

# THE OUTSIDE VIEWPOINT

**I** PUBLISH below further letters from those who value an outside opinion in the arrangement of their difficulties. There is every indication that these columns are appreciated. On the other hand, direct statement of facts, simple phrases and legible handwriting assist considerably.

*Ann Slade*

## Brother and Sister

"I love my home but I cannot get on with my brother. There are only the two of us but ever since we were little we seem to have been at cross purposes, and now that we are grown-up we can't agree on the smallest thing. Mother takes his part. We both help to keep the home going and I feel rather mean at the thought of leaving.—D.S."

*(It is a pity you cannot choose an occupation that would take you away somewhere else. I cannot see that anything is really gained for any of the household if there is the wretchedness of continual friction. If you truly cannot live peacefully and happily at home I certainly advise you to try to live your own life. So many girls back or board these days and learn to build their own lives very successfully, independent of family.)*

## Unhappy Experience

"I have been married eight years and we were very happy. My husband is an officer on a boat and comes home fairly often. Lately he has been very moody and bitterly jealous. It is all about nothing but his trust in me seems to have vanished.—A.V."

*(He must know your character by now. Therefore I think it must be the influence of others who have been disillusioned. Has he a friend, by any chance, who has had some such unhappy experience?)*

## The Adopted Child

"My husband and I adopted a small boy when he was only nine months old. He is nearly two years old now but cannot walk or even stand steadily. Is it unusual for a child to take so long to learn, or am I being over-anxious? We are as fond of him as if he were our own and do everything possible to make him strong.—L.P.J."

*(Two years does seem late for walking. His weakness may be due to pre-natal food deficiency. A special diet now may be all that is necessary to bring him up to normal. But I certainly think it would be wise to have him properly examined—preferably at a Public Hospital where you can get the benefit of several expert opinions.)*

## A Matter of Time

"I was formerly my husband's housekeeper, and now, though my stepchildren are attached to me, I know I am not accepted by many former friends of the family. It distresses me to think my husband may feel slighted on my account. I cannot bring myself to discuss it with him.—T.L."

*(I think it would be only painful to try to discuss such a thing with your husband. If you love him and are careful to please him it is enough. The rest is a matter of time—and also of very little importance. Take up some pursuit that will occupy you happily—preferably one in which your stepchildren can take an interest also.)*

## No Common Interests

"The girl I love went to Europe to study two years ago. She still writes to me but we seem now to have no interests in common. Mine are all sport. Should I wait for her to come back?—W.V."

*(If you feel you can do without her I advise you to try. Europe will have developed her in a way that will remove her interests further than ever, even in peace time. If your romance came to nothing before she left I fear it is unlikely to do so now.)*

## The "Pushing" Child

"How does one cure a child of 'pushing'? Our second to youngest (I have five children) makes himself definitely unpopular with all grown-ups by 'buntings' and 'pushings' with a very bullethead whenever we are especially occupied. His mother comes in for most of it.—G.N.M."

*(You probably have the key to the situation in your phrase "second to youngest." It is quite a common thing for a small person to feel distinctly unhappy at the arrival of a new brother or sister and it is not difficult to understand. All the attention formerly lavished on him becomes the unargued right of another. The "bunting" is his inarticulate way of making himself noticed. His mother can soon alter all this by a little added "petting" and letting him help with baby.)*

## Just As Intelligent

"We have three sons. The youngest seems just as intelligent as his brothers but, for some unknown reason, does not do well at school. This is the end of his first year—a very bad one. He wants to start work after Christmas. Do you think it wise?—V.O.S."

*(Yes, I think I do. It is hard to be sure—but if High School was right for him the first year should have been enough for him to settle in. Many lads who have gone through primary school only have done excellently afterwards—frequently outstripping their more docile brothers. Has he any definite interest?)*

## The Older Man

"I have been in love with a friend of my parents since I was a little girl. I am twenty now and he is forty-five. But I cannot think of boys of my own age, and he has no idea. Shall I marry someone else and try to forget him?—S.W."

*(Good heavens, no—you'll only remember forever! Take all your courage and tell him how it is. It will be worth it—if I guess him right—whichever way it goes.)*

## ANSWERS TO CORRESPONDENTS

"P.R."—I have handed on your inquiry to a reliable authority on the subject and will post the reply direct to the address you give.

"T.L.S."—All queries regarding food recipes should be directed to "Aunt Daisy," c/o The Listener, 93-107 Featherston Street, Wellington.

# WHILE THE KETTLE BOILS

Dear Friends,

The other day I felt in need of a little cheer, so I went into town and bought a new hat. It's a recipe that I've tried before—and it never fails to work.

I went into town feeling a shade depressed, and three hours later a polite but firm shopwalker assured me that the shop had officially closed three minutes earlier, and if I didn't want to be locked out—or in, I had better Impshi!—or words to that effect. I went, clutching a large brown paper hat-bag, and feeling slightly reckless and decidedly exhilarated. That is what buying a new hat does for you. More so if, like your reckless Cynthia, you blithely forsake your usual line of millinery and branch out in quite a new style. Believe me, dear friends, this is good for the soul. It gives you a Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde sort of feeling—and you step out in a gay new spirit of adventure.

It is an adventure in itself to make a tour of the millinery departments to-day. The collections are weird and varied—but never dull. Funny little tip-tilted chapeaux with a crown like Mother Goose perched impudently on top. Tricornes, turbans, and jaunty toques. Some of the most striking gain individuality from their contrasting veils—which are indispensable. A smart navy blue Breton sailor tied with a stiff green veil. A black creation, made alluring by the addition of a cyclamen veiling, tied at the back with two long floating ends. A white straw swathed in a white, black chenille-spotted veil. The possibilities are endless, and the results enchanting. A woman gains glamour when her eyes smile at you behind a veil's fine mesh. They can transform an everyday hat into a thing of beauty and distinction.

But there is more in this hat business than meets the eye. If you want to complete the picture, just think occasionally of the expression you wear. The loveliest model that ever came out of a French salon will lose half its charm if it is accompanied by an unbecoming expression. Most women worry about their make-up or the tilt of their hat, forgetting all about their expressions. Just take a peep at yourself in a mirror some unsuspecting moment as you pass down the street, and perhaps you will see what I mean.

No matter if you are feeling depressed or discouraged, keep up the corners of your mouth, ease the tense line of your jaw, and infuse a softening into your gaze. Smile on the world and it will smile back at you. Let it know you are courageous and defiant—and can take it on the chin. None of us is free of care of some kind, but we can keep it personal to ourselves. Don't let your expression betray you: you owe it, not only to your own pride—but to your new hat—to be cheerful. Make a complete job of it—see that your expression matches your hat. Try and get the feeling of your hat. If it is demure, then you will look demure. If it is one of those cheeky, impudent affairs, then you will look correspondingly naughty—but charming. This is not only psychology, but art. One should always strive for the artistic, even in the most commonplace, everyday things. It fulfils an instinct in us that goes back to Eve.

On the subject of hats, a friend told me of an amusing incident during a recent tour of America.

During a visit to a cinema, a slide was thrown on the screen:—

*"The management wishes to spare elderly ladies any inconvenience. They are therefore invited to retain their hats."*

There was an immediate stir all over the theatre—and all hats came off!

Yours cordially,

*Cynthia*