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What Everybody Says

The following is what it is said after the engagement is announced of almost any girl to almost any man:

The Girl Herself—I'd like to see Lillian's face when she reads the society news—if she ever does anything so intellectual as to read! She's always been perfectly crazy about Bob and she'll be utterly furious! She'll try to make people think she could have had him if she'd wanted him, but every one knows how she has chased him for months. I wonder if any one will send Arthur a paper. Poor boy! It will be such a blow to him! If ever a man was devoted to a girl he was to me. I'll always feel that I've ruined his life. He's one of the constant kind that never gets over such a disappointment. I wish I could decide whether I want a white satin or a crepe meteor wedding dress.

The Man Himself—Yes, they've got my name spelled right, after all. Gee! It's something like reading your own obituary notice, it's so formal! Anyhow, it's nobody's business but ours and I don't see any use of all this foolishness in print! Every idiot I know'll be around to see me to-morrow and tell me how to be happy though married! Well, it will settle McKenzle all right—he won't be sending Edith flowers now in that airy, oh-I've-got-a-chance-yet way of his. I always wanted to kick him. Robert Rogerson Fairburn—yes, that's me, all right. Well, life begins to look real and earnest now. I wonder if Ethel won't kind of think when she reads this that maybe she wasn't so bright after all running off and marrying Smith just because she had quarreled with me. She's had three years of pretty rough sledding with him. Of course it's all for the best so far as I'm concerned, but—I wonder!

Lillian—What! You don't tell me Bob is really engaged to Edith! Well, what do you think of that! It's most remarkable how men do these weird things when they are reduced to desperation, isn't it? Poor Bob! Of course Edith is a very nice girl—so capable and domestic and all that—but, my dear, did you ever see a girl so dowdy, and with so little style? I am sure Mrs. Noah did her hair up in precisely that same way in the days of the ark. Bob always did love pretty things—that's one reason he hung around me so much. Some men never notice a new gown or a smart hat, but he always does. No, I'm awfully fond of Bob, but mercy! I never could fall in love with him! Never! I suppose he realized it at last! Poor Bob!

Arthur—Hello! Edith's going to marry Bob Fairburn! Well, well! Nice little girl, Edith! Seems to me I had a crush on her myself once. She had the biggest brown eyes—no that wasn't Edith—it was Mabel. I remember now that Edith's eyes were blue. Or were they hazel? Where in creation did I put that tobacco? Hey—Ferguson! Got any tobacco?

McKenzle (who sent flowers to Edith)—One by one the roses fall! So Edith is going to shake us all for Bob Fairburn! It was worth the florists' bills, getting him mad. He seemed to think that every one was in a conspiracy to take his girl away from him. Edith's too quiet for me. But it paid to stand in with the family—her father's tips on the stock market were all right.

Ethel (who married Smith)—Oh, Teddy! Guess who's going to get married now—one of my old beaux! No, not that one—Bobbie Fairburn! Why, of course you remember him! He took me to that party where I first met you and was crazy mad because you had four dances! I used to think I rather liked him, but that was before you came along! I can't imagine why I ever was so foolish. Goodness! What if I had really married him! I had an awful time working up a quarrel with him so as to let him down easily. I hated to be downright brutal and drop him, so I seized on the first chance for a fight. It was awfully funny, now that I think of it! Well, Bobbie was a nice boy in his own way. I wonder who she is—I never heard of her.

Edith's Relatives (individually and collectively)—Well, I suppose this means another wedding present. It was perfectly idiotic of grandfather to start that custom of always giving the brides in the family solid silver. Something less expensive would do exactly as well. I suppose Edith will expect a huge tray just because her cousin got one from us. Maybe we can strike a sale. Anyhow, she is throwing herself away on Bob Fairburn. His family are simply nobodies. Well, she's 26 and I suppose she had to take what she could get.

Bob's Relatives—And when he had such a good chance to marry Senator Goldmine's daughter! And her shaky social position and her father and all! Why, he's simply burying himself. Bob always was stubborn. What can he see in Edith? She simply angled for him, that's all, and a man is so helpless! Poor Bob!

This country could no doubt be run a great deal better if it wasn't for the constitutional objection an American has to letting anyone run him.

