

## Woman and Her Work

A few years ago there was a very interesting controversy in some of the newspapers concerning the proper disposal of the presents which a devoted lover is supposed to lavish upon the idol of his heart; after the engagement has been broken and the quondam lovers have gone their separate ways. Some authorities said the sacred tokens should be immediately returned to the donors, while others held the more modern view that where the engagement was dissolved by mutual consent, as so often happened, or where the two parted without acrimony, and with the possibility of future friendship between them, it was perfectly correct for each to retain the presents given by the other, when a mutual wish to that effect had been expressed.

The presents given by a man to a woman it was argued, were generally of such a nature that they were utterly useless to him when returned, and the sight of them could only cause him pain, while their possession would be a continual source of embarrassment to him. Besides that as it was manifestly impossible for his late fiancée to return the flowers he had given her, the chocolates and theatre tickets he had lavished upon her, or the worn out gloves and fans she had had no hesitation in accepting from her intended husband, the returning of more tangible though often less valuable gifts was really an inconsistency, a sort of straining at a gnat and swallowing a camel.

On the other hand it would be most trying for the discarded swain to be expected to return his former lady love a choice collection of the half worn slippers, braces neckties, and smoking caps she had worked, and presented to him from time to time; not to mention the elaborate vests, and dressing gowns which it has been the fashion lately to shower upon one's lover, as Christmas and New Year's gifts. Fancy returning to the dear girl one had adored last year, but grown cold to of late, the well smoked, and rather odoriferous pipe which had been her last birthday gift to one!

Lately it has been considered quite the thing to offer one's lady love a pair of dainty evening slippers to match one of her ball gowns, but picture the return of those same love tokens very much soiled and perhaps with a whole in the side of one! The idea is far from pleasant.

The suggestion that the presents which two people who once loved each other dearly, but whom time and circumstances have separated, exchanged during their love dream, should be tenderly laid away out of sight in some private drawer, and preserved as sacred relics of the past, seems a practical and sensible one and a very happy way out of the difficulty. The idea of continuing to wear commonly the bracelet once fondly clasped by a devoted lover, who is a lover no longer, is not to be entertained for a moment, but there is nothing repulsive in the thought of putting it tenderly out of sight. The ring itself, which is the actual pledge of the engagement should always be returned, the sight of it could cause nothing but pain, I should imagine, and though I have heard of girls who continued to wear their engagement rings with all the calmness in life, long after the engagement itself was broken off, I have never yet encountered a well authenticated instance of such bad taste, so I am naturally rather disinclined to believe that one exists. Of course where where engaged people part after a sudden quarrel, or where one has treated the other very badly, been guilty of the meanness of jilting, perhaps, there is a certain amount of satisfaction, a grim comfort in returning every gift however trifling that the perfidious one has bestowed; and I believe there have been instances where the jilted party has been most exacting of the return of the love tokens when the jilter has shown a disposition to retain them. In fact I came across a very amusing instance of this, the other day, a jilted swain out in Nebraska having made things most unpleasant for his late innamorata by demanding the immediate return of the many costly presents he had lavished upon her during an ardent court ship extending over a period of two years. What adds to the awkwardness of the situation is the fact that amongst the most valuable of these presents are a number of jewelled garters, which the young lady positively refuses to surrender. The lover, who has certainly been treated very badly indeed, has no idea of allowing himself to be imposed upon, and threatens an action for replevin followed by a visit from a police officer armed with a search warrant to search for the garters, and other presents which it would be very difficult to recover

without the young lady's consent. Both the young people move in the best society circles in the town of Lincoln, Nebraska, and it can readily be imagined that the affair has created a sensation amongst their friends, and that animated discussions as to how far the jurisdiction of the law extends in such matters, and just what the rights of an officer would be in carrying on a search for such an article as a garter considering the position in which it is usually to be found.

The first indication that the injured lover had of his lady's change of heart, was conveyed through the cruel medium of a printed announcement of her engagement to another man, and not receiving any official notification from the lady herself he made a demand through his father for the return of all his letters and presents are valued by him at two thousand dollars, and his ire being aroused by the cupidity of his former love he followed up the demand by engaging an attorney to look after his interests and succeeded in recovering a valuable souvenir clasp, and an expensive mandolin but nothing more. The attorney threatens the replevin suit, and search warrant, and there the matter rests for the present, but I confess I am anxious to hear the result of the search.

