



# The Bee's Home Magazine Page



## The Rights of a Mother-in-Law

Ella Wheeler Wilcox Answers Some Questions and Gives Some Pertinent Advice to Women Whose Daughters Are Wedded

By ELLA WHEELER WILCOX

Copyright, 1913, by Star Company. A question, or series of questions, pertaining to the old, old subject which has troubled the mind of man since the beginning of creation, with the exception of Adam and Eve.

1. Has a mother-in-law any rights that a son-in-law in honor should respect? 2. If a mother-in-law and son-in-law have had a bitter quarrel over domestic affairs, has the son-in-law a moral right to command his wife to cease all social or loving intercourse with her mother?



3. If the wife decides, through a mistaken sense of duty to her husband, to forever remain on terms of sundered companionship with her mother, is she departing herself in a proper or filial manner toward her mother?

4. If the wife has a brother who becomes a chum of her husband under the state of affairs above mentioned, is she not showing a proper love or protecting spirit toward his mother, who is old and alone?

These questions are entirely too abstract to permit of a definite answer. It all depends on the nature of the quarrel or misunderstanding. If the mother has been interfering with the domestic affairs of the household, and offering unsolicited opinions; if she has been officiously intrusive in matters which pertained solely to the husband and wife, and which they could settle between themselves; if she has been pouring kerosene upon flames, instead of oil in troubled waters, then, indeed, the husband is right in suggesting that his wife choose between a home with himself or with her mother.

A mother-in-law has been known to incite her daughter to jealousy of a most faithful and kind husband. If he remained in the office a half hour later than usual; if he chanced to walk a block on the street with an acquaintance of the opposite sex, the mother insinuated infidelity and neglect, until the comfort of the household was destroyed by her presence.

When the daughter, who proved to be a woman of common sense, and just as sensible, informed her mother that she would support her away from her own home, but not in it, the mother lifted her voice in a loud wail of being "forsaken" by her own offspring, and the majority of the public sympathized with her.

Yet the daughter was right. So is the husband right, who takes a similar stand when he finds that harmony and peace and love exist in his home when his mother or his wife's mother is out of it, and that they are driven from the windows in... when she enters at the door.

When a woman marries a man, when a man marries a woman, their personal, financial, domestic and sentimental affairs should be decided between them with no intervention of a third party until they ask assistance.

Many a mother fails to realize that it is her place to stand second in authority, as an adviser to a son, or daughter, after either has taken the vows of matrimony.

If the daughter has selected a husband who has ideas, habits or customs of which the mother does not approve, it is her place to keep silent, since the daughter has made her choice, and not undertake the work of reconstructing their lives according to her ideals. A word of loving counsel, or admonition is all very well, but a continual interference and espionage is quite another thing.

When the brother of the wife takes the part of the son-in-law against his mother, the evidence is somewhat strong in favor of the husband; it suggests the interfering and selfish mother-in-law, who

cannot permit her married children to direct their own lives. A mother who is "old and alone" is not necessarily lovable or in the right. A son or a daughter should look after the physical well being of such a mother and should be respectful in speech and deportment toward her, but to encroach upon her whims and to adopt all her prejudices and to uphold her in all her ideas is morally wrong. The duty to humanity and to one's sense of justice is a greater and higher duty than that to a parent, a child or a friend. It is a pathetic position for a son or a daughter to stand between a parent and a wife or husband.

All children are reared to think mother-love the most unselfish and wonderful devotion on earth, even in the face of facts which so often prove it otherwise; and when they see a mother unhappy they are inclined to make every possible excuse for her, because they feel that to take issue against her will put them in a bad light before the whole established order of society, and that they will bear their heads against traditions wherever they turn.

It is a most pathetic situation for a man—this position between a wife and a jealous mother. My heart always aches for the man in the case even more than for the woman who is misled.

Sometimes the wife is in the wrong. Sometimes a man marries a woman who is so narrow and so selfish and so jealous that she begrudges the husband's mother her son's affection.