PLANNING A GARDEN

"Just what father will say I have no idea," began Doris, swinging a pink-checked sun-bonnet over the porch railing. "But it was his letter that really started me. So he is partly to blame if he doesn't quite approve. And he does want me to stay outdoors."

"Everybody finds me out here, and I don't pretend to apologize for enveloping aprons and garden tools. I've dragged up enough porch furniture so that I can entertain people and now I don't interrupt things to dress. Out here gingham do very nicely."

"It is a charming porch," remarked Louise, with a slight shiver, as she carefully rolled off her delicate gloves and lifted her fawn-gray skirts slightly. "But the yard— isn't it a bit dirty, even for gingham?"

"Now, for goodness' sake, don't be snobbish," pleaded Doris. "It's lovely. And weren't you the very person who advised me to give up the winter term at school and come home, where I could get well making flower gardens? That was the very day father came for me with the news that this house in the suburbs was ours. I came on to find snow everywhere and no possible chance to do anything but plan. Just when things began to get sunny father was called away on this tiresome business trip. Through my conscientious efforts mother's life was made a nightmare until she got father to send a long list of instructions and plans for the garden."

"I started that very day in earnest. Father wrote: 'Have the garden spaded and arranged according to these plans, and when I come Doris can do all the planting under my instructions.' I can see his smile as he wrote that. What will he say to this, I wonder?"

"You see, I had already made plans of my own. He had sent for lots of horticulturists' magazines and in one of them I found a glorious plan for a formal garden—just the size of ours. Of course father wasn't specially interested in the flower side of it at all. He is so crazy over sweet corn and summer squashes that he can't think of other things. When he told me how much of the ground could be mine I kept the plan to myself, for there seemed such oceans of time to discuss it. After he went south I talked it over with mother, and she wrote him about some of my plans. That was why he sent his. So we started in, making every now and then a few changes that didn't really matter."

"Mother protested for a time, but she hasn't said a word for a week—not since I started to dig the pool for my irises and goldfish. Yes, that's it. In the center will be a bank of gravel, but there will be a mud bottom for the long roots. And I had pipes laid, so there will be a continual flow of water across the pool. Of course there is the water tax to think of, as mother says, but maybe we can get a special rate, since we want to use so much water. Most things are cheaper at wholesale, you know."

"Along the sunny fence I've planted hollyhocks and cosmos and coreopsis, because they 'make amicable comrades when shoulder to shoulder,' as my book says. Father's corn was to have been there, but it can go somewhere else just as well, and think of the difference in the looks—and on the most prominent side of the yard, too!"

"The beds all circle about the iris pool and the paths are to be of grass, with a four-foot border with sweet alyssum, pansies and foliage plants, just like the parks. And there are my poppy beds—'nymphs even in the heart of flowerdom,' my book calls them."

"That pillar? Oh, that is my sundial. Isn't it sweet? I had to have one, for this article says: 'About the sundial clusters all the romances of the ages. It is enveloped in an atmosphere of poetry.'"

"Mother and I had our most serious discussion over that bed on the north side of the yard. I have to wait for father before I shall know about my summer house. There I shall serve tea, with rambler roses and clematis and wisteria climbing all about! Father had selected that side for his asparagus beds and they were already started, so I yielded to mother in that. I love asparagus, don't you? And if I must do without the summer house I'll have the vines over the porch, as mother suggested."

"Other vegetables? Well, yes, father wants them, and I am worried to think where he can put them. Why, he even wanted pumpkins and cantaloups. I have left a bed for lettuce and radishes and such pretty things as that. The book advised it. As for the rest, we can buy all the vegetables we want from the truck farmers around. I inquired about that."

"I haven't written father my entire plan. It will be such a nice surprise for him, I think. Besides, it is so complicated that he couldn't have understood it in a letter. I did write about moving the tomato beds away from my hollyhocks and he telegraphed me to let them alone, so that discouraged me."

"I have a suggestion, though. If he can't find room for his corn here, why can't he buy this empty lot next to us? He could have a regular farm there. He is coming home to-night and that is the first thing I want to talk to him about. Don't you think he'd like all that space for vegetables?"



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