

# AS SEEN THROUGH WOMAN'S EYES.

## The "Only-Daughter" Wife.

(By an "Only-Daughter's" Mother.)

Many men are afraid of the "only daughter." "She is sure to be spoilt!" is the pet argument.

But she ought to be well trained, since her mother has had plenty of time to devote to her.

And an "only daughter" should understand housekeeping in all its branches. In a household of many girls, domestic duties are divided. One superintends the linen, another the stores, while a third looks after the "frizzeries," such as the flowers, arranging the drawing-room, and setting off the table to decorative advantage.

The only daughter helps her mother in everything. She begins social life earlier than the girl with many sisters; as a rule she is her father's darling, and a real helpmeet to him.

Thus she gains a knowledge of the ways of a man, his tastes and dislikes; and usually, too, she learns how to manage him, and twist him round her slender white finger.

And the man who is well managed by a woman—so long as he does not discover it—is the happiest soul in the world.

If an only daughter has two or three brothers, she ought to make an ideal wife; for she will then have had a thorough training in all the intricacies of masculinity.

An only daughter possessed of several brothers is usually very tactful in dealing with men.

In a family of many boys and girls, these do not try and "get on" with all the others.

They usually divide up into cliques; twos and twos become special chums, and don't bother very much about the rest.

But the only daughter tries to get on well with the entire family. Perhaps she runs the gauntlet of a bit of spoiling. But the writer always maintains that a girl's character is softened and sweetened by a certain amount of spoiling.

"Unkissed, unkind," is a very true proverb. And in a large family mother is often too busy to devote much time to the individual child.

Of course, she loves them all; but there is so much to look after, and so many to divide her tokens of affection amongst, that the very ones who need her love most suffer terribly from heart-bunger. The desire to be loved softens the nature, so long as the hunger is satisfied by a certain amount of the sympathy and affection it craves.

But in the rush and hurry of a big family there is many a little heart which eats itself out in silent yearning for the token of love which are a child's birthright; but of which, as one of a crowd, he gets but few. So a certain reserve and harshness is apt to form; the child looks to strangers for the love he ought to get at home. Sometimes the strangers are also too busy to show much affection.

Thus a gradual withdrawing into his own nature, a certain coldness and reserve, may spring up.

In an only daughter you will usually find less reserve. She is so accustomed to being valued and noticed and petted, that she takes it for granted that everybody likes her and is interested in her.

This in itself is a great charm. If there are no brothers, and she is an only child, there is a danger that she may be a little selfish. She will not have learned the valuable lesson of "giving up," which all the members of a large family have to take to as naturally as little ducks to water. On the other hand, the only child will not have had to face the friction and opposition and the fighting for her rights which is the rule in families of brothers and sisters. In some cases the family fights prepare the members for the world.

They learn to give and take, to exchange blows, to plan revenge, and to seek and offer forgiveness. But the process may harden and spoil a sensitive nature. The constant bickerings and

jealousies in which some sisters indulge cannot be said to elevate and improve a girl.

The atmosphere of peace and calm an only child has been used to makes for harmony in the home when she marries.

A tendency to argue and quarrel are habits which—like ill weeds—grow apace. If a girl is accustomed to stand up for her rights, and fight for every privilege with a couple of sisters or several brothers, she finds it dull when she marries, and the opportunities of nervousness and scenes are removed.

So she begins to quarrel with her bridegroom. And the fallacy that it takes two to quarrel is the most absurd error ever invented. One person can accomplish it to most artistic perfection!

The delight to a lover of wooing his lass without having to run the gauntlet of a regiment of critical brothers and sisters is almost too obvious to need dwelling on. Many brothers detest the men who pay attention to their sisters. Part of this is jealousy. Some of it is a kind of contemptuous pity for a chap who manufactures romance and sentiment over a girl "who is a good sort," but having been their sister all their lives, presents no romantic possibilities to them.

And few girls are friendly disposed to men who fall in love with their sisters.

To begin with, he has shown such obvious bad taste! And Nell feels horribly "out of it" when the prospective brother-in-law comes a-wooing. In fact, the whole family feels out of it. And they think Dolly a cold-hearted little wretch to throw them over, and cease to take any interest in her own people, all for the first strange man who comes along.

They forget that little Dolly is in the grip of a relentless power, stronger than her own—the law of Nature, which makes a woman forsake all and cleave unto her own masculine mate.

Lastly, there is the ultimate advantage of any family heritage, furniture, and worldly goods wherewith papa endows his only daughter.

## Mrs. Wick on "Picnics."

Of course, some folks take their pleasures queerly. As the man said when his wife proposed invitin' relations for Christmas. I never did, an' never shall, understand the way people who are accustomed to comfortable meals in their own homes will move mountains to get one in a slippy-sloppy fashion in the open air.

I've a prejudice, myself, in favour of tea that's hot, and I've never thought that curries an' such-like improved its flavor.