Yes girls! there are cases in which it is decidedly better to return all the presents.

I am afraid we are in for the perfectly close tight sleeve, and that it will be upon us in all its hideousness almost before we have time to realize the fate which has befallen us. Already the sleeve that is tight nearly to the shoulder, and finished with a moderate puff, begins to have an old-fashioned appearance—at least so the dressmakers say—and they assert that the one certain thing about the fashions for the coming season, is the absolutely plain sleeve. It is a horrible prospect, and I cannot understand why women seem to be compelled to bow to fashions they detest. The close sleeve may be economical as far as the quality of material required to cut it goes, but that is its one recommendation, and is counterbalanced by a dozen disadvantages. It is uncomfortable to begin with, one cannot raise her hands to her head to replace a hairpin, or secure her veil without the risk of either bursting the elbows, or tearing the arm-holes of her sleeves, and in warm weather the clinging sleeve is a perfect misery. It is extravagant because it wears out in half the time that the large sleeve does; and worst of all, it is most ungraceful, showing up every defect of a poor figure, and detracting from the charms of a good one unless it happens to be cast in nature's most perfect mould, and not more than about fifty per cent of us are blessed with that kind of figure.

Picture the woman whose arms are thin, with skin tight sleeves to her dress! I don't mean the arms which are small, or politely termed "slender" I mean the arm which is nearly the same size from shoulder to wrist, except where the elbow joint stands out in high relief like a door knob! Why such a woman would almost be justified in suing her dressmaker for libel, if that autocrat dressed her in tight sleeves, and that is just what she will do. You cannot persuade a first class modiste to do violence to her fetish—the prevailing mode—if you ask her to do it she will have none of you, so you have no choice but to bow the knee and look hideous. Tight sleeves are the fashion and no dressmaker will injure her reputation for style, by making garments cut after last year's modes; if your arms are not right for the fashion it is a pity, but as the arms are in fault they must suffer, that's all.

What a pity we cannot all be like the lovely Princess of Wales who never follows the fashion unless it suits her, and having found a becoming style adheres to it in spite of every change in the mode.

The sleeve of the present is so trimmed that its elaborate puffs, tucks and shirrings distract attention from the fact that but for a frill or two, or a little sleeve cap, they are quite tight and plain at the shoulder. Some of these sleeves are really very pretty, and not sufficiently tight as yet to be ungraceful. They have little frills of lace the entire length, or rows of insertion set on either in points, or around the sleeve; or they are trimmed lengthwise from shoulder to wrist with rows of braid or ribbon. Other new sleeves have a small puff at the top beneath which is set a band of insertion; below this the material is tucked in lengthwise tucks, down to the elbow where they cease, and the fulness below them is formed into another small puff. Clusters of three small frills at the shoulder and elbow trim other sleeves. The plain large leg o' mutton sleeves so popular last year, can be easily remodelled by taking in several inches at the seam from the elbow up, and cutting off nearly enough for another sleeve at the top. If the sleeve was made early this spring and has the moderately full puff in fashion then

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Send Size, Width, Style of Toe, and full particulars.

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## WATERBURY & RISING.

It can be much improved by trimming just below the puff with bands of satin velvet ribbon, or insertion of lace finished at the top with small buckles, or little bows of ribbon. So much for the sleeve.

The old fashioned Spanish flounce with rows of insertion set in above the hem, is the latest whim of fashion in organdie and thin muslin gowns, but the new model differs from the old, in being knife plaited, and is therefore very much prettier. Rows and rows of lace insertion set in around the plain portion above the flounce, add greatly to the appearance of the gown, and give it that yoke like appearance, so popular just now.

The puff seems to divide honors with the frill this summer, and for the information of the home dressmaker, I may say that the tiny puffs which are really shirrings are sometimes not more than half an inch apart, and are made in strips, the gathering underneath, or else with very narrow bands of insertion between, and are then used for yokes, as a trimming around yokes of lace or tucks or as a decoration for sleeves. Yokes set in around the hips of some of the latest skirts, are made of puffs; for instance, a silk gown has a skirt yoke which points down sharply in front, made of mousseline de soie of the same shade. The puffs run around, and are banded between with a narrow trimming of jet. Puffs require skillful hand sewing, the sewing machine being powerless to deal with them, so they are a troublesome decoration in spite of their beauty. Tucks, set in closely together to resemble accordion plaiting, are greatly used for yokes, epaulettes collars and vests, and they are very pretty.

