

**A MANUAL FOR YOUNG LADIES, WITH
HINTS ON LOVE, COURTSHIP, MARRIAGE
AND THE TRUE
OBJECTS OF LIFE. SUPPLEMENTARY TO
KENT'S NEW COMMENTARY; A
MANUAL FOR YOUNG MEN**

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A Manual for Young Ladies, with Hints on Love, Courtship, Marriage and the True Objects of Life. Supplementary to Kent's New Commentary; A Manual for Young Men by C. H. Kent

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C. H. KENT

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KENT'S NEW COMMENTARY;

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BY C. H. KENT.

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PREFACE.

The attempt of an unprofessional writer to compile a book with the expectation that it will meet with favor and be a success, is an experiment that few care to make; and especially so, if he has read of the fate of thousands who have written only to have their work dead in a week on the hands of their publishers. Writers, too, who were no novices in literary labor, have had such experience; even so distinguished a writer as Lord Beaconsfield, for his "Endymion" was a failure, and a heavy loss to the publishers.

The old saying, that "they who know nothing, fear nothing," no doubt applies to those thirsting for fame in authorship, venturing where "angels fear to tread," &c. However, we remember reading of men who have made a success and a fortune in ventures in which no man of experience would have risked a dime. An eccentric character, styling himself Lord Timothy Dexter, once lived in Newburyport, Mass. He displayed his peculiar genius in various ways. His geographical knowledge was somewhat at fault, but had it been better, he would not have made a fortune as he did, by shipping an entire cargo of the old-fashioned brass warming-pans to the West Indies. The natives used the pans for molasses ladles, and the covers for strainers. This man also wrote a book which was a success by way of originality. He adopted a novel and original method, which no author or publisher before or since has dared to imitate. The title was striking—"A Pickle for the Knowing Ones," and a most remarkable feature about the book was, that everybody could read it, but not one could tell the subject it treated upon. He despised marring his book with punctuation marks, and threw them all in on the last page, leaving readers to punctuate to suit themselves. There were the "dots;" "season to your taste." It was too much of a "pickle."

We also felt we were inspired to write a book, and so the "NEW COMMENTARY" was compiled. We trembled, however, one day, at

the sight of a big pile of books right from the book-makers' hands, and wondered who would want a copy. We almost wished with Job, when he exclaimed, "O, that mine adversary had written a book," and not us, and then we should be relieved of the task of looking at them and dreading the ordeal that they must pass through before the fate of the venture would be decided. At last we made up our mind that it was just as well to settle the question at once, as to whether the "NEW COMMENTARY" was worthy of notice or not. We selected our man as the one who was to be the judge of what merit it contained, if any. With no little reluctance we dropped a copy into the post office to his address, to go on its mission, not knowing what might be its fate. Had the gentleman himself appeared at our office, we doubt whether we should have had the courage to have presented a copy to him then and there. We knew him to be not only an eminent scholar, but a most severe critic. In due time a letter came bearing the post-mark which we knew was the proof that our "NEW COMMENTARY" had reached its destination. We never broke open a letter with greater reluctance than we did this one. In fact, we looked at the envelope some time before we could muster up courage to open it. We fairly dreaded to face the revelation we knew it must contain. But aware that suspense is always more terrible to endure than the worst reality, we overcame our weakness and opened the letter. We "stood up" to read the verdict, being too nervous to sit down. We read it through once, and then again. We could not believe our eyes or our senses. In fact, it was too much for us. We were overcome—dumbfounded. Our eyes seemed to be failing us, blinded by undue and unusual moisture—*they weep!*—we couldn't help it. How could we, when we read "*hitting the nail on the head,*" "your way of clinching every nail by pertinent and striking examples, so largely new to readers, is most commendable. Jacob Abbott began that line of writing for the young, and he has had no lineal successor, unless you prove to be the man. I hope you may."

We couldn't comprehend the situation; we couldn't believe that we had become a full-fledged author without preparation or experience, and unskilled in scholastic lore. But, here was an endorsement of the work by a well-known college president; a man who abhors shams and slipshod work of every kind; neither is he given

to jokes, or praising what to him does not merit praise. We were simply astonished beyond measure. A check of a thousand dollars from a stranger couldn't have surprised us more. Still we wanted to try other disinterested judges, men of rank in their profession. We sent copies to various places, even to the "Hub," the Athens of America, intellectual Boston, to men whose judgment and reputation in the literary world was par excellent. The same general tenor characterized every response. It did not seem to be affected in the least by the "climate." It stood it well; August and December changed not the verdict. All pronounced the "NEW COMMENTARY" as exceedingly valuable, and most opportune. It has met with unprecedented favor wherever it has gone.

