

## AT HOME WITH THE LADY EDITOR.

DEAR LADY EDITOR.—Will you kindly give me space for a few words about girls to young men? So many people now-a-days give their opinion about girls, why should not I? especially as I flatter myself that I know them well enough to be able to give some sound advice to young men concerning them. But stay, what is the definition of a girl? Well, in New Zealand she is called a girl up to thirty years of age, so let this definition be assumed by me also before proceeding. A girl, in my humble opinion, is not fit to marry before twenty-five years of age, at which period she has got over the excitement of her "coming out" frivolities, and if ever to be sensible will be sensible then. If she is accomplished, or rather means to be, she will need all that time to develop her faculties, and she will have had time to look into the household management, and ought then to be sensible enough to acknowledge the advisability of looking thoroughly into these matters. Beware of the girl who shuns house-work and seems to make everything around her comfortable and beautiful! If it is her misfortune (?)—I consider the best wives are those chosen from a "not very well-off family"; I think you will understand what I mean—be poor, let her not think it undignified to work for those she loves. There is nothing mental in labouring to make happy our dear ones, and if it is God's wish, and it undoubtedly is if she is poor, let her be glad to bear her burden cheerfully and brightly, and then if for goodness sake do not "put on side," as the schoolboys say, for there is no more painful sight than the poverty-stricken trying to appear grand in the sight of their neighbours. Remember, girls, for although this is written especially for the sterner sex, I dare say some fair head will bend over and read it with a smile, that whatever you do, let it be done thoroughly. When gentlemen are poor, they are almost always proud. They cannot help it, I know, for I have felt it myself, but for a sensitive heart to have to contend with this is extremely trying, and her rich friends unthinkingly deal her many a blow. A girl, whether she be rich or poor, bravely doing her duty, will command respect from any man whose opinion she values.

Beware of girls who speak slightly of their fathers and mothers, or of any member of their family, or if they laugh behind their backs. A dangerous girl is she who wickedly makes fun of her relatives. A worthy girl will take the best even of their faults to outsiders. Beware of the girl who wears a shirt and tie, and perhaps carries a silver-topped cane, and also of she who dresses extravagantly, and in the extreme of fashion. Anything exaggerated is vulgar, and "manishness" in a woman of all things is to be abhorred. Rather, oh, far rather, choose for your companion through weal or woe "one who is modest, quiet in voice and manner, and who is beloved in the family circle, and one who makes you feel welcome when visiting at her home. Rather choose she who pays particular attention to a stranger, or to some one who is rather shy in society, for a beautiful nature will always assert itself in this way, and will do her best to make everyone feel "at home." An unselfish girl is so rare a thing nowadays, I grieve to say, but when one does alight upon one, is she not a treasure, and how well she compares with her selfish sisters! Then again, she must be thoughtful; she must not forget her promises, however small they be, for it is not in small things rather than in great ones that one's character is revealed. I remember once thinking how well a young lady's modest character was shown when she was sending a present which had cost her a good deal of time and trouble, and to which she did not even attach her name. She was willing to make the recipient happy in the possession of the gift, and to forget which she knew would be appreciated, and yet never for a moment wished for the credit of having given such pleasure.

There are a great many indefinable evidences of a refined and beautiful mind, but here are a few—a young lady paying great attention to having always neat collar and cuffs, gloves, shoes, and a dainty handkerchief. You may laugh, young men, but there is a great deal of character displayed in a lady's handkerchief, for no matter how badly off she is, she will generally manage to have a good handkerchief, and also one that has been freshly laundered, if the latter has to be performed by her own fair fingers. Then, if you ever have occasion to receive a note from her, you will find that she uses dainty note paper. There is a great deal to be learnt of anyone in a letter; it is part of themselves, as indeed are all the actions, which, if springing from a pure mind, are sure to be beautiful.

