, etc., are shown by the floor



First Floor plans. Cellar under parlor and hall. Loft floored for storage. Open fireplace in the dining-room. Double folding doors connect parlor with hall and dining-room. Alcove off front bedroom serves as a dressing-room.



Second Floor

This design is subject to many feasible modifications. Sliding doors may connect hall, parlor and dining-room. Another chimney may be introduced in parlor. Alcove off the front bedroom

may be partitioned off for a hall bedroom, with entrance directly from the hall. Bathroom with a full or partial set of plumbing may be introduced in second story.

The price (\$1,000) is based on New York prices for materials and labor, and in many sections of country the cost should be less. Materials, ranges and heaters are not included in the estimate, being left for the individual builder to select.

Additional signs of reviving trade and encouraging evidence of improvement are seen in all directions. Since Jan. 1, 1895, to the present time the increase in real estate in the vicinity of New York is 40 per cent and in building permits 70 per cent. In Chicago the increase in real estate is 25 per cent, and their increase in building permits 40 per cent—a greater increase than there has been for the same period of time for the past five years.

Figures in the last census present a striking picture of the home conditions under which the mass of wage workers in this country live. One of the recent bulletins show that out of every 10 families in the United States 52 hire their homes or farms, 35 own them without incumbrance, leaving 13 in every 100 who own them with incumbrances. The proportion of dwellers in the cities who own their homes is, of course, smaller than this. In 423 cities and towns having a population of from 8,000 to 100,000, 64 in every 100 families hire their homes, 12 own them with incumbrances, and 24 without incumbrances. It may be predicted with confidence that the next census will show even a better record than this.—By the editor of the Co-operative Building Plan Association, Architects, New York.

Survived from His Aunt-Wife.

Harry McClelland of Baltimore has been granted a divorce from his wife, who is also his aunt, they having married four years ago without knowing that it was unlawful for a man to marry his aunt. The couple lived together two years, when they learned that the union was illegal. Then they separated. They have no children. First they applied to the court for an annulment of the marriage, but the court decided that divorce proceedings must be instituted. Both were anxious for a divorce, though pained at the separation, as they were devotedly attached to each other as husband and wife.—Washington Star.

Japan to Have an Eiffel Tower.

A number of patriotic Japanese in Tokyo will erect a tower a la Eiffel in memory of Japan's victory over the Chinese. It will be 1,000 feet high and contain a hall, in which will be exposed samples of the industries and commerce of Japan. It will also have a picture gallery, in which will be placed photographs of the Japanese who have distinguished themselves during the war. The total cost will be \$350,000, which has already been subscribed, and drawings and sketches have been received from the large iron works in France, Germany and England.—Berliner Tageblatt.

Children Cry for Pitcher's Castoria.

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The Horrors of Terrible Indigestion.

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The symptoms are, coated tongue, purr or bitter taste in the mouth, point of appetite, heaviness and heaviness in the head, dullness, constipation, inactive bowels, nausea and frequent vomiting of food and bile.

As a perfect cure physicians now prescribe and recommend Paine's Celery Compound; the action of this noted medicine is prompt and decisive. It never fails to regulate the action of the digestive organs, and it always restores to perfect health. Numberless testimonials have been sent in from the people of Canada, proving clearly that no other medicine in the world can so

thoroughly meet the tortures of indigestion and dyspepsia as Paine's Celery Compound.

Mr. Thomas Pethick, of Bowmanville, Ont., writes for the benefit of suffering men and women: he says:

"In the interests of sick and diseased people I have decided to testify in favor of Paine's Celery Compound. For three years I suffered from indigestion and all the horrors it usually brings. Day after day my food lay like a solid ball on my stomach, and I could get no relief. I tried all the sarsaparillas and pills advertised without any good results. A friend advised me to use Paine's Celery Compound. This was indeed the medicine for my case, as seven bottles perfectly cured me. I am now able to eat well, sleep well and attend to my work. I strongly advise all to use Paine's Celery Compound, as it is sure to cure."

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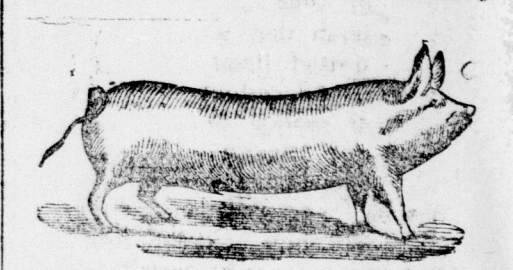
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Carpets, Rugs, CURTAINS, DRAPERIES.

New JOHN KAY, Son & Co.'y, TORONTO.

The New Spring Goods are here. Compared with former seasons, and no stronger comparison could be made, the house has certainly surpassed itself, and more than held its acknowledged position of leadership in House Furnishings. This may be explained, perhaps, in the great change in colorings, from the light, insipid shades to the darker, richer and more durable colorings. The fact remains, and the new goods will win favor with all.

The firm have added to their Drapery Department by giving that portion where Rugs were kept, thus increasing the light, and enabling them to make a worthy exhibit of their Liberty Department—Cretonnes, Silks, Muslins, etc.

In Carpets let attention be directed to the largest assortment of Wiltons and Axminsters the firm have ever imported in one season. Many prices, but only goods that can be recommended. The assortment is attractive in small, Indian and geometrical designs, suitable for halls and rooms. Also some noble designs in larger figures in the new Empire greens and rose tints. A line at \$1 50 net, regular price much higher.

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