Ruches of all widths are greatly worn. Wide ruches cut bias and gathered twice in the middle are used as a heading for the graduated flounce, wider in the back than the front, which is a feature of so many of the summer dresses; and narrow ruches cut straight and firmly hemmed trim organdie dresses from the waist to the hem being set on at wide intervals.

ASTRA.

### A PUZZLING SUBSCRIPTION.

His Name was Blackbird but it Puzzled the Postmaster.

The French word for black is noir, and the French word for bird is oiseau. If the reader knows these two things, and the further one that Pierre is French for Peter, he will be ready to appreciate a post-office scene in upper Michigan, of which the Chicago Times-Herald prints a description. The actors were an 'amateur postmaster' and a half-breed Indian. The half-breed had called for a letter, and the postmaster was looking for it.

'There never was such a name in the world,' said the postmaster, in a grumpy

voice. 'Who ever heard of Blackbird for a name?'

'Dat eez so—dat my name-me,' said the man who wanted the letter. He spoke with a strong French accent. 'Peter Blackbird, my fader he make it too.'

'And I tell you Blackbird ain't no kind of a name—heathen or otherwise. Say, Frenchy, what have you done to pick up a name like that? Howsomover, if the letter was here it would be plain readin.' Mobbe'll come next week. Who d'ye expect it from, anyhow?'

'Me fader—an' it ze money got—dat I len' him me.'

'Well, get out now with your jargon. If it comes I'll save it for you. Come again when you can't stay so long,' and the letters were packed away for the next corner.

In a week the half-breed was back looking for a letter for 'Peter Blackbird'. And as before, no letter awaited him.

'Can you read writing?' asked the postmaster, angrily, as he flipped the letters on the rough counter.

'Whaffor I hev lettre come eef I no read?' asked the half-breed in return.

'Then you look here and see that there isn't anything for 'Peter Blackbird.'

The woodman took each letter in his grimy hands and with infinite pains and difficulty spelled out the hard names, in comparison with which the one he had given seemed an easy one. At last he seized an envelope with a yell of delight, and began tearing it open, when the postmaster insisted on seeing it.

'Hello!' he said, 'this aint your letter!'

'Yum, yum, yum, dat my lettre—I tell you dat name in English—for you not speak-a de French—dot my fader hanwrite—dat my name.'

He held it up and the puzzled postmaster looked at the inscription and read this legend.

'Pierre L'Oiseau Noir, Camp Alger, Mich.'

'Well, what has that got to do with you?' asked the postmaster. 'Dat Peter Blackbird in French—all right. What for you zat ig'rant,' was the half-breed's answer, as seizing his precious letter, he faded away.

### A Purchaser's Option.

Throggs (enviously)—Dat's quite a corporation yev've got on yer, Buck. New food lay?

Bucktooth Boggs—'Yep. I allus ast wimmin ter sell me some wittles nowadays, which shames 'em inter givin' me; a good hand out.'

Thin Throggs—'S'posin' sum woman wid no shame in her wants ter take pay?' Bucktooth Boggs—I find out w'ot price she charges an' retuse ter pay de outrageous amount.'

### A Successful Appeal.

'Our type-writer girl asked the boss if he couldn't lighten her work this hot weather.'

'What did he say?'

'He told her not to hit her type-writer keys so hard, and to lick her postage stamps only on the corners.'—Chicago Record.

A gentleman had left his corner seat in an already crowded railway car to go in search of something to eat, leaving a rug to reserve his seat. On returning he found that, in spite of the rug and the protests of his fellow passengers, the seat had been usurped by one in lady's garments. To his protestations her lofty reply was: 'Do you know, sir, that I am one of the directors' wives?' 'Madame,' he replied, 'were you the director's only wife, I should still protest.'—Argonaut.

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### His Limited Information.

A countryman who had lost his wife asked an editor to write her obituary.

'Gentle and lovable, was she?' asked the editor.

'Well, tol'able—'cep'tin' when she wuz riled.'

'What was her age?'

'She never did tell it. All I know is, she wuz purty lively for her age!—Atlanta Constitution.'

'And so my darling got the prize at the baby show. I knew he would. It couldn't have been otherwise,' said Mrs. Youngma to one of the old bachelor judges. 'Yes, madam; we all agreed that your baby was the least objectionable one of the lot,' replied the brute.

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