Lastly, beware of the dancing girl. By this I mean she who devotes her whole life and thought to dancing, and will in a moment forget the name of an insignificant partner and substitute that of a more favoured and perhaps richer one. How often this is done, and what an unlovely nature it betrays. The dancing girl is very amusing, and will find plenty of partners at a ball, but if you take the trouble to look into the matter, you will find that she is an empty-headed little flirt, not to be compared to her less fortunate (?) sister, who perhaps will be found sitting out unnoticed. Beneath a quiet, unselfish disposition you will be almost certain of finding a strong sympathetic nature, such as will be a comfort and help to any man. Man needs sympathy and comfort, but he is very loth to believe it, and that it can only be satisfactorily given by women. Just think of the time when you were ill, and when Mary was the only one who would do when you called for help. Who was it but Mary who smoothed your pillow, and kept you comfortable, and bent over you, and seemed to soothe all the pain out of your fevered brow with her cool hand? And think of the days when you return from your office, tired and worn out, on a dreary winter day. Why, your whole dreary aspect of life changes the moment you get home and find a cheerful fire and a hot meal, and, above all, Mary waiting for you with her bright, fresh face ready for a chat, or if you do not feel so disposed, quite ready to leave you alone to rest. A woman's ever-ready tact can tell whether you are in a mood for talk or rest. Her tact is a gift just as also is that instinctive power which enables her to tell whether or not she likes a man at first sight. In nine cases out of ten you will find her right in the end. She shrinks from anything rough and cruel, and looks for gentleness and courtesy in a man just as much as she admires his manliness. The one without the other will not satisfy her. Young men, do not scoff at love, for to her "Love is the incense which doth sweeten earth," and it is upon those who laugh at it that it generally falls deepest. If it has not already come to you it will surely do so in time, and you will then be glad to agree with Unseley. It is only

natural, although so many look upon it as a weakness. The so-called love, which might better be termed ambition, that one sees in the fashionable world at a ball, for instance, where it so closely resembles jealousy, envy, hatred, malice, and all uncharitableness, I admit, is repulsive, but surely it is the very reverse in the truest sense, for does it not bring out all that is beautiful in life, and add a rosy tint to all that is unlovely in creation.

Try and get the idea that all girls are scheming to marry you out of your head. It is equally unwholesome and untrue. There may be some with that thought, but you may rest assured that it is only those who are utterly devoid of pride, therefore it is only those to whom a true gentleman would not give a second thought. I hope, in being frank, that I have not been unkind in giving both sides of the question of "Love, that mystery."—E.L.F.

DEAR LADY EDITOR.—Having been struck by some remarks in this column on the subject of loyalty and reverence as practised in the colonies, permit me, as a "new chum," to say a few words thereon. The remark you particularly allude to is one from which I gather that you were inexpressibly shocked because the theatrical audience failed to remain in their seats until Royalty, as represented by the Earl and Countess of Onslow, had taken its departure. If you are not aware what period of time has elapsed since you left the old country, but most assuredly at the present day no London audience would dream of remaining in their seats until Royalty (by whomsoever represented) had passed out. I have been present at several theatrical and operatic performances which were attended by members of the Royal Family, and in no instance have I ever seen the audience wait to see them out. Of course, I am not now speaking of occasions like that of the German Emperor's visit to Covent Garden, though even then I fancy the people are too much engrossed by the thoughts of their several "busses and trains to study ceremony. Only last spring I saw the Princess of Wales, her daughter, and Prince George at the conclusion of an afternoon concert at St. James' Hall walking out among the crowd just the same as anyone else, the only difference being that upon their arrival at the door the officials at once stopped the other carriages until the Royal lady with her bairns had been safely packed off. If the door-keepers at Wellington did not act in a like manner for the Governor, you will excuse me for saying that the fault and ignorance was theirs only, and not that of the audience.

One other thing I should like to ask in my simplicity. I am not a worshipper or even an admirer of Royalty in the abstract, though perhaps it is rank heresy in your eyes to say so, but like everyone who knows what sorrow is, I sympathised deeply with the Princess of Wales in her late trouble as I should with any mother in a like case. Therefore, it is in no carping spirit, but merely as a matter of inquiry that I ask where and by whom was the practice of standing during the recital of the "Dead March" initiated? To me it seems all wrong. According to the ritual of the Church of England we kneel to pray, sit while the Word of God is being read, and stand up to praise and glorify Him, as in the Psalms, hymns, and while the Gospel is being read. There could have been no question of the latter during the playing of the "Dead March" under the circumstances, hence my inquiry. I have no doubt I am wrong, and am entirely open to conviction on the subject.

