

**Husbands.**

There can be no doubt that, if a woman grows dissatisfied, it is the fault of the husband. There is a certain moral and physical condition which women attain who are not happy at home. They become moody, discontented, and sullen. If you ask them, the answer always is, "Oh, that man!" When pressed for further explanations—for it is with the greatest difficulty you can get a woman of delicate susceptibilities to impart her wrongs—"that man," of course, turns out to be the heartless brute who has worked her misery—her own husband. And, what is so provoking is, he can't be brought to see it. He smiled at her across the table with the assurance and impertinence of an Irish Low-Church curate. An invitation to champagne is a studied insult—he knows she never drinks it. If he proposes to ride with her in the Park, it is because he has heard her order the carriage. A trip to Paris would be all a most exacting wife could desire; but have not all the children been ordered to the sea-side, and it is impossible to go? You would have thought him the most tender, affectionate, thoughtful of husbands. Of course you would. The hypocrite knows what he has to expect from society if he does not appear to be all this. But see him in his domestic privacy, when he returns, gloomy and cross, from his day's business or pleasure. Instead of amusing her with the news or gossip of the day, he pleads fatigue and retires to his smoking room by himself—whence, presently, his sonorous nose announces to the whole household that he is asleep. Is he the companion for a woman of cultivated mind and business habits? Whose concern is it to overlook the weekly bills, and see that they are sent in correct by the tradesmen? What pleasanter occupation for a quiet evening? True, the checks are always forthcoming when asked for; but any idiot can sign his name to a document, especially if it shows on the face of it that he is throwing away his money. He actually paid her milliner's bill last year without looking at the items; merely remarking that he thought the total was rather high, and that she ought to be a good advertisement for Madame Fichue. He doesn't understand her. There is not that sympathy or confidence there ought to be between husband and wife. He is a fool, and she was a greater for marrying him. Why did she? Papa was very much involved, as every one knows, and he offered to relieve him of his embarrassments. He did not certainly propose to do so till after she accepted him; but was she the less sold for all that? Of course, he would not have come forward if she refused him. Then he takes absurd prejudices against this man, and the other; whereas, when Mrs. Lovemore comes to dinner, he has neither eyes nor words for any one else; and, for all she knows, may at that very moment be running after her all over the town. Who can help pitying and sympathizing with an admirable woman of this kind, whose oath lies in such rough places? What might she not have been in a different, perhaps in a more humble, sphere?—*Once a Week.*

**Keeping Pianos in Order.**

A musical journal says that there is not attention enough paid to pianos to keep them in good tone. It asserts that a piano should be tuned at least four times a year by an experienced tuner. If you allow it to go too long without tuning it usually becomes flat and troubles a tuner to get it to stay at tuning pitch, especially in the country. Never place the instrument against an outside wall, or in a cold, damp room, particularly in a country house. There is no greater enemy to a piano than damp. Close the instrument immediately after you practice; by leaving it open, dust fixes on the sound board and corrodes the movements, and if in a damp room the strings soon rust. Should the piano stand near or opposite to a window, guard, if possible, against its being opened, especially on a wet or damp day; and when the sun is on the window draw the blind down. Avoid putting metallic or other articles on or in the piano; such things frequently cause unpleasant vibrations, and sometimes injure the instrument. The more equal the temperature of the room the better the instrument will remain in tune.

*The Farmer's Tea-Table.*—It walks a fairy vision of wondrous witchery, and with a courtesy and a smile of winning and mysterious magic, takes her seat just opposite you. It is the farmer's daughter, a living creature of eighteen; fair as the lily, rosy as the rose itself, and sweet as a posy of violets.

**Answered Prayers.**

BY EUDORA MAY STONE.

Lily-bud, rose-bud, down in the dale,  
Watching and wishing for rain;  
Little blue violet, deep in the vale,  
Waiting and longing in vain;  
Little green leaflets that hang on the tree,  
And blossoms that brighten the bowers,  
Little green grasses on hillside and lea,  
Praying and sighing for showers.

When shall the clouds yield the burden they bear  
To the grass and the flowers and the trees?  
Clouds that so languidly hang in the air,  
Floating about in the breeze.  
But see! how the lightning illumines the land,  
The crash of the thunder I hear;  
And surely I felt a cool drop on my hand—  
I know that the shower must be near.

Lily-bud, rose-bud, down in the dale,  
Open, their petals aglow;  
Little blue violet, deep in the vale,  
Smiles at the crowd as they go;  
Little green leaflets that drooped on the trees,  
Flutter with joy and delight;  
Little green grasses on hillside and lea,  
Give thanks for the shower to-night.

**Arrangement of Flowers.**

Flowers may be arranged either according to the harmony or contrast of colors. Red harmonizes with orange, orange with yellow, violet with red, indigo with violet, blue with indigo, and green with blue. Green is the contrast with red, sky-blue to orange, yellow to violet, blue to orange-red, indigo to orange-yellow, and violet to bluish-green. To find the contrast to any flower, cut a small, circular piece out of its petals, place it upon white paper, look at it steadily with one eye for a few seconds, without letting the eyelids close, then look from the colored circle to another part of the white paper, when a circle of another color will be apparent; the color is the true contrast, or complementary color. Tastes differ as to whether the arranging of flowers according to contrast or complementary is more pleasing to the eye than according to harmony. The former is the most in favor. To carry it out, a blue flower should be placed next an orange flower, a yellow near a violet, and a red or a white should have plenty of foliage around it. White contrasts with blue or orange, or still better with red or pink, but not with yellow or violet.

