

A NICE GIRL'S CONFESSIONS.

I DO NOT desire it to be understood that there are no advantages connected with being a "nice girl." For nearly ten years—or to be absolutely correct, nine years and ten months, I have been a governess. It may have been natural inclinations or it may have been reverse of fortune that reduced me to it; that, of course, is my own affair, and personal experience has taught me the wisdom of being the sole custodian of my own secrets. But speaking of the advantages of my position, I candidly believe that the prosaic existence of a governess offers an unprecedented field for observation. To whom can Mrs. Cheerful confide that little *affaire du coeur*, which occurred now so many, many summers ago, but to her discreet governess? It is scarcely to be expected that a woman is going to tell her husband that once upon a time she confessed to Tom Jones that life without him would be a bleak, barren, malarial waste. Oh, no, the well-nursed and carefully watered little secret is reserved for the ever-willing ears of the "nice" girl, who smiles and says: "We have all had our little romances."

Please, remember, I do not assert that every married woman loved her Tom Jones, but I am convinced, and I think many of my married female friends will share my belief that not a few at some time or other in the happy days gone by worshipped at the shrine of Tom. The women who cannot boast of a proposal from some one other than the man they afterwards married are not numerous. This does not apply altogether to married women, for I know of one young lady who claims to have a dozen hearts hanging at her belt. When she was posing for her last one—she became absent-minded—even the best of us will be off our guard sometimes—and as the lover toyfully played with her yellow hair and inquired, "How do you know that you love me?" she replied, "Well I guess I know my business."

After all, I do not see why even the most exacting husband should object to the wife of his bosom now and then unveiling the past and contemplating

the pleasure of an early love. A recent writer, who has philosophized exhaustively the subject of love, computes that unrequited the extreme duration of the passion cannot exceed five years. He speaks with special reference to men, with whom, indeed, he demonstrates somewhat unnecessarily that such a thing as an only and engrossing love, to the exclusion of all lesser fancies in life, is by no means the rule. Goethe and Heine (theoretically) believed, to be sure, that first love only was the genuine passion that a man could love but once in a lifetime in the best way. How far their practical sentiments accorded with this high idealistic abstraction is matter of history. Other men of genius have loved multitudincously without much distinction as to which was the best and the only true passion, the first or the fifty-first. What confesseth a Spanish poet? "I loved once, twice, many times. The heart is a fountain whose waters ne'er run dry."

History and that consensus of public opinion which crystallizes in fiction seems to say that man chiefly suffers. A certain monarch who knew the gentle sex well (having foregone no opportunity to study it) wrote, to be sure with the indelible impress of a diamond on a frame, the immortal words: "Fickle is woman. A fool he who trusts her." Nevertheless and despite the poets, who found it more picturesque to bewail the infidelities of their mistresses rather than their own, there has ever been a feeling that if constancy were at a premium women would be leaders in the race. Men, at the bottom of their hearts, have always had this belief. They may say that women are not to be depended on. But it is not woman that is such a very uncertain quantity in man's mind after all. It is man himself.

—But are women more constant than men? Sad as it may be to dispel any illusion still afoot in this unstable world, it must be said that they are only more constant where circumstance, occasion, hemming them around, make them so, although I know of an instance right here in Victoria where a woman suffered years of untold torture. She had been bewitched into a marriage unsuitable with a fascinating villain, and pre-

ferred to endure her torture rather than acknowledge her mistake. Again if women love fewer men in the course of their life than men love women, have they the same opportunities of choice, the same freedom to look, to seek, to cultivate acquaintances of the opposite sex that promise unusual charm? Let us be impartial. Let us be just. All experience is against the myth of constancy in love. And were they as independent as men, women would be no more constant than they.

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ESSAYS ON THE STAGE.

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First Rise of Drama.

The theatre is an historic institution dating back to the primitive days of social activity in Greece.

The drama of the Greeks (which is the oldest) arose in prehistoric times and was connected with the religious worship of the people.

The Grecian divinities were the recipients of gratitude and veneration, and this was represented in some form of dramatic poetry.

Theatrical performances were a constituent part of their religious festivals, and, at these festivals, music and dancing formed the basis of their political and religious life. Some of the dramatic pieces in the classic authors contain specimens or snatches of moral teaching.

In so far as the plays portrayed the nobler sentiments of human character, in the same degree was the moral influence good. The Romans copied from the Greeks, in the way of dramatic art. The French stage was modelled very closely after both the Roman and the Grecian, and the unities time, place and action were rigidly observed.

The English drama is the Greek drama in an English dress without the religious element of the Greeks.

The dramatic bearing of the ancient classics was transferred by the Renaissance to England, where it revived and was fostered by the university wits, Marlowe, Peele, Nash, etc.

The English drama, like the Greek drama, was divided into two parts, viz., comedy and tragedy, and both are well