Last time I let myself be over-persuaded to go into the country with our Bible-class treat I set my teeth, anticipatin' into a ham sandwich, an' before I'd had time to do more'n suspicion the mustard there was a green fly in the back of my throat, that kept remindin' me, as you might say, for the rest of the afternoon.

For those who prefer a flickerin' spirit-lamp, that the wind puts out constant, or a fire that won't neether lay nor light, to a kitchen range that settles a kettle in five minutes, or who get more enjoyment from traumpin' over fields in the broilin' sun to carry water from a stream than turnin' on a tap, an' don't mind a hillowin' table-cloth, nor one that gets up an' wraps itself round them an' the food at intervals—to say nothin' of seeds of lumbago an' rheumatics thrown in—I don't say that a picnic's not a good way of gettin' amusement cheap. That is, if they don't spend their money an' tire themselves through into the bargain with a train journey to find a place where they can take their teas uncomfortablely.

An' I quarrel with the unsociableness of a picnic. 'If you gather a few friends indoors, you sit up to your tea round a table all within easy talkin' distance, an' nobody's left out in the cold; an' if you should chance to be discussin' matters that don't exactly concern the parties present, you've no call to raise your voice. But with a field, or woods, or sands, it

seems as ef the space, an' the waste of it in sittin' huddled, got into your blood. You'll have your meal—an' what with the drawbacks I've named at startin', it'll take you all your time to do that, let alone tryin' to converse—an' when it's over, you'll all get up an' scatter about in ones an' twos an' threes, for all the world 's ef you were so many sheep browsin'. An' as fer conversation, ef you should get together again, I remember Mary Jane Wilkes at the treat tryin' to cerlect a few of us in Barcomb Woods to tell us about her visit to Ellen Seaford, who'd married into the villidge of Barcomb below. What with a worryin' brook one side, an' a wind blowin' from the other, an' birds chirpin' themselves silly overhead, she'd got to shout 's ef she was addressin' a meetin'; an' just when she was explainin' the poor quality of blankets put on her bed, there was a cracklin' of twigs, an' who should step along the path behind but Ellen Seaford herself an' her husband, who she'd gone to meet from his work at the quarries. "You needn't worry about their thinness, Mary Jane," said she, loud an' very perliite, 'fer you've slep' between them fer the last time!"

No, to my thinkin', picnics are a disappointment, unless it's from the point of view of courtin' couples, who like to come across new places fer meanderin' separate. But in that case, as bein' in love seems to have a contrary effect on people's appetites, the main idea of gatherin' of the kind would be somethin' of a waste.

## First Proposals.

Everybody is supposed to be able to manage their own affairs best, but as a rule at no time in her life does a girl stand so sorely in need of a wise woman friend's help and advice as during that time just preceding her first offer of marriage. But it all has to be done so tactfully that even the girl herself does not know she is aided, and her mind led to see things in their right light.

A curious blindness usually afflicts a girl who is being courted for the first time, and it prevents her from having the slightest inkling of what her lover is endeavouring to lead up to. Then when he proposes she is so astonished and perturbed that not knowing her own mind he is perhaps refused when

ne should be accepted, or accepted when a gentle refusal would tell more truly the state of her affections.

Girls seldom consider sufficiently their first proposal. It seems hard to a girl that in the midst of a particularly happy companionship with a friend she is suddenly stopped for all the responsibilities of life to be arrayed before her, and for her to decide if she will walk this new road with the man who is pleading at her side, or, refusing his hand, see him no more, and empty her life of at least the enjoyment she had found in his society.

But there is the other girl who, on being proposed to for the first time, thinks only of the joys and importance of the being engaged period. In a moment she is in a flutter of excitement, and answers "Yes," without a moment of thought. It is only afterwards that she learns that the delights of being engaged usually come only to those engaged to the right man.

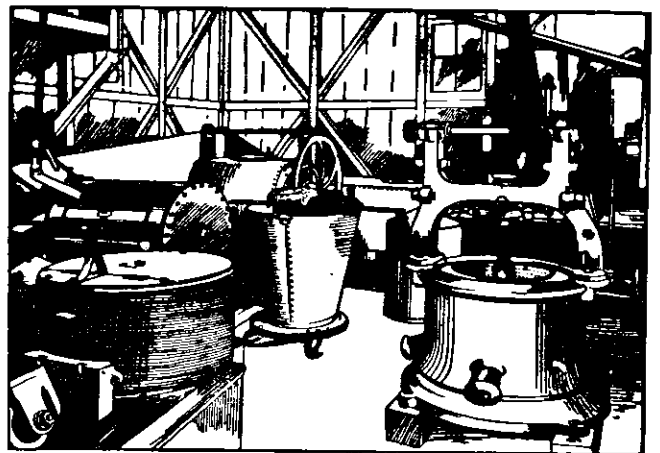
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