Sometimes a loved and cherished daughter marries a man so selfish, so tyrannical, that he wants utterly to obliterate childhood and girlhood from her memory and leave only himself the tyrant for the wife to think about.

But I must confess that I have seen but one such wife or husband where I have seen ten selfish and disagreeable mothers-in-law.

And with what pleasure and admiration I recall the few beautiful and noble mothers-in-law I have known. I can count them on the fingers of one hand without including the thumb.

There are just four whom I can recall. They really loved their sons, and loved whatever and whoever gave these sons happiness.

There is a dear old lady living with her son-in-law today who always chides the daughter if she disagrees with her husband on any trivial point. "You have such a good husband," she will say, "how can you disagree with him?" Another mother-in-law said to me one day, "If ever there was an angel upon earth it is my son's wife." The wife was, in truth, a very ordinary, amiable young woman, but her mother-in-law had idealized her into something angelic.

Would that there were more like her in the land.

Madame Mother-in-Law, so far as your rights are concerned, you have no more right to interfere with the domestic relations of your son or daughter than has any stranger in your town.

You are entitled to love. If you are loving, to respect. If you make yourself worthy of it, and to respectful treatment at all events on humanitarian grounds. You are entitled to good care and protection from your children, but this does not mean that they shall always make you a member of their households, if they find it more expedient to care for you elsewhere. It does not mean that you have the privilege of criticizing the domestic arrangements of their lives and homes.

If your son or daughter asks your advice, sympathy and counsel give it as wisely as you can, but keep away from such a position if possible. Pour oil on troubled waters and soothe and allay wounded feelings when possible. Act as mediator and adjuster of difficulties, rather than the widening wedge.

And if this attitude does not make you a welcome member of your child's home, find another home as soon as you can, and do not pose as a martyr. Your own child will always love you, if you are loving. We are not concerned with relationship, but for the qualities within us. If you are not obliged to be a member of the household of your married child do not be. If you are, try to be an agreeable one.

## The Fight for a Continent

By REV. THOMAS B. GREGORY.

The "Seven Years' War" between England and France for the possession of the North American continent had its official beginning 187 years ago, May 17, 1756.

In point of fact the war that was declared on May 17, 1756, had already existed, for two years. Washington and his Virginia had begun it at Great Meadows, and Bradford had been annihilated in the Pensaylvania woods, and at various other points the Saxon had been made to bite the dust at the hands of the Gaul and his redskin allies.



It looked blue for the Briton. The government was downcast. Even Washington, who at that time was as faithful to the mother country as later on he was true to the colonies, was deeply discouraged. But there was a man over in England who was destined to save the day—William Pitt, earl of Chatham, "the greatest war minister and organizer of victory that the world had ever seen." Having buried his declaration of war at France, Pitt prepared himself for a struggle to the death for British supremacy in North

America. With genius almost preternatural, and energy that smacked of the demonic, Pitt threw himself into the mighty work that lay before him. Well aware of the solemnity of the struggle, and of the far-reaching issues that were at stake, the great commoner toiled at his task with a zeal that was sublime.

And great was his reward. So soon as he took the helm the tide began to turn in Britain's favor. Victory followed victory; Louisburg fell, stronghold after stronghold was taken; the crowning triumph at Quebec came, and thus, as John Fluke puts it, "came to a close one of the greatest scenes in the history of mankind, the final act in the drama which gave the North American continent into the keeping of the English race instead of the French." Fluke's words are strong; but strong as they are they are fully justified. Had the French won in that war it is safe to say that there would be today no United States of America, no world-gladdening British empire, no world-wide influence at work for the moral, intellectual and economic uplift of the race.

In an Expert Witness. "You say this man is no chicken stealer," inquired the judge. "Yassun," replied Mr. Erasmus Pinkney. "Da's what I said." "What do you know about the facts in this case?" "I don't sposed to know suttin' 'bout de facts, but de defense."—Washington Star.

## The Problem of the Red Man

By GARRETT P. SERVISS.

We do not see ourselves as others see us, and that is true of nations as of individuals.

