

**FACT AND FANCY  
FOR WOMEN**

BY ELLA HIGGINSON.

AFTER THE AUGUST RAIN.

The tears of heaven lie in the lily urns,  
And all the air with new-born sweetness soaks;  
Along the lanes and thro' the pasture fields,  
One smells the warm, wet sunlight on the ferns.

The sea has wearied of her love, the mist,  
And flung his pale face from her throbbing breast,  
The while she wove the red sun in the west,  
Until their lips have met and, flaming, kissed.

The birds shake little, quivering trills of glee  
Across the scented yellow of the air;  
Here flames the plump golden-rod—and there  
Great, sweet, wet currant-globes hang lazily.

Here the vine-maple reaches blood-red palms  
To the glad sun; and purple thistles bloom  
In the bright places, shunning cold and gloom—  
And O, the winds are soft among the balm!

Now home! Wet rose vines drench my window-pane,  
And smiles chase tears from her face waiting there,  
A while ago clouded with jealous care—  
And all is sweet—after the August rain.

"You see how it is, my dear," he said, taking her soft hand which had never done very hard work, and patting it reassuringly; "I'm poor—only a thousand a year, dear—and we shall have a struggle to get along at first—"

"I don't mind that in the least," she interrupted, stoutly, rubbing her cheek softly against his hand.

"And," he pursued, graciously having allowed her interruption—"we shall have to come down to strict economy. But if you can only manage as my mother does, we shall pull through nicely."

"And how does your mother manage, dear?" she asked, smiling—but very happily—at the notion of the mother-in-law cropping out already.

"I don't know," replied the lover, radiantly; "but she always manages to have everything neat and cheerful, and something delicious to eat—and she does it all herself, you know! So that we always get along beautifully, and make both ends meet, and father and I still have plenty of spending money. You see when a woman is always hiring her laundry work done, and her gowns and bonnets made, and her scrubbing and stove-blackening done, and all that sort of thing—why, it just walks into a man's income and takes his breath away."

The young woman looked for a moment as if her breath was also inclined for a vacation; but she wisely concealed her dismay, and, being one of the stout-hearted of the earth, she determined to learn a few things of John's mother, so went to her for a long visit the very next day. Upon the termination of this visit, one fine morning John received, to his blank amazement, a little package containing his engagement ring, accompanied by the following letter:

I have learned how your mother "manages," and I am going to explain it to you, since you have confessed you didn't know: I find that she is a wife, a mother, a housekeeper, a business manager, a hired girl, a laundress, a seamstress, a mender and patcher, a dairy maid, a cook, a nurse, a kitchen gardener, and a general slave for a family of five. She works from five in the morning until ten at night; and I almost wept when I kissed her hand—it was so hard and wrinkled, and corded, and unkindly! When I saw her polishing the stoves, carrying big buckets of water and great armfuls of wood, often splitting the latter, I asked her why John didn't do such things for her. "John!" she repeated, "John!"—and she sat down with a perfectly dazed look, as if I had asked her why the angels didn't come down and scrub for her. "Why—John"—she said in a trembling, bewildered way—"he works in the office from nine until four, you know, and when he comes home, he is very tired, or else—or else—he goes down town." Now, I have become strongly imbued with the conviction that I do not care to be so good a "manager" as your mother. If the wife must do all sorts of drudgery, so must the husband; if she must cook, he must carry the wood; if she must scrub, he must carry the water; if she must make butter, he must also milk the cows. You have allowed your mother to do everything, and all that you have to say of her is that she is an "excellent manager." I do not care for such a reputation, unless my husband earned the name also; and judging from your lack of consideration for your mother, I am quite sure that you are not the man I thought you were, or one whom I would care to marry. As the son is, the husband is, is a safe and happy rule to follow.

So the letter closed, and John pondered; and he is pondering yet.

