

LOVE-LETTER EXTRAORDINARY.

What a charming sight is a little corner of a fly's wing when one looks upon it with the aid of a microscope! How perfect in design—how dainty in detail—how glorious in effect! One hangs with rapture over the examination of its beauties. But just for a moment lift away the microscope, and lo! a dead, thin, distorted insect, than which scores of plumper, prettier specimens buzz hourly upon every window-pane in one's house. Now thousands of people have made this remark, and yet, perhaps, it has never occurred to any of them that Cupid has just such another microscope of his own; and thus we bring it home to him. Who ever fell in love with a whole woman at once? No man: the task would be superhuman. Every man's heart is caught, after its own weakness, by some particular charm, which, as ladies say, "grows upon him." For example—Brown, Jones, and Robinson, are rivals for a girl's affection; but examine their respective admirations a little closely, and they shall not be rivals at all. Her ringlets have entangled one of them, her little foot has walked into another, and her figure has added a third to her admirers. The gentleman who used to write sonnets to his mistress's eyebrow (and *only one* of them) was a genuine type of your true lover; so enamoured of his own one beauty, that he cannot for a moment divert his eyes to any other district of his lady's charms. This is a law of nature: it is, in fact, Cupid's microscope; very much developing somewhere, and shutting quite out of sight everything anywhere else. And to show its universality, witness the cheerful complacency with which the dear creatures couch in the tenderest attitudes under the displaying glass of their exhibitor; it is the whole art of love in woman. Unhappily, the crisis comes when Hymen smashes the lens at the church door (on the way *out*), or when Cupid himself, pocketing the whole contrivance, flies away to show off his science again in the same manner upon some other couple.

Now, to us it is a touching thing to see young folks going about falling in love with each other after this fashion, for qualities to which they will be less than insensible in a fortnight after their honeymoon. Unluckily, we can see no help for them. People in love can't be expected to listen to reason: they may perhaps be accessible to it after marriage, but then it is only an aggravation; no longer a remedy. The only plan we can suggest, is to pitch good advice into them *before they fall in love*, by some sort of "contingent hints on courtship and matrimony," or "prospective precautions about sweethearts, addressed to heart-whole bachelors." In this age of handbooks, such titles would be worth any money to an enterprising publisher. At present, however, we have concocted and struck out *only* the titles, and as we have not the slightest idea of going any further with the undertakings, we just register them here "provisionally."

Next to being disappointed at all, perhaps the greatest satisfaction in the world is to have a good right to be disappointed. Now, the man who recklessly resigns his heart without specifying its weaknesses, has no more reason to complain of its subsequent injuries, than he who suffers his house maid to "dust" his mantel-piece, or who sends glass anywhere by carriers, without instructing them as to which "side up, with care." In order, then, to establish before wedlock the right we speak of—in order, as it were, to unlock his heart, and leave the key in it, before he knows to whom he shall part with it—we can imagine some young bachelor, foreseeing the altar, addressing to her whom time reserves for him, a letter of preliminary candour. To be sure he can't send the letter, because he doesn't know where to direct it. He is equally ignorant of the lady's name and of her number. But we—we will make sure of its reaching the right individual, by placing it before the world—as follows:—

"To _____

"Madam—Permit me to request your serious attention to a few remarks, of a very peculiar nature, from one who is at present a total stranger to you. But first, as it is just possible that you may consider I presume considerably in thus addressing you, I will try to excuse my freedom. The fact is, that you and I are going to be married—some of these days. Yes, madam, although I am the last man that would force his attentions on a lady, I feel I must be your husband. You intend to marry when you shall receive an eligible offer? Very well; you will receive such an offer. I shall make it. I shall not be able to make it to anybody else. You will turn it over in your mind a long time, but you will—you must accept it at last. It is not in us to help it: man and wife we are already—not yet united, it is true, but still some day to share, like a pair of unconsciously associated soles, a mutual fate. It is not, then, very premature in us now, while we are still in the chrysalis of celibacy, to begin to think of each other, and try to imp the wings of inevitable wedlock for a pleasant flight together—is it, dear?"

