

Health Hints :- Fashions :- Woman's Work :- Household Topics

Reward of Dignity

By BEATRICE FAIRFAX.

Too many of us have a way of asking other people what to do—and then ending up by doing what we choose. If all of us profited by the advice we invite and need most of our tragedies could be avoided.

A year ago a girl wrote me a letter asking my advice in a love affair with a married man. I gave it heartily and sincerely—and conventionally, if you like. For all such girls there is just one answer, "DON'T."

Recently I had a very pathetic letter from the girl, telling me how she grieved because she had not listened to me and adding a pathetic story of the tragedy she was facing because of her own weakness.

The individual who is outside of your problem, looking at it and judging it sanely, rather than emotionally, as you must, is often qualified to advise you just because of her impersonal detachment from the question which troubles you.

To all my girls I want to sound an urgent note: If you have faith enough to go to someone for advice it must be because you trust their judgment and feel the need of wisdom greater than your own. If you are not told to do the particular thing you want to be told to do, pay heed in spite of that. Sugar plums don't cure bronchitis—a doctor's prescription may!

And now I am quoting another letter—one which comes from a girl who asked advice in all sincerity, took it, found it practical and was gracious enough to acknowledge that she had learned something from someone else.

The girl who is wise enough to profit by the viewpoint of someone more experienced than herself is likely to manage her life very efficiently. I thank my "Three Sincere Friends" for the letter I am quoting and I commend their sane intelligence to other girls. The letter follows:

"Some time ago I wrote you a letter and signed it 'Doubtful Frio.' You will probably remember having answered it with an article on girls and the drink question.

"Allow me to extend to you the most heartfelt thanks of A, B and myself for the kindly interest you have shown us in our quandary and we do assure you of our deep appreciation of your most welcome advice. We have all three benefited by it, and I am sure there are thousands of other girls whom that article has helped to overcome the problem that inevitably springs up in the life of every girl.

"As for our subject for discussion, namely B, she has followed your directions implicitly and has come through with colors flying. No one at the party mentioned seemed annoyed when she refused and said she did not like the taste of liquor and got a single one followed her refusal with urgings to drink. She has vowed never to touch another drop, and I am positive she is going to hold to that avowal, as are both A and myself.—Your Three Sincere Friends."

Simplicity Marks These Ultra Smart Summer Models



As the sun has grown hotter, hats have grown wider, until many of the smartest have a breadth of brim like that of the one above. The puffy crown is black net, and nodding back ostrich-tips are tacked close against it. The transparent brim is horsehair braid.

REPRESENTATIVE of the most advanced styles of the summer, yet simple enough to wear at any informal party is the dress above. It is French blue net over French blue silk, with plaited blue ribbons edged with silver thread for trimming. Such a frock would be just as smart of organdy and lace, or of Georgette crepe and ribbon.

THE cleverness of Premet, its French designer, has given the white taffeta frock shown here just the degree of originality which conforms to good taste. The sleeves are embroidered in violet and maize silk, the soft draped collar is a trimming in itself, and the crisp tunic of white tulle splashes out to give the fashionable fullness at the hips.

Mother-in-Law Problem the Bane of Modern Home

BY DOROTHY DIX.

I get a great many sad letters in which women pour out to me sorrowful secrets of their hearts and ask advice on problems that only omniscient wisdom itself could solve, and that are so far beyond my own poor powers that I do not even dare to try to answer them.

Of all the pathetic letters that come to me, however, none are so pitiful as those that deal with the question of the mother-in-law, because they always reveal a useless tragedy and one that is due only to jealousy and selfishness and lack of self-control.

Sometimes these letters are from the daughter-in-law, sometimes from the mother-in-law. Often a young wife writes that she is married to a good man who loves her and whom she loves; that she has a beautiful home and her life would be perfectly happy except for the nagging of her mother-in-law.

The older woman lives in the house with the younger one and criticizes everything that the young wife does. She calls the husband's attention to his wife's faults. She tells him that his wife is extravagant, or a bad manager, or too fond of amusement, and in a thousand little ways she comes between husband and wife and makes the wife's life a martyrdom.

Often the letter is the heart-broken wail of an old woman who tells of the cruelty of a daughter-in-law who is so mean and selfish that she begrudged her husband's mother a place under her roof and a seat at her table. The old mother is made to feel herself a burden. She is scribbled, thrust aside, treated without honor or respect, and the wife uses her influence to wear her husband from his own mother.

The most curious thing about the in-law problem is that these women, who act like fiends toward each other and who inflict on each other a torture as ruthless as the Inquisition, and sacrifice the man they both love to their malevolent tempers, are not the abandoned wretches one might suppose. On the contrary, they are good, Christian, church-going women who think a lot about doing their duty and are full of charity and loving kindness to everybody except their in-laws.

I know a family such as this, in which mother-in-law and daughter-in-law are women of exceptional nobility of character; but they fell out over a mere trifle and hate each other with a ferocity that is simply appalling. Not long ago, when I had listened for the millionth time to the mother-in-law's abuse of her daughter-in-law, I said to her:

"Well, what are you trying to do? Are you trying to separate your son from his wife by making these ceaseless complaints to him? Do you think that he will be happier parted from his wife than with her? Do you think that he will be better off if you break up his home? Will these little children have a finer chance in the world if they are half orphaned, if their father and mother are divorced?"

