

BRIC-À-BRAC.

WOMAN.

BY MOSES OATES.

Oh woman, woman, you're the source
Of nearly every earthly trouble,
And when you're not you're sure, of course,
To come and make our misery double.

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Thus might I rail at womankind.
Were I, as crusty bachelors, who
The dross of human nature find
Because the gold they will not view.

But mine has been the happier lot
To leave the dusty, weed-grown highway,
And seek some rare sequestered spot
By a less trodden, lovely by-way,

Where fairest flowers, with sweet perfume,
Blow for the few who feel their beauty,
In such pure, radiant glory bloom,
That loving them becomes a duty.

Hence are my thoughts of womankind
Borne ever on a charmed air :
This truth is cherished in my mind—
'As a true woman nought's so fair.'

Since, as in earlier days, I dream
Of grace and beauty more than human,
And now, as then, they ever seem
To shape themselves into a woman.

And now, as then, I love to think
That woman's is the purer nature,
And serves man's grosser soul to link
To angel forms of noblest stature.

And when for higher things I long,
I place the virtues that I covet
In the ideal of my song,
And learn to imitate and love it.

THE MAJOR'S ESSAY.

This was a youthful effort of the
Major—for the prize in composition :

'THE GIRAFFE.'

'No wonder the toper in the play
sighed for a giraffe's neck, or that Mr.
Smith, when he saw the animal in the
park, should have exclaimed, "Imagine
two yards of sore throat!"
'The pains and pleasures of the came-

lopard are, indeed, intense beyond the
ordinary lot. When he reaches a spring
after a long pilgrimage in the desert, he
enjoys himself hugely. The water gur-
gles refreshingly down six feet of neck
hose, making a miniature cataract. He
has been seen to smile a minute or two
after swallowing a peculiarly nice plu-
tain, like a Scotchman laughing at a joke
five minutes after its utterance. The
pleasant morsel seems to grow sweeter as
it goes down, and when it comes to the
last few feet of windpipe, the animal's
keen enjoyment overcomes his sense of
decorum at meals, and he breaks into a
chuckle.

'On the other hand, when a disap-
pointed giraffe gulps down his bitterness
at the triumph of a favoured rival, the
convulsive spasm ripples painfully down
till it reaches the uttermost end of the
throat.

'The death-rattle in the throat of a
departing camelopard is like a whole or-
chestra out of tune.

'The song of the giraffe is seldom
heard, and never forgotten. It proba-
bly suggested to the poet the exquisite
idea of "linked sweetness long drawn
out."

'To see an unrepining giraffe swallow-
ing bitter almonds which he has mis-
taken for sweet ones, and attempting to
cover his distress, is a spectacle of pat-
ience and long-suffering, piteous as it is
sublime.

'In running matches a giraffe can al-
ways beat a horse of exactly equal speed.
At the winning-post he has merely to
stretch out his head a few yards and
win by a neck. A lion can get better
time out of a giraffe than the most skil-
ful jockey.

'The lazy and voluptuous monarch of
the Nevva-washees, who does not con-
ceal his dislike for uncooked Baptist
missionaries, fords the swollen Niger in
a palankeen suspended from the horns
of two domestic camelopards, and thus
preserves his sacred person from contact
with the stream. It has not yet been