

Jungling Brothers.

WHO ARE STUMBLING-BLOCKS TO SISTERS' LOVE AFFAIRS.

"I wish I hadn't any brothers!" sighed the sister of six.
 "I wish I possessed a dozen!" retorted the girl without any.
 "Brothers are all right till you fall in love," said her brother-ridden friend.
 But they are terrible stumbling-blocks in the way of sisters' engagements. There's

THE JEALOUS BROTHEK.

who glares at every eligible man that comes within his sister's radius.
 It's easy for brothers to "head off" a man who's beginning to be sentimental. In that stage young men are so self-conscious. And a little ridicule and chaff goes a long way.
 Then there are the always-in-the-way brothers. Most girls suffer from this variety. However sweet and pretty a sister is, it never occurs to some brothers that other men will think so. "Men don't bother over a child like Nan." The child is nineteen, and feels years older.

To her brothers she seems barely out of the nursery. But the other man didn't know her when she wore short frocks, and had a huge appetite for sugar-sprinkled bread-and-butter.
 To him Nan seems a worshipful young goddess. And her brothers' carelessness over such a paragon of perfection makes him furious. The young idiots don't appreciate the privilege of living in the same house with her, reflects young Roberts. What

OBTUSE DUFFERS

they are all round! They are always offering him cigars, and challenging him to ping-pong contests. Why on earth can't they leave him alone, and play their stupid sing-song and racy games by themselves?
 He wishes they weren't fired with such a wild enthusiasm to give him a good time. He's quite capable of looking after his own interests, if they'd only let him have a show.
 "Decent chap that young Roberts!" chorus the brothers. "Wonder why he doesn't care for women? Suppose he's been thrown over, or treated shamefully by a girl. Seems to fight shy of them here. Quite relieved

when he's taken out of the drawing room. That's why he comes so much, I suppose. He isn't left to chatter to a lot of women. He knows when he drops in here he'll get some sensible talk with us. Roberts hasn't any 'parlour tricks.' He's a real man's man."

"Think he comes to see you. Well, that's just like your vanity. He took good care to clear out of the drawing room last night the moment you gave him the chance. Couldn't you see how bored he was with the girls' talkee-talkee?"

As a matter of fact, the man badly wanted to "punch those brothers' heads."

The sister feels snubbed at her brothers' accusation of tethering unwilling masculines.

Next time young men are dragged from the drawing room the bereaved sister says never a word.

It isn't always a bit of bungling. Many brothers do this sort of thing on purpose. Jealousy comes in. They really don't see what there is in "the fellow" for their sisters to make a fuss about. Any idiot with curly hair has only to come along, and women rave and flatter and spoil till he's a conceited ass.

The sister of six has to get used to BROTHERS SITTING ALWAYS ON THE SPOT,

like Patience on a monument.

"Two's company, three's none." What girl with brothers hasn't this engraved on her heart through long suffering?

"Brothers are all very well before and after the marriageable period," said the girl with too many, "but not during the process. They might be so useful if they had tact. But did you ever hear of girls whose brothers were tactful over their love affairs?" she asked cynically. "Girls with brothers always on hand might as well make up their minds to sit for ever on the shelf.

"Jim finds my brothers at home nineteen times out of twenty calls. Some of them are always waiting to annex hapless masculines who come to see me and Bell. We hear lots about the woes of Boers surrounded on all sides by the blockhouse system, but we never hear a word about millions of despairing British girls whose blockhouse brothers hold the fort, and never give men a chance to make love to their sisters—to say no-

thing of any reciprocity on the part of the girls! Jim pretends he's teaching me chess, which gives us a quiet corner to ourselves. It's such a 'mental strain,' we won't allow on lookers. He's taught me for three months. And it's such a 'mental strain' I don't know the moves yet. Jim's a born strategist to have thought of it. No other man ever outwitted the brothers, and won the game of Me! And the best of it is, Jim couldn't play real chess to save his life.

"This is how brothers lead young men and maidens into temptation. I'm not a bit deceitful—nor Jim either. But if we weren't 'slim' we shouldn't have a chance. And we're going to be married—Jim and I. We settled that over the chess-board. But the dear, bungling brothers believe that we're absorbed in the moves of silly wooden pawns. You don't need to fall far into the ways of deceit to throw dust in your brothers' eyes.

"What! my brother Jack is teaching you chess? Well, of all the sly girls I ever heard of—"

The Care of Goldfish.

It is remarkable how seldom people are able to keep goldfish more than a month, and all because they neglect a few first principles. Goldfish can be kept almost any length of time, accidents apart, if kept scrupulously clean. The air in the water is soon exhausted, and they should have fresh water every day; if possible often in summer, though once will do if the globe is fairly large. One can usually tell when the fish require fresh water. They stand up on their tails with their mouths to the surface of the water, and move slowly in that position, generally making a bubbling sound. When you put the fresh water into the globe let it dash in from a height, so that plenty of air gets in; and let your fish have a handful of shells or small stones. People frequently make the mistake of thinking the fish get enough food out of the water. That is not so; they need feeding when in captivity. Packets of fishes' food, chiefly consisting of dried ants' eggs, can be procured from any seed or naturalist's shop. It is said that goldfish should never be handled. This is no doubt true if they are kept for breeding purposes. Otherwise, it does them no harm—if due care is exercised—and you may pick them up one by one in your hand, and pop them into their globe of fresh water. Never buy a fish unless the fins are erect and fully spread. Directly the fish is out of health the fins close more and more until it dies, when they are quite shut up against the body.

Literature for Boys and Girls.

Boys, in whatever class of life they may be, are natural patrons of romance and adventure; but it is melancholy to think how this excellent instinct is perverted in the juvenile literature of the streets. Its pages abound with plots as feeble as the incidents are absurd. Poverty of invention is sought to be hidden by wild extravagance in detail. The sentiment is bad; the writing is frequently ungrammatical jargon; the humour, when humour is attempted, is flat, stale and vulgar. The vapid mixture is made to go down by a fiery spicing of bloodshed, culminating not unfrequently in a perfect orgy of violence and crime. The writers, to do them justice, are as a rule free from any conscious design to corrupt and deprave; but it is easy to see how hurtful must be the effects on young and half-educated minds of this constant familiarity with deeds of ferocity and brutality. There is yet another kind of popular literature, and this is perhaps the most largely read of all. The boys get their fiction too hot and strong, the girls apparently like it mild, and mild, undoubtedly, are the stories which appear in the penny weeklies that are supposed to penetrate chiefly to feminine circles. There is no adventure, little violence, and not very much crime in the wearisome tales of the "family" papers which number the enraptured readers by myriads. If vice is exhibited—in the form of a wicked baronet, perhaps—it is only to lead up to the final triumph of virtue. But if the moral of those compositions is good, their effect must often be mischievous. They contain any amount of silly love-making, and an enormous mass of maudlin sentiment, both of which are probably as harmful to the intellect and character of unformed and uncultivated maidenhood as is the carnival of gore in the "penny dreadfuls" to the boys.

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