One oversight, however, has been noticed by several eminent ladies, who have been kind enough to indicate the omission, and which we now propose and are happy to supply. We find we were some like Mr. Smith, who lived in Boston—probably he don't live there now. It was August, hot and suffocating. He proposed to try the country air for a month. In due time he alighted from the stage coach in front of a country farm-house, up in New Hampshire, the home of an old acquaintance, where he was most welcome. His traps, trunks, valise, (no bandbox), hunting and fishing tackle and umbrella were not overlooked, and were landed upon the veranda, and his friend's wife met him at the door and gave him a most cordial welcome, and then asked him, "Where is Mrs. Smith?" Mr. Smith threw up his hands in blank astonishment as he exclaimed, "I declare if I have not come off and left Mrs. Smith at home. I felt all the way up that I had forgotten something." And so it was we forgot the young ladies in the original edition. We are very glad that our lady friends have noticed our extreme partiality to the young men, and have asked, "When shall there a Kent arise to inform the young ladies that parlor idlers are only better than street idlers," &c.

It was all wrong. Young ladies occupy a most exalted position in our country—greater than the young men. Their influence is to shape the destiny of the coming generation. If they shall step to the front and fill the high and exalted positions they were born to fill, it is of the utmost importance that they shall rightly comprehend their responsibilities, that they may prepare themselves for

their high mission. If, however, they shall fail or neglect to fit themselves for these responsibilities, their own future happiness will be placed in jeopardy. Idleness and indifference will bring disappointment and misery always. It is the natural fruit. The character and influence of a mother is incalculable for good or evil. The mother makes the home—her influence is the most potent.

What we have said in the following pages has been said in all earnestness, and perhaps too strongly stated for some classes of minds. It is, however, absolutely necessary to paint the picture in the strongest possible light and shade, yet none the less true to fact, that we may reach the attention of those most needing advice, and the most likely to not heed it, unless it be well emphasized. It is those who are dreaming that we wish and hope to reach, and to rouse from their lethargy, that they may realize that life to be a successful one, must be lived in sober earnestness, having a fixed purpose, a plan by which every day's march shall bring the goal one day nearer, with its treasures of wealth and enjoyment.

The picture we have painted is a dark one; how could it be otherwise? Yet we have not shaded it as dark as the real facts would make it. There may be such a thing as making it too sombre, and the timid ones thereby become discouraged and say, "What's the use of trying to live at all. The world is full of wickedness and deception; no one can be trusted. If we make a friend to-day, they will betray us to-morrow. No use of my trying to do or be anything; I shall be disappointed, no matter what I do." We can say to all such, so long as you harbor such views and allow them to influence you in your daily life, so long and so much of that life will be a failure, and you the less fitted to make it a success.

We have given the dark side of wedded life for a purpose, and that purpose is that those who may enter into the married relation may do so intelligently, and not blindfolded, as has been done more than five times out of ten. We have shown only *one side* of the picture. The reverse side needs no censure or commendation. It will speak for itself. There are thousands, millions of homes where the entire family are a unit; where harmony and concord make it sweet to dwell therein; where true happiness is ever found, and where no harsh discords grate upon the sensitive ear. It is the ideal home we would point every young lady to look forward to earnestly, and

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to concentrate all of her energies for the accomplishment of that one grand achievement. If you should fail of reaching the highest round of your aspirations, your happiness will in no wise be lessened by the efforts you have made.

If what we have said shall be the means of influencing one of our readers to a higher plan of living, and thereby the fullest connubial happiness be granted to the most favored of earth, our efforts will not have been in vain. Trusting that what we have said shall meet the honest approbation of every one of our readers, and meet with general approval in so far as our aim and object shall appear to be based upon a desire to uphold truth and virtue, thereby elevating humanity up to a broader and nobler plane of living, our work is respectfully submitted.

THE AUTHOR.

Park Place, Davenport, 1881.