To our eyes the red man has practically sunk out of sight. To European eyes he is still the most picturesque figure in the western world. If you doubt that statement, then the next time you are in Europe fall into conversation with any intelligent Frenchman, German or other native of the old world, about life in America, and you will be likely to discover that he is much more deeply interested in Indians than in fifty-story buildings. Even the wonders of the Panama canal appeal to him with far less force than do the history and the fate of those unique tribes which owned this continent in fee simple for centuries before our ancestors landed upon its shores.

If you have imbued yourself with the notion that "the only good Indian is a dead Indian," you may be a little vexed to find that our contemporaries abroad, with their bird-eye view of things on this side of the water, persist in regarding the American red man as a personage quite as interesting to the philosophical



observer as the American white man, and infinitely more romantic. Then you might with advantage turn to an article in this month's number of Hearst's Magazine, where Mr. Francis E. Leupp, recently Indian commissioner, explains his ideas about the way we have heretofore treated the red man and the way we ought to treat him.

A great-brained European once said to me: "I am a friend of your country and an enthusiastic admirer of its ideals, but I most respectfully protest against the manner in which you have dealt with one of the most interesting races that ever existed on this earth. I pardon me for saying that I think you have done very wrong. You might have kept him and made a good citizen of him. Instead of driving him into extinction, or what is even worse, into racial abasement."

Mr. Leupp appears to take a similar view. He has ideas about the capacity of the Indian for civilization, and about the best way to develop that capacity, which ought to command the attention of a liberty-loving and fair-dealing people.

The sole idea of our government seems to have been to make a farmer of every Indian. "Give him a farm and make him work it," has been the slogan. And when the poor Indian, ignorant of the white man's science and the white man's methods, fails to become a successful farmer in a single generation or less, he is condemned as good for nothing and treated with contempt and with renewed injustice. Disregarding the fact that he has neither the capital to develop his farm nor the experience to enable him to compete in agriculture with men of European origin whose ancestors were trained in that kind of industry long before America was discovered, the red man is re-

quired to devote himself exclusively to work for which, in many cases, he is racially and constitutionally unfitted, or else to become a drunkard and a pauper. Some Indians make good farmers. Some of them have the gift and the ancestral tendency. Every reader of our history knows what the Ironquas Indians did in the fertile valleys of central and western New York. When General Sullivan marched to the lake region of New York he destroyed farms and stores of grain, of which any industrious European agricultural community might have been proud. That was a war measure, and, as such, perhaps, excusable at the time. But suppose that an enlightened government had taken pains to develop the skill of the Indians in cultivation after peace had been established.

It may be replied that the Indians ran away and refused to be civilized. True, in part; but at last they could no longer run beyond the white man's reach. As Red Jacket once eloquently expressed it, "We are become a small island in the bosom of the great waters. We are encircled, we are encompassed. The waters rise, they press upon us; and the waves are set tacking over us, we disappear forever."

Taking advantage of the terrible effect that "fire-water"—whisky—had upon the unimproved red man, his white enemies pressed it upon him, as they press it upon him still, until he became a brute in spite of himself.

The Indian has many useful capacities which he would develop if he had a proper opportunity, but the opportunity is refused to him. Read what Mr. Leupp has to say about the multitude of red men who take naturally to mechanic arts and to various trades, and the hopelessness of their struggle against the immense agricultural units that his white competitors, with comparatively unlimited capital, are developing around him, and you may be led to exert your influence to have the doors of opportunity opened wider to this long cheated race.

We may constantly keep up Japanese, but the Indian was here before we were, and the principles of eternal justice demand that he shall not have the door shut in his face.

lately worthless in the beginning, and instead of straightening up and walking on, glad to be relieved of the burden, went down on one's knees in the dust and dirt to seek for that which was lost.

There is a wall and a cry and time is spent in weeping that should be devoted to rejoicing. A love that can be lost is a mistaken love; it is the best thing that can happen to a girl to lose it before it is fettered on her.

If it had been lost while it wouldn't have been lost so easily. It would have taken much more than the pretty face of another girl to have won it away. The fact that it could be lost puts a price mark on it, and that price mark is very, very low.

