

genius is as sure to widen its influence as to keep it while the language lasts.

"WHAT are 'men's women?'" asked, only the other day, the most charming of her sex; "men are forever saying of so-and-so, whom, by the way, I detest, that she is 'a man's woman.' Teach me how to be one, please. Wherein lies the charm? Must I smoke like your Venetians? Must I talk horse? Must I adopt all the other of your dreadful ways?"

Certainly not, dear madam. Yet it is quite true that while one man's ideal differs most fortuitously from another's, as one star differeth from another star in glory, there are those who are known among us as "men's women," for a happy combination of qualities somewhat difficult to describe. Are you old enough to have seen the comedy of the "*Belle's Stratagem*," unabridged? and if so, do you remember *Mrs. Racket's* definition of a fine lady? "A creature for whom nature has done much, and education more; she has taste, elegance, spirit, understanding. In her manner she is free, in her morals nice. Her behavior is undistinguishingly polite to her husband and all mankind." That will do admirably for a foundation. But a "man's woman" I take to be all this and something beyond it. To begin with, she is old enough to know her world thoroughly; yet, though she need never have been beautiful, she must have kept her youth. She is in no sense a light woman, neither is she over-intellectual; she would not speak Greek, even if she could. She is a creature of infinite tact, whom every being with the outward semblance of a man interests profoundly. With him she is always at her best, and she contrives to get out of him the best there is. She listens well, and grows sympathetic as she listens. Has he a special weakness? she half tempts him to believe it is a virtue. An adept in the subtlest forms of flattery, she would force the meanest of us to shine even when he is ill at ease. And yet, above all, she remains sincere. Her interest in him is real, and survives the fleeting moment. He is a man; that is to say, for her, the brightest page in nature's book. She respects convention, knowing well when she may venture to be unconventional; yet she is unapproachable and irreproachable. In return, he adores her.

This is all very well, you say, but I don't like that woman. Dear madam, as it never enters into her calculation that you should, she does not take such pains with you. She makes dear foes among you, of course. Sometimes, even, she does not escape calumny. But this, having no actual basis, falls of its own weight, and in the end, as you yourself will admit, you stand in awe of her. Your question proves it. I have tried to tell you why *we* like her; and if you must have a word of definition, here it is: She is one who has the gift to study men, and who, having studied many, finds the process still amusing. If you lack this primal requisite, abandon the unequal contest; you will never become like her by a servile imitation of her tricks and her manners. In spite of these, which set you so against her, let me entreat you to believe her a deserving woman indeed. To become such a woman there is, happily, an infallible prescription, dating from a Venetian province, in the good old times when "the doges used to wed the sea with rings." Like mine, it was given for the asking, by one Iago, on the quay at Cyprus; and I recommend to you every line of it except its lame and impotent conclusion.

WHAT is a man to do about those interesting possibilities that he calls his first loves? I say "possibilities," using the plural (and thereby doing violence, perhaps, to popular prejudice), because of the conviction that experience does not always teach enough, and that in a good many cases experiences are needed. If there are any agencies which are more usefully instructive than first loves in ripening adolescence into manhood, this deponent knoweth them not, and his ears are erect, and his eyes intent for the catalogue of them.

By first loves be it understood to include not only that preliminary being who first makes the incipient man aware of a peculiarity in his affections, but all the constellation of beings, more or less angelic, who become the successive guiding stars of his existence, from the time he achieves tail-coats until some woman takes him for better or worse, with all the fruits of a protracted training in him. Of course, there are some individual males who find their pole-star at the first essay, and never wobble afterward

in their courses. The limited knowledge of men of this sort may prevent them from realizing that their experience is exceptional. They must go to the books to learn what is the common lot of common men, and there is no book that recalls itself at this moment to which they can go to better purpose than to Edmond About's "Story of an Honest Man." There they will discover, if they need it, how the impact of successive entities upon the affections may hammer them at last into a durable article, graceful to contemplate, and able to stand the wear and tear of a work-a-day life.

Now as to those several entities. Many a man, unlike About's autobiographical hero, feels constrained to regard them as monuments of his own inconstancy and weakness, and either buries his memories of them in unmarked graves, or recalls them shamefacedly and with a very sneaking sort of tenderness. The greater fool he! I miss the proper point of view if such half-hearted sentiments are not mistaken; and if, by entertaining them, he does not needlessly contribute to blot out some of the most charming and interesting oases in all his desert of a past. A lad at college, though college for the time is all the world to him, does not deem it necessary to forget that he was once at school; nor does a man new launched in the real world affect to forget that he was once a part of the microcosm known as college. Indeed, the difficulty often is to make a college man remember anything else. But, by a very prevalent affectation, a married man is supposed to forget that eyes are fine in more than one color, or that other agencies than age or dye have ever been potent to change his views as to the proper hue of hair. The truth is, to be spoken flatly and with confidence that it is the truth, that a man who does not love his first loves all his life long makes a great mistake and does injustice to his own past. But, of course, he is to love them as they were. The affection they inspired in him, when they did inspire it, is a part of himself for all time, and they, as they then seemed, are a part of him too, and it is as idle for him to try to eradicate them from his actuality as for the leopard to attempt to change spots with the Ethiopian. That he should love what

they may become with the lapse of years is manifestly inexpedient and unreasonable, as well as usually improper, if for no other reason, because

"One must not love another's."

There was obviously a corner in Praed's heart where "the ball-room's belle" had permanent lodgings, but obviously, too, he had no special tenderness for "Mrs. Something Rogers," but regarded her, no doubt, with an interest that was always friendly, but never uncomfortably acute, as one is apt to regard the cocoon from which some particularly lovely butterfly has escaped. True always to the butterfly, doubtless Praed disassociated it from Mr. Something Rogers's cocoon. When the fledgling Pendenis loved the Fotheringay, he loved her from his hat to his boot-soles, and don't imagine that he ever succeeded—even if he was fool enough to try—in erasing that lovely image from his memory. The Fotheringay saw the beginning of a habit of woman-worship of which, in due time, Laura reaped the benefit. And there was Genevieve! What an education she was to Coleridge! And can you imagine that he ever recanted, whatever Mrs. Coleridge's baptismal name may or may not have been!

Men may as well make up their minds—and women, too—that first loves are facts—most respectable and laudable facts, and not shadows; and while they need not be obtruded on a world that is not interested in them, they are neither to be snubbed nor denied, but respectfully entertained and cherished. Of all history, the most instructive to a man is his own. He can keep it to himself, if he will, and oftentimes it is very proper that he should, but he cannot afford to forget any of it. The discreditable parts he must remember as a warning to himself, and the rest, his first loves among them, to encourage him.

THE tours of the college glee-clubs during the holidays, and one or two dinners of Yale and Harvard clubs that came to my notice, suggested certain reflections as to the proper limit of a graduate's devotion to his *alma mater*. When he stands up in evening dress, with a glass of champagne in his hand, and drinks her health, of course he is excusable if he tints his