**The Woman who has the Charm of Neatness.**

It is difficult to be rude or rough or coarse in her spotless presence; it is impossible to be unduly loud and familiar with a woman whose dress bears the impress at once of refinement and reserve. "Cleanliness," says St. Paul, "is next to godliness," and even the ungodliest man is ready to put off his mental shoes and acknowledge he is on holy ground in the presence of a pure and spotless woman. We do not like to think of any lady having to rush away in abject terror if by chance one of her husband's friends should call during the forenoon. Dress is not without its influence on address. A woman in her right gown will seldom be in her wrong temper. She will feel at ease, not racked as to the "sit" of her bib and tucker, or exercised as to the angle of her topknot. Not needing to think of herself, she will be better able to think of her guests, and will enter into the conversation of the moment with a gaiety and gusto that will charm her visitors. Should, on the contrary, her gown "gag," her shoes be down at heel, her hair untidy, embarrassment and pre-occupation will sit heavily upon her.

**A Matrimonial Hint.**

We remember somewhere to have read a story of a youth who, hesitating in his choice between two young ladies, by both of whom he was beloved, was brought to a decision by means of a rose. It happened one day, as all three were wandering in a garden, that one of the girls, in attempting to pluck a new-blown rose, wounded her finger with a thorn. It bled freely; and applying the petals of a white rose to the wound, she said smilingly: "I am a second Venus; I have dyed the white rose red." At the moment they heard a scream; and fearing the other lady, who loitered behind, had met with an accident, hastened back to assist her.

The fair one's scream had been called forth by no worse an accident than had befallen her companion. She had angrily thrown away the offending flower, and made so pertinacious and fretful a lamentation over her wounded finger, that the youth, after a little reflection, resolved on a speedy union with the least handsome but more amiable of the two friends. Happy would it be for many a kind-hearted woman did she know by what seeming trifles the affection of those whom she loves may be confirmed or alienated forever.

**CANARIES.**—Make just half the fuss directed in the bird-book over the matter, and you will have, doubtless, better success in raising birds. Never give them sugar, but all the red pepper they will eat. It is the best thing for them. And if your bird feels hoarse at any time, put a piece of fat salt pork in the cage, and see how the little fellow will enjoy it. Give him flaxseed once in a while, and if he appears dumpy, occasionally give a diet of bread and water, with red pepper sprinkled in.

**Hints About Letter-Writing.**

Letter-writing is very much a matter of habit, and for that reason it is important that young people should learn early to consider it a pleasant way of communicating thoughts and feelings to their friends, instead of a burdensome task to be got over as quickly as possible.

We often hear people excuse themselves by saying that they have no "gift for writing letters," as though it were something like an ear for music, only accorded to a favored few. But the truth is that any one can write interesting and pleasant letters who will take a little trouble and really persevere in the effort. The grand difficulty in the way is that they are too selfish and too indolent to try. Nothing that is worth anything comes without effort, and if you do not care enough about gratifying your friends to take a little pains for it, you deserve never to receive any letters yourselves. A few simple rules carefully observed, will help you over some of the things which you call difficulties. In the first place always write distinctly. It destroys much of the pleasure in receiving a letter, if it cannot be read without puzzling out every word. Many an epistle, written on cream-laid paper, with a monogram at the top, is only an annoyance to the one to whom it is addressed, on account of pale ink and careless handwriting.

Be particular in the matter of dating, giving every item distinctly, and sign the letter with your full name. If this habit is formed, you will not run the risk of losing valuable letters, which cannot be forwarded from the Dead-Letter Office, unless accompanied with the full address. You will find it more easy to reply to a letter soon after you get it, than if you neglect it for a few weeks, because you will have the impressions which the first reading made upon you. Tell your friend when you received the letter which you are answering, and take up the topics in the order which they naturally come, remembering to answer all the questions which have been asked. Try to think what your friend would like best to hear about, and when you undertake to tell anything, do not leave it half told, but finish the story. People who are not careful about this often give a false impression without meaning to do so. For instance, one of these careless writers, in giving an account of a fire simply stated that a house was burned, without giving any qualifications, thus giving the impression that it was entirely consumed, thereby causing a whole family much unnecessary trouble and anxiety, as the actual burning in question was very slight.

Do not consider anything too trivial to write about, which you would think worth mentioning in conversation. Writing letters is simply talking upon paper, and your friends will be much more entertained by the narration of little every-day affairs, than by profound observations upon topics which they care nothing about.

In writing to very intimate friends who will be interested in the details of your daily life, it is well sometimes to make your letters a sort of diary—telling something of how you have spent each day since you wrote last; what books you have been reading, what letters you have received from mutual friends, and what you have heard or seen which has interested you.

Write all that you have to say on one subject at once. That is, do not begin to tell about your garden, and then about your school, and then about your garden again; but finish one subject before you begin another. Do not be afraid of using the pronoun I. Some people avoid it, and thus give