

WOMAN and HER WORK.

A British ratepayer has recently made the appalling discovery that amongst the patrons of the public baths fitted up in the principal cities of England, for the convenience of the poorer classes, only one out of every seven is a woman. And the rate-

ever washes properly, while the woman who makes it a regular rule to crawl out of bed either into a tub of steaming hot, or ice-cold water, just as her constitution demands, would deem it very im-



STYLISH OUTING COSTUMES.

The gown at the left center is of heavy crepon bordered with bengaline. The corsage and sleeves are of bengaline. The vest and revers are of white satin. The other center wrap is of fine mohair with sleeves and facings of bengaline, all black. The incroyable costume is of heavy cheney silk, mauve in color. The coat is of royal purple velvet. The costume at the extreme left is of shepherd's check surah, with white china silk combination, and the silk is overlaid with black insertion.

payer above mentioned has taken the trouble to write to the Pall Mall Gazette commenting on the fact, and drawing the conclusion therefrom, entirely to his own satisfaction, that women are less cleanly than men.

Of course this one man's opinion is not of sufficient weight to brand our sex with the stigma of lack of cleanliness, and more than one swallow it requires to produce a whole summer by his mere appearance, but as I have seen the item, and the ratepayer's letter, rather widely copied in Canadian papers, and no one has arisen to set the troubled mind of its gifted author at rest, I am moved to cross swords with him myself in defence of my sisters in the humbler walks of life, and make a few suggestions which I am satisfied would never have entered his narrow mind.

I am painfully aware that amongst a certain class of men there exists—and, none the less deeply-rooted because of its utter absurdity and untruth,—a stubborn belief that men are more given to personal

mance in general society, and very properly holds her tongue on the subject of her ablutions, with the cruel result that she is frequently credited with an indifference to the pleasures of the lavatory which she is very far from feeling.

I can truly say that I have yet to meet with a thoroughly uncleanly woman moving in respectable society, while I regret to say that I have known several—aye, half a dozen or more men, who answered to that description perfectly, and yet move in the best society; and at this moment I know more women than men to whom a daily bath is an absolute necessity, and who are just as great "cranks" on the subject of cleanliness as any man in the world.

But to return to those poor women in London who have so obstinately refused to avail themselves of the privileges and conveniences of the free baths so generously provided either by the municipal or imperial government, I forget which, and incurred the stigma of allowing seven men to bathe each day, for every one woman

bodies decently, and that poor as they were they still retained enough of womanly modesty to prevent them from venturing on the public streets in the rags they wore at home? That many of them had not possessed a pair of shoes for years, and naturally shrank from traversing the long distance which often intervened between their own dwelling and the public baths in bare feet? That others again were shut up in mills, shops and laundries almost from daylight till dark earning their daily bread, and had their poor household duties to attend to, both before they went to work, and after they got home: so that they simply could not snatch time to indulge in the luxury of a bath, unless they chose the dead of night, when of course the baths would be closed. Some poor women have no one to leave their babies with while they are away from home, and so are tied to the house from one year's end to another.

I think there is another class still, and a more numerous one than the casual observer might imagine, of women who, poor as they are, yet retain a certain obstinate pride which would make them consider that they lowered themselves in the eyes of their



VESTS AND CHEMISETTES.

The center figure shows a novel combination of white duck vest and black pongee shirt waist with cravat bow. The upper left figure is a full vest of brocade. That below it is a polka dot pique vest, plain and double breasted. On the right below is a white chemisette and collar, both postiche. Above it is a false front to wear under a blazer coat. It is postiche.

neighbors, and proclaimed their poverty to the whole world, when they made use of any public institution which at all savored of charity, even when it took the form of a bath. Such women may not be uncleanly, but so long as they possess a pail and a piece of yellow soap at home they will not "go out to wash themselves" as they would express it.

With the men of their class it is different. They must be on the street frequently, so they have to be dressed decently, however the woman at home may be clothed, and when once their hours of labor are over their time is their own. They have no children to look after, no cooking to do, and no clothes to mend, so nothing is easier for one of them to do than to stroll into one of our baths and have a refreshing dip, either at dinner time, or after six o'clock in the evening; it will soothe his temper, relieve his tired muscles, and at the same time give him a reputation for cleanliness, which his poor jaded wife at home might also enjoy, if he was willing to stay in once in a while, and look after the children, while she took her turn of rest and refreshment. I think perhaps these are a few of the reasons which may have prevented poor women from indulging freely in the luxury of public baths, and I hope that at least those who read the Woman's page of PROGRESS will judge them more leniently than the writer in the Pall Mall Gazette seems to have done.

Nothing has been further from my intention than to hurt the feelings of any member of the sterner sex who may chance to read these pages. Bless his dear heart, I would not wound him for the world, either individually, or collectively! I know he is a sweet clean soul, but still he tells about his virtues in that respect too much, and at the same time is so inclined to doubt the existence of similar good qualities on our part, that I feel I am only doing justice to my own sex, in opening his eyes to the fact that he is not the only human animal who appreciates the blessings of soap and water.

Mrs. Clark's Mind at Rest.

Mrs. Richard Clark, wife of the Congressman from Mobile, is one of the few women brave enough to scatter witty things in the waste of five minute official calls. At the house of Mrs. Hale of Maine the church service was mentioned. "There's one portion of the litany," said Mrs. Clark, "that always used to bother me. It's where we pray especially for the 'widowed and fatherless.' I never

cleanliness than women. How the idea originated I am not prepared to say, unless it may be that the man who is fond of bathing is usually equally fond of talking about it, and taking it calmly for granted that no one else in the world but himself

who took advantage of free soap, water and towels.

I wonder if it ever struck the writer in the London paper, that there were hosts of women in that great city so poor that they had not sufficient clothes to cover their

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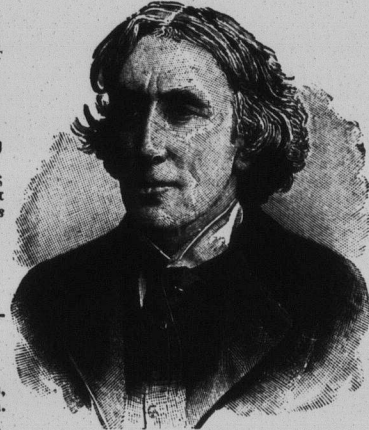
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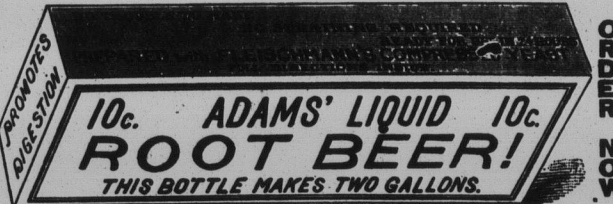
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