

Gospel. Well, then, let's go a-preaching.

And what of the vast amount Americans are wont to give to foreign missions? Twenty-eight million dollars will build only seven destroyers or submarines. But the same amount will buy millions upon millions of loaves of bread for America's hungry, veritable oceans of milk for America's under-

nourished children. They will purchase unemployment insurance for innumerable workmen whose employers are still too selfish to have caught the vision of a new day. They will take our army of wandering boys and girls off the unfriendly roads and establish them at home where they belong. This vast amount will buy hospital beds for our own neglected Negroes whose misfortune it is that they must sicken and die

in Georgia and Carolina instead of India's coral strand.

If it be objected that in China and Japan, in India and the islands of the sea, as well as here at home, there is also hunger and misery, sickness and death, we may well paraphrase in reply the words of Jesus:

"If we love not our brother whom we do see, how can we love the heathen whom we do not see?"

Victorians Had a Word for It

By Helen Van Pelt Wilson

THE VICTORIANS had a word for it. They called it—charm. Every thoughtful mother of the 1890's recognized its importance and religiously cultivated it in her daughter from the time she tied her baby's satin cap strings at their most alluring angle until she proudly pressed a wreath of orange blossoms upon her lovely brow.

The Victorians may have beaten about the bush on some subjects but a girl's destiny was not one of them. Marriage and children were her frankly accepted career. Old maids were old maids, not bachelor girls, and they bore like a brand the stigma of failure in the competition for a man. In its early stages, feminism, with its unpleasant concomitant of high collars and manish hats, found little favor with the majority of women—particularly if they were pretty. We who were graduated a decade ago, however, knew it at its grim and impressive height—impressive even to our parents. So they sent us all to college, fit and unfit alike, to pluck the flower of higher learning and when we emerged they grieved as silently as possible over our peculiarities.

For four years we were oddly misinformed. No one thought to point out the obvious and important fact that even the most ardent feminist was going to have to make her way in a world geared to man's advantage. No

Despite all the feminist agitation, this is still a man's world and likely to remain so. So this writer is going to train her daughter to meet it on man's terms



one told us it was his oyster, not ours! At my alma mater a maiden president exhorted us almost daily in chapel to become "great female leaders." She cast no aspersions on marriage but we came to see it as a very minor career, good enough in its way for girls unequal to a more spectacular dash

through life. So the college was kept free from the "disturbing" taint of men—professors and reluctant brothers the rare leaven in our campus dough.

Brains had their big inning then. Charm was an unconsidered by-product, beneath the serious consideration of women who strove to be the acknowledged equals of men. Today the militant feminist is as out of date as knee-length skirts. Femininity is the keynote of women's education. The Mae West figure, flower-decked hat, and sweeping train are but signs of the times. The biological function is highly respected. Women who have denied it freely confess to their intimates a sense of incompleteness. No matter what the rewards of medicine, art, or letters, they regret the lack of husband and children. Statistical surveys among college girls reveal that almost eighty-five per cent set marriage as their goal, desiring only those careers compatible with marriage.

As a mother of today this trend is illuminating—a valuable guide to me in the education of my daughter. It plainly indicates that I must not only train her to be a good wife but see to it that she has a chance to become one. After all, she won't thank me for having her taught the Elizabethan dramatists or the circulatory system of an earthworm if I let her grow up un-

attractive to men. And she will be the first to lament that though I may have made her adequate—if she can cook, sew, manage children, and live within her income—I have not made her charming and so desirable.

How now shall I go about this task? Charm is easy to recognize, hard to analyze, but still possible to teach to those who seem to lack it because, like a mosaic, it is made up of many small things. Girls who are really hopeless cases are rare, and those the world puts down as impossible are usually far from it.

As I try to analyze this quality called charm, I find at least two definite aspects—attractive appearance and pleasing personality, but especially the latter. When Sir James Barrie wrote, "If you have it, you don't need to have anything else—and if you haven't it, it doesn't much matter what else you have," he did not add that almost all children have natural charm until it is buried or distorted by education. As a mother I consider it my business to bring the spark to a blaze and re-light it if it goes out.

In developing its outer aspect, good looks, I know I can almost proceed by rule as did my friend Marguerite Harris. She emerged from college, brainy, awkward, homely, and panicky in the presence of men. She literally achieved charm by intelligently studying herself. She recognized irregular features, heavy eyebrows, and a certain angularity as defects with milk-white skin, lustrous dark hair and eyes, beautiful hands, and the possibilities of a good figure, if she could put on weight, as assets.