She looked at me in horror. "You know," she cried, "that I think divorce is a sin and a disgrace, and that I wouldn't break up my son's home for the world, or separate him from his wife. I would die first."

"Then why are you trying to kill your son's love for his wife by pointing out her faults to him, and making trouble between them by bearing tales to him?" I demanded. And she could not answer.

Undeniably it is hard for two women to live together in peace. But there are some things that the women so placed might think upon with profit.

One is that the woman whose son supports and cherishes her in her old age owes him enough gratitude to get along at least in outward peace with his wife. She may not like her daughter-in-law, but she can maintain an attitude of amiability toward her and not make her son miserable by stirring up strife in his home.

And the woman whose mother-in-law is a guest under her roof may rest assured that she has no higher duty on earth than to care for the woman who has given her a good husband. She should remember that the other woman has suffered and sacrificed to raise to man's estate a man who is fit to marry. It is a debt of honor that every daughter-in-law should pay in tenderness and sympathy.

For the crux of the whole matter is this—a man's happiness is bound up in the way his wife and mother get along together, if they live in the same house. They may be antagonistic as oil and water, they may entertain a Kilkenny-cat feeling toward each other, but if they really love the son and husband they should be willing to sink their differences and sacrifice the pleasure of fighting for his sake.

But heaven help the mother-in-law and daughter-in-law who are condemned by fate to live under the same roof! And heaven pity the man who has to live with both of them!

Advice to Lovelorn

By Beatrice Fairfax

He Must Save Your Love. Dear Miss Fairfax: Recently my fiancé has neglected me, so I demanded an explanation and learned that his faith in me had been shaken because of some false remarks about me. How would you suggest that I act? John Hussey says: "Each has the truth in his heart need never fear the want of persuasion on his tongue." This way seems so endlessly long and painful.

If the young man loves you and is worthy of the devotion of a girl of the sort your letter suggests you to be, I cannot quite understand his believing unkind stories told him of you. That is a sad weakness of human nature. It so easily distrusts and questions even when it loves. If you cannot restore his faith in you, and if he is not ready to believe in the ultimate goodness of the girl he loves, I think you would be almost happier without him as a factor in your life. Anything in the world of nature of suspicion or distrust is sure to soil and belittle love. Tell him the simple truth about yourself and bid him to believe you and to save the fineness of texture of your feeling for each other. Has he never heard the one great saying that covers all cases of suspicion—never those against the guilty. "Him that is guiltless among you, let him cast the first stone?"

Girl Workers Who Win Out

The Singer and Her Reward.

BY JANE M'LEAN.

"Miss Ames, won't you come up to the hospital this afternoon with me?" And the speaker pushed her head through the half-opened door and smiled brightly.

Helen Ames looked up drearily, a refusal on her lips, but she hesitated for a moment before deciding. After all, it might be her good to get out in the sun and forget about her troubles.

Helen had come to New York from a small town in the west. Like hundreds of other girls she had a sweet voice and thought she would set the world on fire with it if she might have the study and the means to cultivate it. Her father had finally been persuaded to allow her to come to the city for a voice examination.

"If I can sing before Madame Bronte," she had said eagerly, "I will abide by whatever she tells me."

And that morning she had obtained a hearing from the great prima donna and all her hopes and aspirations had been dashed to the ground. "You have a very sweet voice, my dear," the woman had said kindly after Helen had sung a simple melody in her clear, sweet soprano, "but your voice is not destined to be a great one. You can sing, yes, you have the quality, the timbre, but no great power. You might study for years, and your singing would improve, your technique might become perfect, but your power would never be great. Your range would be mediocre and your sympathetic tones, which are your greatest possessions, would not be greatly improved."

Helen's lips had trembled childishly. She had looked forward with all her heart to this interview. She had determined to work and study and

show her father and all of the Gainsville people what a great singer she would become. And now it was all over; she had a sweet voice, but she would never be a great singer.

"Go on studying at home, child, perfect your technique, do church work. A voice like yours has its place in the world. Do not imagine that, because you may never be an opera singer, your place is not just as secure, for it is. Work out your own destiny in your own way and life will bring you much happiness."

Helen thought it all over as she walked up to the big gray hospital on the hill. The kindly woman who had the room next her own in the boarding house had somehow suspected the girl's unhappiness and had said very little on the way up. Once inside the great cool place, the quiet and peace of it fell like a cooling spirit on the girl's hurt feelings. She heard the woman say:

"I have some flowers for the little

Gordon girl," and then Helen followed her upstairs and into the children's ward where little hurt bodies were lying in rows following the strangers with their eyes as Helen and her friend walked between the cots. The little Gordon girl had something the matter with her spine and she smiled as Helen's companion laid the flowers down beside her.

"Wouldn't you like to sing them something?" said the woman gently. "I have heard you in your room and your voice is so soft and sweet."

Helen flushed, but she began a little slumber song, and followed it with a children's nonsense rhyme. Laughter echoed over the long room, and the little Gordon girl's thin fingers tightened on Helen's own.

"You have such a sweet bird in your throat," she whispered, "sing some more." And Helen silently stroked the little hand and began the song she had sung for Madame Bronte.

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By CONSTANCE CLARKE.

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