Yet, day after day, girls, on their knees in the dust of humiliation and despair, cry to me after vainly searching for the worthless bauble they have lost. "How can I win it back? Help me, for my heart is broken?"

And how I would like to help you, you poor little girl with your aching heart! But my method would not be the kind you seek. I would raise you to your feet and have you laugh at your loss, and walk on, glad to be relieved of the care of anything so worthless, and glad that you lost it before its possession had become more serious.

But I contend that there is a waste more prodigal than that of all these. And that is the time wasted in trying to win back a lover whose affections are waning. It is as if one lost something abso-



PHOTO BY J. J. CHAPMAN

## How to Manage a Husband

By DOROTHY DIX.

They had admired all of the little bride's wedding finery, and had finally drifted over to where the tea table was set by an open window.

"Well, my dear," said the woman in the soft white gown, "I hope you are going to be as happy as a pig in a sty. These days are long, and I am sure you will, for Jack is a fine fellow, and he is well to do, and an orphan, so you are going to escape hard times and mothers-in-law, two of the principal snags that are most apt to make a big dent in the barque of matrimony, even when they don't wreck it."

"Still, you must not expect to find everything plain sailing. There are a good many storms on even the calmest sea of wedlock, and you are going to find out that lots of things that you expected to happen won't happen, and a lot of things that you were positive couldn't occur, do occur with amazing frequency."

"Also, you are going to discover, and it will give you the jar of your life, that the noble ideal of perfect manhood that you are tying up with has got faults, and peculiarities, and whims, and eccentricities that you have never suspected concealed about his person."

"Now, you take it from me, that the great thing in married life is for the wife to begin right, to get off on the right foot, so to speak, for every man can be managed, and brought to eat out of his wife's hand, if only she goes about it in the proper manner."

"What is the best way of managing a husband?" anxiously inquired the little bride.

"Well," replied the woman in the soft white gown, "I can't do better than relate to you the experiences of two friends of mine, both of whom married good men, but men who were high tempered, and tyrannical, and cross-the-sort of men, you know, who possess all of the virtues and none of the lovable qualities of life. They are the kind of husbands who are too much gentleman ever to strike a woman with their hand, but who leave her bruised and bleeding, and wounded to death in spirit after they have stabbed her with their tongues."

"There are lots of men like that, my dear, and when I get elected to the legislature the very first thing I am going to do is to bring in a bill to make a man's disposition, instead of his morals, a cause for divorce."

"But back to my story. One of these

women whom I am telling you is Bertha, and she is one of those gentle, suave women who are born salve spreaders. Anything like a jolt in the domestic machinery hurts her to the very core of her being. She isn't weak. Oh, dear no. She would hang on to a principle, or a conviction, to eternity, and be loyal to one she loved to the death itself, and if you pushed her to the wall she'd fight until there wasn't an enemy left alive; but she would never argue a question with you, or say a thing that would hurt your feelings, or do anything to make the slightest unpleasantness.

"Well, when the rosy mists of the honeymoon rolled up, she and she discovered that she was married to a man who was twin brother to the fretful porcupine, and whose prejudices simply stretched the ground around her, she undertook to manage him by tact."

"She only conversed upon the subjects that she knew he agreed with her upon. She devoted her days to rubbing his fur down the right way. She kept everything that was unpleasant, and that could possibly ruffle him, hidden out of sight, and spent her life top-toeing on eggs for fear of rousing him and exploding his infernal machine of a temper. In short, in order to keep the peace, and make her home happy, she went through a very martyrdom of sacrifice of all of her desires and inclinations."

"H'm," said the little bride, "and how did the other woman manage her husband?"

"The other woman," replied the woman of the soft, white dress, "was of a different type. She had a redheaded temper of her own that was a dead ringer for her husband's, besides which she loved a scold for the pure fun of the thing. She didn't dodge the issue when her husband flung a debatable subject into the family arena. She simply rolled up her sleeves and sailed in, and when the domestic mixup was over she wasn't always the one who was on the mat."