Three years after commencement she had transformed herself into a woman of Italian distinction. Her ugliness had style. Women noticed her and men passed by more obviously pretty girls to converse with her. "I knew what I wanted," she explained to me, "and I went after it. The result's coming this evening." He was a handsome young surgeon, undoubtedly a fair reward!

She had started with a thorough going over at a beauty salon. A good dancing teacher taught her grace and relaxation—how to sit, stand, and shake hands, things that all of us can learn from books and magazine articles if we really are serious about it. Her doctor prescribed diet and exercise to make

her gain weight. She achieved style through study of an outstanding fashion magazine. Her improved appearance naturally brought self-assurance and poise. With her mind thus freed of her unattractiveness, she concerned herself with other ideas, gradually learning the tricks of revealing her charm. Yet there wasn't a thing Marguerite did for herself at twenty-five which her mother, or any mother if she had taken a frank view of her daughter's needs, could not have accomplished more easily for her in her early teens.

These are the points I know I must strive to develop in my daughter: first—good posture. A Worth model or Schiaparelli's grandest creation will look like a rack dress from the basement if her shoulders droop or her abdomen protrudes. And I cannot wait until she is eighteen to think about the way she carries herself! Bones are well set by that time and poor habits of posture hard to change.

I must see that she develops correct habits of eating. I have memories of Great-aunt Deborah, who weighed a good two hundred pounds and loved her pie for breakfast, and squat Cousin Angela tipping the scales at one hundred eighty but never forsaking her midnight snack of crullers and milk! If these tendencies appear in my daughter, life in the next ten years will be no halcyon path for me. I've seen my adolescent friends wreck their health on the pineapple régime one week and the chocolate éclair diet the next. They do not realize that a trained appetite, that is, liking what is proper for you, is the only sure basis for a good figure—unless, of course, some undiagnosed illness exists such as a lazy thyroid gland. A doctor's advice must be sought when stubborn overweight persists.

I shall certainly teach the art of make-up. Only a foolish mother forbids its use. I don't want my daughter to hide her youthful glow by witlessly rouging her mouth as the uninitiated do until it has just about as much allure as a recently painted red barn.

How I shall pause over eye-glasses! As Dorothy Parker has so succinctly put it:

"Men seldom make passes
At girls who wear glasses."

Yet for the sake of looks I cannot let the child go blind! But already I am

teaching the light-over-the-left shoulder rule and providing an adjustable bed lamp. Before the finest oculist on earth puts glasses on her he will have to convince me that her type of defective sight cannot be cured by exercises. And then I shall be sure that glasses for close work alone will not suffice. A certain picture of my own owl-like girlhood will give me strength in the conflict.

And what an ally we mothers of today find in the hair-dresser! Once crimpers by night and curling-irons by day beset the path of the straight-haired. Now there are permanent waves, and, still more useful for the little girl, experts who know how to cut glossy, well-brushed straight hair into a more attractive frame for many a face than curls. I am impressing my little girl with that fact. I will not have her grow up thinking straight hair a curse.

I am stressing, too, the importance of exquisite personal daintiness and neatness—the essentials of that good grooming which make pleasing the appearance of even the plainest child. When she has done her best, however, I shall warningly add, "Forget it." Girls who make a cult of beauty lose that naturalness which is essential to charm. But no matter how she turns out, I want my child to feel she is attractive. The self-effacing dowdy girl never gets anywhere, while the one who may be homely but is not oppressed by the fact is taken by men at her own valuation. Humbleness in women is a worthless trait!

Besides, other attributes than beauty add to charm. I am striving to develop a low, well-modulated voice, as pleasing as it is rare. The shrieks which rend the air at women's bridge-lunches indicate only too vividly this tremendous need for voice culture in America. Then there are the informal aspects of education which are a mother's province. I shall see that my daughter has some small talk but not so small no one wants to hear it. A knowledge of current events supplied by the reading of good magazines will give her something to say to people of all types and protect her from the necessity of gossip—the refuge of empty minds!

A fair game of tennis or golf, the ability to ride and swim—not brilliantly but well enough so that fear will not

be gnawing at her vitals—and a mastery of dancing are likewise important. The last is especially vital, and financially possible for every one. There is nothing more damning to a girl's reputation at fifteen than a boy's simple comment, "She has lead feet." All these abilities add enormously to a girl's charm for they make it possible for her to fit gracefully into a wide variety of activities.

Lastly there is wisdom in inculcating a sane point of view which will develop poise. I expect to break the news to my daughter very early that this is a man's world, made for them and run by them. Women who early recognize this fact and gracefully accept it save themselves a lot of trouble and get places in the end.