"You are very pretty, I'm sure (I shall call you an angel some day, so don't be precipitate); but I hope that, when I fall in love with you, you will not think it necessary to show me how very lovely you are, by demonstrating what a beauty you are thought by all the young fellows of your acquaintance. You will make me ineffably happy by marrying me; but I trust you will not seek to aggravate my gratitude by acquainting me with all the very numerous offers you will have had

from richer and handsomer men than I am—all of which, no doubt, your dear mamma will have been most anxious for you to accept in preference to mine. I shall love you to distraction, and you will reciprocate my passion (probably after the manner of Mr. James's heroine in his next novel but thirty); but I beg you will not permit your imagination to invest me with the peculiarities of an exile, or bandit, or cavalier of the fifteenth century, because such impressions must lead only to your disappointment, and my subsequent depreciation in your eyes, as I assure you I have not the slightest element of any such gentleman in my composition.

"When you find yourself for the first time at the head of a household, though never so humble an one, you will very naturally be overcome with a delightful responsibility in the cares of your little queendom. Judging from my present circumstances, I think that 'when we marry,' we shall probably afford 'an eight-roomed house, genteelly furnished.' But the path of youth should ever be upward; and I trust and expect, at no distant period, to remove you to a 'twelve-roomed ditto, luxuriously.' Therefore I hope that, in our first nest, your callow housewifery will not proceed with uncomfortable thrift to envelop our looking glasses in yellow gauze; pop our bell-ropes into long-striped bags; disguise our chairs in mysterious dominos; and make me walk over my domestic hearth upon raw brown Holland. I hate to see people's 'genuine effects' so muffled; it reminds me of the way tradesfolks have of wrapping up one's copper change.

"As young ladies go now-a-days, it is very likely that your disposition, my love, may be overwhelmingly 'serious.' Some women have religion always in their mouths, as if it was a voice lozenge. If so—be it so. Mine shall never be the bed of a Procrustes, seeking to stretch his wife's conscience. Perhaps if I jerk a button from my wristband on a Sunday morning, your piety will forbid you to stitch it on again. Then never fear a consequent rebuke from me. I, rather than engage in a controversial discussion with my wife about my buttons, would with the greatest cheerfulness—wear studs.

"One of the proudest prerogatives of female matrimony is what ladies call 'mutual confidence.' But if, in your notion of this privilege, you should expect me, in my used-up evenings, to pour into your bosom my troubles and anxieties in 'the city,' and, in return for your sympathy, to share with you the annoyances of housekeeping—if you should repay my confidence in the matter of my best friend's bankruptcy, with a particular account of an 'extravagant shoulder of mutton,' in which bone unconscionably preponderates over meat—if, when I try to explain to you my current position in a lawsuit, you should interrupt me with your just vexation that your maid has mimicked in gingham what you invented in satin—in such a case I must beg that we keep our separate trials quite separate. We might as well exchange with each other the umbrella and the parasol, the peacoat and the pattens, as to expect to find shelter in such uncongenial comfort. So much for our troubles. Let us, however, be always unanimous in our pleasures: let us enjoy everything together; with this especial precaution—that there is always enough for both of us to enjoy.

"I own I could wish that, until we marry, you should have some regular occupation; but, of course, as you are a lady, you would blush at the idea of earning your bread. Nevertheless, I hope you will never have the unfeeling vanity to wince at the name of my trade—even though it should involve an apron—as if it were a thing not to be admitted before company. For you will meet, my love, much stylish company in London, whose tools of business are Shylock's own knife and scales, yet who would shudder at the imputation of a yard-measure or a canister. But be sure, the tradesman's wife who loves such company, hears daily baser metal rung upon her dinner table than ever her husband nails to his counter in Cheapside.

"And now, my dearest girl that shall be, pardon my audacity if, as I bend my mind's eye into the vista of futurity, a little past the altar I perceive the cradle. Yet why not? The tree of our love, though now but an acorn, must bloom and blossom, and then—only think of the branches! With our little ones (bless 'em), even from their coral, let us do nothing without a purpose. Wise men say that the mind of a child resembles a sheet of white paper. It is then a parent's duty to be sure that the guiding lines he traces on that sheet of paper are always ruled in the right place. The world has a very harsh way of rubbing out false impressions.

"I drop my pen. Good-by, my love, *au revoir*. This letter is as ingenious as the next I shall write to you will be silly and incredible. Nevertheless, I am afraid you will like the other best.

"Your devoted, THOMAS RINGDOVE."

AGRICULTURE.

THE DISEASE IN THE WHEAT CROP.

We have been favored with the following account of the disease, that has so unfortunately attacked the Wheat crop this season. Our correspondent candidly tells us, he is not the author of it, nor the remarks which precede it, but that he has copied from a standard work in his

possession. We thank him for the communication, and hope to hear from him again.—Ed. Ex.