I should like also to tell you how deeply disappointed I was upon coming to what I expected to find a democratic country, to find you so set in particular striving and struggling very hard to get to one of the effete old inanities and non-sensical ceremonies of the old country. Everyone can understand how Lady Clara Vere de Vere, the daughter of a hundred earls, loaded to and worshipped from her cradle, has come to look upon herself and her class as beings of an entirely different order and calibre to the masses round about her. This was the natural result of her bringing up; but no one with the average amount of common sense can understand how anyone out here in this newly-made country, where there is no aristocracy except the very doubtful one of "oof," can set themselves up as a class and talk about the masses and "Society" as though born and bred in the purple, while in many cases their parents, if not themselves, came out in an emigrant ship. I am sorry, as I have a great admiration for the sex which is akin to the angels, to see that they are the worst sinners in this respect, the men, as a rule, striking me as being much more free and easy and sensible in their notions.

Now, my dear lady editor, if I have not already bored you to death, I should like to relate just one little incident which will perhaps illustrate better than I have been able to the loyalty of the average Briton, and where it ends. It occurred at the Victoria Hall, and where it ended, I know as the "Vic," the home of drama of the most sanguinary type, now transformed by the generosity of the late Samuel Morley into the South London Polytechnic. Thursday night in every week are devoted to ballad concerts, presumably for the poor, who can usually hear a very good selection of music at prices ranging from threepence "up in the gods" to a stage box for five or ten shillings according to size. The artists, I must explain, give their services free, some of the best musicians in London occasionally contributing; also for the sake of drawing a good house and so adding to the fund, Royalty is sometimes induced to put in an appearance. Upon the evening of which I write the Prince and Princess of Wales had been humbly petitioned, and their Royal Highnesses had graciously consented to grace the concert with their presence. Heirs-apparent being rather an unknown quantity in Lambeth, the house was crammed to suffocation, an unusually good programme having also been put forward. At the hour appointed to commence, the expected visitors not having arrived, the opening was delayed until the audience got impatient, and an individual stood up in the pit saying, "Get on with the blooming concert, can't you? We don't want to stop here all night waiting for 'Tiddy Wales.'" A few more remonstrances of the same sort were passed, and at last the concert commenced. It had not proceeded far, however, when with a terrific fust and bustle, their Highnesses entered, while a gentleman (Mr Redfern Hollis, the well-known tenor) was singing. The toadies behind immediately called him off (in the middle of a song) to allow the band to play "God Save the Queen." Then, my dear lady editor, a scene ensued that would have destroyed your belief forever in the loyalty of the British working man. The crowded audience rose to their feet *en masse*, demanding the song to be finished at once, and a struggle between loyalty and courtesy began—true courtesy to the man who was exerting himself singing for them as against loyalty to the lady and

gentleman who sat there and allowed themselves to be wared at. I am thankful to say that, to the honour of the British workingman, courtesy gained the day. After immensa uproar, stamping, and shouting, "The Mairiel Boy" was concluded, and narrowly escaped an encore, after which the "National Anthem" was quietly permitted. It is only fair to say that H.R.H. applauded the singer as vigorously as anyone else, and appeared, if one might judge from his face, to think the people were perfectly right.

Apologising for the length of my letter, I am, dear madam, yours,—NEW CHUM.

I can assure you, "New Chum," that you have my sincere sympathy in your deep disappointment that a democratic colony should ape the nonsensical ceremonies of the old country. I do not quite follow your meaning as regards the "effete old inanities." Surely your dreams of this liberal land did include having the chimney sweep early in the morning to operate on your smoke-conductors, and then asking him to sit down to your spotlessly clothed table and eat with you and your feminine belongings? I am, grieved, indeed, that society in New Zealand has not *en masse*—and class—opened its arms so wide to you that the petty distinctions which human nature in its grovelling mammon-worship invariably makes, should—in your case at least—have been obliterated. I think, my dear "New Chum," that my correspondent, when speaking about the rush made at a theatrical performance, intended to imply that as this was—so I understand—the first time the Governor and Lady Onslow had appeared in the Opera House, a few polite people in the dress circle might have allowed those of confessedly higher position—looking at them purely from a political point of view—to pass out first. Of course, were Royalty or their Representatives frequent visitors, this would not be done. Do you not remember that Mark Twain makes one of his characters—a regular new chum from England—express astonishment that in a democratic country like America some females should be called "ladies," while some were not? He fancied they must be all women. In this, as in other democratic colonies, wealth, no worth, entitles its feminine possessor to be styled lady. With regard to your second objection to my correspondent's words, I must say that I see no harm at all in standing while the "Dead March" is being played. It is, to my mind, a token of respect for the dead—you have no right to judge how far they, personally, are worthy of it—and a mark of sympathy for the living. Why do men raise their hats at a grave, whilst the funeral service is proceeding? Why, when they meet a funeral procession, do so many pause, men lifting their hats? I think it is an instinctive feeling of reverence for that wonderful thing, Death, whose awful summons no man or woman, child or infant, has the power to disobey or to delay for even an hour.