Furthermore, my daughter must realize that marriage and children, her racial career, will limit any other special type of development, and yet without marriage and children she cannot expect happiness. It's tough but true and I want to protect my child from having to find this out for herself through painful and often embittering experiment. She may as well know at the outset of her study of writing or painting or business that if at twenty she and her husband start out with equal ability and equipment he will always be about a decade ahead because, even under the most efficient management, child-bearing and the care of the home are a strain. Yet this fact of man's superior opportunity won't be a bit bad, once she gets used to it. It is only when a girl has proceeded wide-eyed on the policy of equal advantage that she is brought up with a painful jerk and the check-rein hurts!

And while this is sinking in, I shall also have to make my daughter aware that the majority of men—certainly most young men who are looking for companions, not wives—prefer them beautiful but not obviously too bright. Many like them intelligent but not intellectual. A rare few will endure them brainy. Not one will bear superiority to himself and "high-hatting" is the death knell of allure.

Every woman knows that popularity is essential to happiness during adolescence. Now if a girl is really clever, she should be smart enough not to appear too much so once the advantages of this

course are evident. The brilliant girl draws but few men, the attractive but unoppressively intelligent one brings along the pack. She has a good time doing it and when she is ready to select a husband, she has the advantage of having known many types of men and the kind she really wants is within reach.

So that she may choose with mind as well as heart, I hope I can reveal to my child some knowledge of herself and her tastes. I hope that through studying her I shall be able to prepare a fair opinion of what qualities in a husband will bring her the greatest happiness. If she travels largely with those who like them half-witted and is not so herself, I know she will be unhappy married to one of them. A husband just for the sake of a husband is not worth having. I want her to have an opportunity to select from the valuable minority who drift in when the majority come to get acquainted with her charming self.

Besides, men who are attracted to stupid women expect all kinds of intelligence once they are married to them and are often much aggrieved if they do not find it. The answer is that intelligence is a pearl of great price but our daughters must know when to wear it. Certainly we must not let them grow bitter and despise it as some thwarted females do.

I shall also impress my child with the fact that there is a time to curb a sense of humor. Man is undeniably vain. He quivers and retreats from a too witty tongue and can seldom bear the joke's being on him. One of the cleverest young women I know now threads her way alone. As one ex-suitor said to her, "Ellen, you just better look out or you'll laugh your way out of your last chance for a good provider." And she did.

This same vanity in man is useful to woman. Because of it more flies are caught with sugar than vinegar and the "A-1 incense burner" seldom wastes her sweetness on the desert air. That does not mean that man sits spellbound while woman hands out compliments in hunks with a shovel. I want my daughter both subtle and sincere, realizing that in almost every one there is something to be interested in and to admire, once her thoughts are slanted that way. For not a mother among us wants a

hard-boiled daughter, a monument of smooth-tongued insincerity. Yet to meet the world except on worldly terms is impossible and the finer interpretation our wisdom can give to the facts of life the more valuable we become as parents.

It is obvious that the essence of charm is after all ability to attract because we are ourselves attracted. "Be interested in the other person" is as true as it is banal. I see Mrs. Cameron, for example, an unhappy egotist whose life has been dominated by a sense of her own inferiority. The only people she can comfortably admire are poor souls with some infirmity or lack of adjustment to the world more apparent than her own. If you were a hunchback or painfully shy, Mrs. Cameron would find a thousand virtues in you but if you were beautiful or amusing she would detect a shallowness which had been unapparent to your life-long friends.

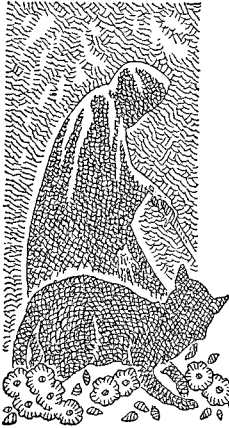
Her sister, on the other hand, who is not at all a milk-and-water sort of person, sees good in every one and people know it. She is sweet-tempered and infinitely adaptable and no woman can get along with men who is not. As has been wisely said, "Be clever if you must, be beautiful if you can, but be agreeable if it kills you." Man's is a direct course through life, like a skater who makes a bee-line from end to end of the rink. Woman's course is laid with fancy figures. She must circle around man, fitting her life agreeably to his pattern. She must have the faculty of infinite adjustment to his gait and develop a superior balance dependable in crises. If she is clever, she will find that arabesques, while more fatiguing, are also more amusing than straight lines!