"Strange as it may appear to the reflecting mind, yet such is the fact, that some men will still contend for equivocal generation: that a vegetable can be produced without seed: that when a soil is congenial for any vegetable, there it will always be found: that rushes will be produced in wet soils, without seed or previous root: that charlock and thistles will grow from soils brought up from the bottom of deep wells; that fungi and mosses do not come from seed, they being the result of rotteness. Ignorance of the natural history of these vegetables makes way for conjecturing that they are spontaneous productions, the effects of corruption, and not of generation; because no seed appears to the naked eye in the *red rust* or fungi on the straw of corn, or to the eye in a fern bloom, a mushroom, a moss, or lichen, it is even now asserted that none exists; and whilst the humble plants are villified as the offspring of putrefaction, these sages allow that the oak and sunflower are dignified with generative faculties, because they are apparent. The doctrine of equivocal generation must be assigned to those persons who require an asylum for their ignorance.

"THE RED RUST, MILDEW, BLIGHT, OR RED GUM, *Puccinia Graminis*, attacks the leaf and then the straw of wheat, just at the time of blooming, and until the ripening; and, like other parasitical plants, destroys the vigorous growth and energy of its parent. Sir J. Banks published the results of his observations, founded upon ocular demonstration, forty years ago, that this disorder of the wheat was a cryptogamic plant, attacking the straw: a fungus, the seeds of which were wafted to, and nourished by, the straw of corn. Peculiar weather will open pores on the surface of the straw, ready to admit the seeds of this fungus; yet with this information, and the accumulated observations of other vegetable physiologists, many of the cultivators of the earth will say, that a blight is a something generated in the air, and comes with a thick mist, and cannot be a seed.

"Attentive observations of Agriculturists would fully convince them whence comes this blight; let them examine the grass in the fences and in the woods before the wheat comes out into ear, and they will find it lurking there, ready to blast their expectations of a golden harvest. The grounds of small enclosures, when they are surrounded with trees (the conductors), are much subject to this fungus; the dripping of trees over wheat, particularly of some peculiar fruit trees, as the barberry, the pear, &c., often invigorates the mildew, commencing therefrom, and when once the corn is attacked, and there is congenial weather, a warm humidity of the atmosphere, the blighting will proceed with great rapidity across a field, taking the direction of the wind.

"After the corn has been cut and carried, an observant eye can readily discover the fungus lurking on the grasses, and other perennial plants; a similar fungus may be found on the bramble and on the coltsfoot weed, on the under side of the leaves, from which it sucks a nourishment, and discolours the upper side of the leaf: the weeds under a pear-tree, growing in a district which has been infected with blight, are generally sprinkled with the fungus in the autumn; it is the bramble and the grasses which seem to preserve the fungus during the winter.

"Some naturalists consider that the fungi—which flourish on the bark of trees, on the bramble leaf, the coltsfoot, and other plants,—are different kinds to what exist on the grasses and corn crops. It may be so; but the commencement of blight, under the dripping of trees, would argue to the contrary, particularly as we know that much difference in the fructification will take place when the vegetable is fed with different juices, as would be the case of the fungus growing on different sorts of trees and leaves. In the autumn this fungus may be observed of different colours, red, brown, black, according to its stage of growth; and thus it is husbanded in the foul fences, on the grass in woods, in hollow places, to come forth in the spring to carry destruction alike to the crops of the sloven, as well as to the more careful agriculturist.

CHARCOAL.

Pounded charcoal, or the refuse of the heap, should be thickly strewed over every place where the filth is allowed to accumulate. It absorbs the bad smell, and makes an excellent manure of what otherwise would not only be useless but offensive. It also prevents the larvae of insects from becoming flies or moths. Pigs love to eat charcoal, and are thought to fatten on it; and, in the course of the summer months, some families frequently have a bushel or so at a time thrown over the pen. It makes the manure so much more valuable that it is worth while to buy it for the purpose: and in so doing the pens are never offensive.

TURPENTINE FOR WOUNDS IN TREES.

The damaged parts of the tree should be cut away or peeled off in the spring, and the places must be rubbed with turpentine, on a fine sunny day, which becomes a sort of varnish, so that the wounds will be kept from the moisture and air, and will speedily recover. We have put grafting wax on such places, and found that it answered very well. We suppose the principle of its operation to be in protecting the parts from the decomposing effects of atmospheric moisture, warmth, &c.