## LONDON AND PARIS FASHIONS.

(FROM OUR OWN CORRESPONDENT.)

(SEE FASHION PLATE, PAGE 261.)

THERE were so many stylish gowns worn at the autumn Dublin Horse Show, that I am sending you a few sketches from which you can gain some ideas for your own autumn frocks, mantles, and hats.

Her Excellency the Countess of Zetland wore a gown of vivid pea-green Irish poplin, with a deep festooned flounce, lined and turned back with white satin, and caught up with green and white bows; a long "bell pull" slash on the side, soft white silk vest, and bands of handsome silver embroidery trimming the bodice, and carried around the hem of the skirt. Long *mousquetaire* cuffs of white satin, embroidered handsomely with silver, and bonnet composed entirely of lily-of-the-valley, mingled with grass and foliage. She wore, on arriving, a most becoming mantle of fawn camel's-hair cloth, made with a yoke, stylishly braided in gold stripes, and trimmed down the fronts with lynx fur.

Her Excellency's daughter, Lady Hilda Dundas, displayed a costume of navy-blue cloth, with diagonal revers, caught across the waist with a buckle, over a pretty pale pink vest. Her hat was the large, flat-crowned, crush-leaf shape which the Duchess of Leinster affects, and was set far back from her forehead, and ornamented with ostrich plumes.

The Lady Mayoress: *Heliotrope ercpon* dress; skirt lifted at one side, over a *jupon* of plain heliotrope cloth; bodice "built up" with soft folds of silk about the waist; sleeves much puffed and ruffled; short puffing of material around the outer edge of the waist-line; handsome embroidery on collar, cuffs, and skirt hem; black chip hat, raised high at one side, with mane and feather trimmings; collar of soft grey and white ostrich, worn close around the throat.

Mrs Loftus Steele, extremely stylish gown of viennese rose *ercpon*, with flounce of deep French lace, beaded with nitred jet; bodice crossed with lace, outlined with jet passementerie; long falls of lace from the shoulders, and full blouse of same in front; deep fringe of cut jet falling from the waist-point, met at hips by long bodice-tabs, bordered with jet; bonnet of black crinoline, trimmed vieux roses velvet and jet. Mrs O'Carroll, dark Hussar-blue *ercpe* cloth, ornamented very handsomely with cut jet and lace, cuirass and collar of rich jet-work, hat to correspond; Miss Edith Wynne, lovely dress of ivory-white Indian silk, trimmed with silk lace and ribbons, flounce of lace around skirt and bodice, black chiffon hat, with pale pink roses; Lady Eva Fitzgerald, black cloth costume, with stylish tabbed skirt and double-breasted bodice, braided handsomely with grey cord; Hon. Mrs Dewhurst, gown of *gendarme*-blue cloth, with double-breasted Eton jacket, made with tails at the back; white *crush* waistcoat, and hat *en petite*; Miss Morris Reade, white *crush* bodice, outlined with *her* cord, deep jacket revers of white silk, white felt hat to correspond; Mrs O'Neill, navy blue costume, with vest of pale aure silk; Miss Kennedy (Glen-n-Geragh), ivory serge cloth costume, with ruby-velvet enrichments, jacket in "cavalier" style, with ruby silk cordings, and cavalier hat; Miss O'Brien, an exceedingly pretty dress of very narrow striped silk—black, or dark grey, and white, with a graduated pleated fall of the material at one side of the skirt, bordered with narrow black blonde; a pleated flounce, similarly edged, and a deep depending neck-kilting to correspond. The back of the bodice was crossed with black watered ribbons, which were carried also around the pointed waist, and tied in a long bow in front.