A friend I had whom I loved and we started out in life together; where I despaired, he hoped; where I doubted, he trusted; where I idled, he worked; where I failed, he succeeded. Step by step, steadily going upward, he mounted life's ladder to the topmost round, and I stood below and looked at him in the flush of his youth, strength, and power, and—yes, I envied him! But lo! that moment of supreme happiness, when he had all

that man cares to have—when he stood radiant and crowned with fame, wealth, honor, and love (and I do not place love last because it belongs there, but because so many men hold it there)—in that moment Death said to him, "Come." Another friend had I whom I loved still more tenderly, perhaps—who knows!—because he was many rounds beneath me on that wearisome ladder; at least I spoke more softly to him, and often and often, when I could tear my blinded gaze from that friend above me, and looked down at the one below, I found that my eyes were wet and my hand went out to help him—I wish now that it had gone out to him oftener, oftener. Long years he climbed, or tried to climb; but love failed him, and sorrow came to him, and hope left him; his tired hold would loosen, and he would slip a round lower, but still he hung on, and tried—Oh! my heart aches with thinking how he tried! Gradually I, climbing away a little higher, holding it better to keep close to the friend above rather than the one below, lost sight of the poor, disheartened struggler down in the dust and heat; and Death claimed him in the same hour he claimed the other. Dead—both of them! And I, standing between—I sent to the one who had reached the topmost round costly flowers to be laid on his honored bier; but to the one who had failed—O, bitterest word that we speak!—I gave my tears and my heart's best sorrow—only I gave them too late. O, you who are climbing, look often at the one above—for that will bring you near to the summit; but look often, too, at the one below—for that will bring you near the best in life.

You teach your children that they must not lie; that they must not swear; that they must not steal; that they must not break one of the ten commandments. But how many of you teach your children that jealousy and envy are two black sins? Jealousy is to the woman what drink, or a passion for drink, is to the man; it drowns her senses, and conquers her reason, and often and often leads her to crime. If you would only pause and reflect, you would see the utter absurdity, as well as sin, of allowing such a passion to control you. Either you are jealous with cause or without cause. If without cause, summon your will to your aid and look your foolishness squarely in the eyes, and laugh at it; let a little song that you used to sing to your baby sister, or a little tender prayer that you used to whisper at your mother's knee, creep into your heart and remain there—you don't know how much good that will do. If you are jealous with cause, let me whisper a little bit of truth in your ear; you may not see the truth in it now, but the day will surely come when you will say I am right. The man who will give you cause for jealousy isn't worth two cents—so far as sweethearts and husbands are concerned—and, although, if you are a true woman, it will hurt you to tear asunder the ties that bind you to him, yet it will be infinitely better for you to do so, firmly and kindly, and at once. It doesn't pay to yield to any evil passion—and jealousy is one of the most evil—for the sake of one who is unworthy of your love or trust. Love strongly, purely, passionately, for that is divine; but never blindly, for that is foolish.

The summer young man is making himself scarce this year; so scarce, indeed, that the enterprising managers of fashionable resorts are hiring him by the quantity—as they do their waiters—and all that is required of him is to part his hair in the middle, play tennis, and flirt with the fair guests. He "draws" better than a soda spring or mountain air.

Now here is something right down interesting—to young women, of course. It has been decided in a French court that a woman is entitled not only to the engagement ring, but also to all articles of value presented by a lover before marriage. Perhaps the same diamond will not be seen on so many different fingers now.

Only think of the millions of flowers that bloom their little hour in the depths of the woods and the solitudes of the forest, and are never seen of men; their lives seem as wasted as that of the woman who dies unloving and unloved, yet there is a fragrance about them that is all their own.

Marion Harland, Christine Terhune Herrick, and Mrs. Hungerford have all resigned their editorial positions on the *Home-Maker*, on account of a disagreement with Mr. Carrick, owner of the magazine. Mr. Carrick will not easily find three women to fill those three vacant chairs.

Death is a gardener who goes about with a slow, stately tread, cutting down weeds with a strong stick; but often and often—ah, me!—he makes a mistake and cuts down a flower.

The bitterest thing life teaches us is that one may have a surfeit of the good things as well as the bad.