A daughter's adjustment to life and to man lies with her mother. We cannot from a plain product develop a Helen of Troy but with patience and intelligence we can make every girl reasonably charming and so able to cope happily with life in this man-directed world. Doubtless when we consider what we want our daughters to be our own deficiencies will appear only too clear. It is then, as we educate, that we can also learn, enhancing our own charm, by paraphrasing to ourselves Josh Billings's advice, "Train up a girl in the way she should go and walk there yourself once in a while."

LIFE IN THE UNITED STATES



TRUE TALES OF
LIFE AROUND US



The Little Man

By Ruth Bass

From deep down in Mississippi comes this true story of the death of the last of the "tree-talkers," with its vivid account of the superstitious awe in which the Negroes still hold "The Little Man"



Hazlehurst, Mississippi.—A noted Copiah character died on March 28, with the passing of Howard Divinity, colored. Howard himself claimed to be 108 years of age, but there is reliable evidence to the effect that he was really 100 years of age, or very near it. Uncle Howard served as servant throughout the civil war in the army, and the lamented George Nelson used to say he stole more chickens for the boys in the army than any other one servant in the old army. He attended every Confederate re-union until he went blind some years ago, and he attended one American Legion session in California as the guest of Uncle Sam's younger soldier boys. The Charles E. Hooker Chapter and other patriotic organizations and citizens contributed to a fund to bury Uncle Howard.

CONJURE is strange and powerful. It devises a remedy for every ailment that visits the Bayou Pierre swamps. But there is a little man in the swamp before whom the most powerful conjurer is helpless and whom no gri-gri, no trick, no mojo can keep away from one's doorstep.

Who dat knockin' at de do',
In a long, black robe an' silver shoe?
Don' look at me, deat'—
Look on down de road!

I got word yesterday that the little man in a long, black robe had called on Old Divinity. Old, old Divinity, one hundred and eight he measured his years, grandson of a witch, wisest and strongest in the head among conjurers, and, most likely, the last tree-talker that the Bayou Pierre swamp will ever know, has "ceased"!

I remembered how I had left him one day in spring, meditating under his old water-oak, gnarled and storm-tossed yet brightening with new leaves. It was evening and a breeze had come in from the west. The last white pigeon had circled over the cabin and

settled with contented cooing into one of the boxes under the eaves. Suddenly a bull-bat swooped above the cabin, fell and rose with his long, thin cry. Swoop! Swoop! Spade!

"Hab mussy, Jedus! Ah ain' gwi' be wid yall long now, Honey. When a bull-bat go lak dat he diggin' a grave. He diggin' Ol' 'Vinity's grave now."

"But, Divinity, you're not sick. You feel as well as——"

"Nemmine dat. De Li'l Man he go from do' to do', dat what de ol' song say; and de Li'l Man he allus sen' he sign fust 'fo he come in—effen a body know how ter read hit. Me, Ah done see um slip in de house many time, in he long, black robe an' shinin' shoe but he allus lookin' de odder way. He look-in' twoge ma now. De bull-bat's diggin' over ma haid. Ah's ol' an' frail. Ah done hindered deat'—but Ah ain' gwi hinder um no mo'." He rubbed his gnarled, old hands lovingly along the gnarled, old tree trunk. There was no touch of sadness in his speech, just the simple, quiet voice in which he had so often "done wo' down de sun wid tawkin'." Yet in his whole manner there was a profound foreknowledge, a calm acquiescence to the inevitable, without a trace of fear or hate or bravado. It was the calm expression of a simple yet powerful philosophy that had made perfect peace with its environment and out of which had grown an attitude which gave to life that constant flow that enabled him to meet death as he would meet any other lit-

tle man, with the admiration of the weak for the strong but without cringing.

So I had left him, musing on the melancholy mystery of death; but not alone, for I had heard his philosophy voiced time and again by all of the swamp and its folk, voiced with sweetness and patience and the saving grace of humor. "Deat' ain' nothin' but a robber an' he come to de big house same as de cabin," Old Con had said years ago as she pointed out to the spindle-legged white baby tagging her about the place, a certain blue plush sofa upon which my grandmother had been laid out. "But don' never pint yo finger twoge 'im, Honey, ner twoge a grave. Dat bad manners an' de Li'l Man don' lak hit. A body mock an' shame at deat', deat' gwi mock an' shame um back."

They know the meaning of omnipotence, these who have not yet denied the earth as their mother but submit daily to the mysterious power of nature, superhuman forces whose actions they can only partially control. They do not whine over evils but "tie de hankerchief ter fit de haid" and make a song of them, finding some jump-up words to set to a blue, or a reel, or a mourn tune as a defense against brooding and proof that what happens to them has happened to others and is a part of the way of the world. So long as they can't trick death they have accepted it and out of their sense of the fitness of things have formed