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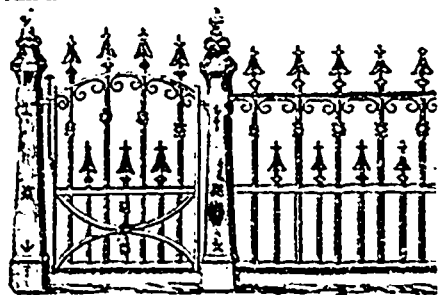
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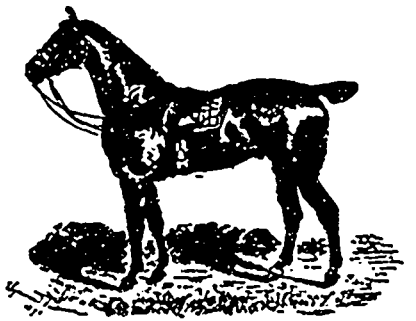
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WITH OUR GIRLS

There is a good deal of nonsense talked in the present day about the up-to-date girl, the modern woman, the new woman. Just a few minutes ago, I laid down a recently published book in which the author, taking two sweet elderly Scotch country women as his types, says:

"And as I think on these 'things which are known to me and listen to the clamour we hear of the 'new woman' and her rights and privileges, I wonder much that women are so blind. For the 'old women,' of which these are the types, exercise rights which are divine, and have secured to them privileges which the angels about the throne might envy. And I pray that when this empty clamour shall have died down, our women will return to the simpler life, and be, as aforetime, ministering spirits to the many who need their sweet ministry; faithful servants, whom, when the Lord cometh, he shall find watching."

Now, you and I are aware that while this is a very pretty sentiment, it means nothing, and amounts to nothing. We are quite conscious that the writer (he is a man, of course) has never met a new woman, but has gained the conception of some curious anomaly such as is pictured in floating scrap or 'fill-in' to be found in every journal of the day.

Let us put together this 'new woman' as these dear stupid men conceive her. She is a bicyclist, a bloomerite, a pugilist, an Amazonian, a circus clown. She is a doctor, a minister, a lawyer. She goes to the university; she takes degrees. Occasionally she comes out senior wrangler. She wants to vote; she believes in clubs. She keeps bachelor hall. She has a latch key. She adores bargain day. She dresses well and has opinions of her own, and if she likes a man, she manages to let him know it.

That is all we remember just now, and every one of these 'features' are taken from high class journals, or the sober lips of sober men; so, although presenting a curious anomaly, we must perforce accept them as truth.

Now, imagine a circus clown demanding woman suffrage, or a pugilist taking a university course,—yet each of these are given as attributes of this impalpable hybrid—the new woman.

You have never seen her, nor have I. Women—athletic, bookish, thoughtful, flighty, fast, mannish, weak, strong, intellectual, spiritual, commanding or retiring, these we have met and meet every day; but they are the old, old women, and there is nothing new about them save the environment to which they are so cleverly adapting themselves.

If the writer of our opening quotation were to place his two dear country Scotchwomen of fifty years ago in the centre of the busy city life of to-day, how would they suit their surroundings?

He would be the first to hasten them back to their own humble

duties and quiet hills, and to turn relievedly to the woman of to-day.

It is little wonder that girls grow weary of the continual caption and misrepresentation to which the daughter of to-day is subjected. They know that of a truth they are God's women, full as womanly as that first Eve. They realise that the conditions of life are complex, that the onward march has been taken in big strides during the past quarter century, and, if in endeavouring to keep pace, they have stumbled a little, or their step has been irregular, surely the men who walk beside them should not cavil nor condemn.

The girl of to-day is filling to-day's needs. She knows that she is not strong-minded in the sense of being mannish,—but educated. She is not fast, but free; not sentimental, but sensible. She is simply adapting herself to changing conditions and her individual circumstance.

These dear 'ministering spirits' which men affect to admire and love so well, may they not be found in thousands and tens of thousands among the women of to-day? And if the ministering be done a trifle more intelligently because of the preparatory education, is that a matter for regret? Is it evil that nurses, women doctors, teachers and mothers should have training and scientific knowledge for their duties?

As for love,—ah, well, you and I know that which men do not understand,—that neither education nor wealth nor fame nor all the adverse influences of modern social life shall be strong enough to separate a woman from a man she loves.

And if she does not love,—or, loving, misses him,—then surely if the 'new' conditions enable her to live her life alone in comfortable self-support, and intellectual fulness,—all hail to the new woman.

MARY S. PEARSON.

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