"She was a good woman and a good wife and mother, who did her full duty by her family, and she stood pat on her record. She didn't waste any time trying to jolly or cajole her husband as poor Bertha did. If he didn't like the way she did things, and her opinions, why, he could lump it; that was all. She was an independent, free spoken woman, and she didn't see why she should wear herself out flattering any old husband into doing the things he ought to do, anyway."

"And she didn't mind expressing these sentiments, but the result was that their house was a dark and bloody battle ground, with no day without its spat. But that was her way of managing a husband."

"Which one of the systems work?" asked the little bride with a troubled air.

"Neither," replied the woman in the soft, white gown.

## Omaha Public Library and Museum

If you have ever tried to identify any of the warblers, you have experienced one of the most maddening things in bird study. Probably you tried at first in the spring, when the woods are fairly ringing with songs of other birds, and the faint lap of the warblers is drowned. If you catch a glimpse of the bird itself, it is, of course, so tiny, and disappears so swiftly beyond a tree top that you have only time to catch your breath, say "Warbler," and the bird is gone.

That is true of most of the family; there are others which are the direct opposite—the yellow warbler, for instance, which is like a half-tame canary in many localities. But for the majority of the warblers you can only be prepared by studying up beforehand, so that when you catch that fleeting glimpse you can say, "Black-throated green," or "Parula," as you would recognize a palm tree or an orange orchard when you see it for the first time.

Now that books are so well illustrated

## Advice to the Lovelorn

By BEATRICE FAIRFAX.

Don't Marry Him. Dear Miss Fairfax: I am a young girl of 20 years and I know a young man whom I hate. He is 24 years old, and my mother wants me to marry him. I could bear to be in the same house with him, which would be the wisest thing to do, but I don't want to marry him. I meet some one with whom I can have a happy home.

In the first place, you are too young to marry, no matter what the state of your affections.

In the second place, and which is more important, you must not marry a man you do not love, though every relative you have may urge it.

Your happiness through life will be sacrificed if you do.

Get Their Consent. Dear Miss Fairfax: I am a Jewess, 29 years of age, and am deeply in love with a Gentile five years my senior. I have promised to marry this young man, but, owing to his faith, my people have objected.

They like him very much, for he is in a man of very good habits and comes from a very good family. But the only thing they have against him is his religion.

We have loved each other for three long years, and I know I would break my heart if I had to give him up, but I would like to have my people consent before I marry—a Jewess.

All the hope I can offer, my dear, is that your parents will be won over by your fidelity to each other. True love is above all difference in creed, and you have proven that your love is true.

Good Conduct Counts. Dear Miss Fairfax: I am in love with a girl one year my junior, and she in return loves me dearly. I gave her an invitation to go to the theater, but her parents object to her going with me. I see the lady once a week, and her parents object to my visit. What can I do to win their consent, as I love the girl very dearly?

Perhaps your conduct does not please them. Look to that. Or it may be that the girl is too young to receive the attentions of a gentleman. You do not give her age; neither do you intimate why her parents disapprove, though you must surely know. Under the circumstances, all I can suggest is that you wait, behave yourself and respect their wishes.

## A Waste of Time

By BEATRICE FAIRFAX.

There are no two in the world, perhaps, who can agree on what it is that causes the greatest waste of time. And by that I mean something a little more than time as measured by the clock and calendar. I mean the value of it, as compared with the results achieved. One wastes time in reading worthless literature, but often such mental nausea results that one is cured of the desire.

The skeptical says that much time is wasted in making love, but those of broader minds and younger hearts have learned that every such experience leaves one a little more sympathetic and charitable.

The man who hoards his money regards every minute wasted that doesn't bring him more, and the tramp who spends his days blinking lazy eyes at the sun is sure that everyone who works is a time waster.

But I contend that there is a waste more prodigal than that of all these. And that is the time wasted in trying to win back a lover whose affections are waning. It is as if one lost something abso-

lutely worthless in the beginning, and instead of straightening up and walking on, glad to be relieved of the burden, went down on one's knees in the dust and dirt to seek for that which was lost.

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