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WOMAN'S SCEPTRE. HAS FIGURED PROMINENTLY IN THE INTRIGUES OF HISTORY. Touch of a Fan changes a Nation's Destiny—Once Known as the Emblem of Chastity—Carried as the Standard of War.

The fan, "woman's sceptre," has, since the sixteenth century, been a necessary article of woman's dress, and it has played its own little part in the intrigues of love and politics, for once upon a time the touch of a fan changed the destiny of a nation. Even the fan of Addison designed to write about the fan in his "Spectator." Said George Augustus Sala: "If a woman was the first needle, no doubt a palm leaf was the first fan." Poor Rameses III, whose troubles began about 1285 B.C., when he ascended the throne of the Pharaohs, was wont to go about attired in black, wearing great somber eucular fans painted in brilliant colors if one may believe the evidence of the frescoes on the temple of Thebes. The fans of the early Egyptians and of the Persians were carried on standards in the hands of princes, bearing great military standards, and were made at different times of feathers, silk, and in the fifth century B. C. the fashion of peacock feather fans was introduced from Asia Minor.

With the introduction of Christianity the fan became an emblem of chastity, and was used to keep the flies from the chalice, being consecrated by St. Ambrose for that purpose. It was called the "fishbone," when it was used in papal ceremonies. In the sixteenth century, however, it became generally used. Queen Elizabeth, when she would suppose, had a quantity of them, and fans were among the treasures of Catherine de Medici. Fans were not made much in France until the days of Louis XIV., most of the trade before being with Spain. The Louis XIV. fan contained from eight to twenty blades, and when they were opened, they were in the shape of a fan, and the face of ivory or mother-of-pearl, decorated with gold or silver. The "mount," that is the part above the sticks, made the largest part of the fan. The fan opened to a full half circle. The "even tail brise," also of this period, had no mount, but was made up of sticks, which were painted, carved or decorated, with spangles. Some of the most beautiful fans were those described in one of her letters. It was of the style known as "Verina Martin." It represented the "Toilet of Venus" and a "Promenade," and the "Toilet of Venus" was a most beautiful and popular design. Martin was a coachmaker of the time of Louis XIV., who discovered a remarkable variety. One of these fans was a beautiful one, and it is now the property of Queen Victoria.

During the reign of Louis XV., the "Toilet of Venus" was a most popular design. The fan opened to a full half circle, and the face of ivory or mother-of-pearl, decorated with gold or silver. The "mount," that is the part above the sticks, made the largest part of the fan. The fan opened to a full half circle. The "even tail brise," also of this period, had no mount, but was made up of sticks, which were painted, carved or decorated, with spangles. Some of the most beautiful fans were those described in one of her letters. It was of the style known as "Verina Martin." It represented the "Toilet of Venus" and a "Promenade," and the "Toilet of Venus" was a most beautiful and popular design. Martin was a coachmaker of the time of Louis XIV., who discovered a remarkable variety. One of these fans was a beautiful one, and it is now the property of Queen Victoria.

DECADENCE OF THE FAN. During the seventeenth century, the fan became smaller, and its use very limited. It has been said that no man was ever known to murder with a cigar in his mouth, but Charles I. is asserted to have killed Marat without letting his fan fall. The Parisian fanmaker is the designer of the fashion of the present day. One very curious fan is not only a designer, but has a rare collection of old fans. The lace fan is among the finest of all. The fan of the Louis XVI. style and Verina Martin. In our own shops we find a splendid collection of the most exquisite designs. There is a black and white fan of the "Catherine de Medici" style, which is a most beautiful and popular design. The pearl sticks are inlaid, upon the mount are painted dainty designs. One very curious fan is not only a designer, but has a rare collection of old fans. The lace fan is among the finest of all. The fan of the Louis XVI. style and Verina Martin. In our own shops we find a splendid collection of the most exquisite designs. There is a black and white fan of the "Catherine de Medici" style, which is a most beautiful and popular design. The pearl sticks are inlaid, upon the mount are painted dainty designs. One very curious fan is not only a designer, but has a rare collection of old fans. The lace fan is among the finest of all. The fan of the Louis XVI. style and Verina Martin. In our own shops we find a splendid collection of the most exquisite designs. There is a black and white fan of the "Catherine de Medici" style, which is a most beautiful and popular design. The pearl sticks are inlaid, upon the mount are painted dainty designs.

A NEW WAR BALLOON. The German Army officer Count Zeppelin's invention. Perhaps any problem of the military airship may have been solved by the invention of Count Zeppelin. At any rate, the German army officials think well enough of it to be planning to give it a trial on July 1. Of course the problem is to get machinery of some sort, and to drive it in a balloon and light enough to be carried by it. Count Zeppelin's invention comprises an aluminum cylinder filled with coal gas and hydrogen, a small engine worked by the gas that generated and it should be sent up only in gentle land breezes. It is to be tried over Lake Constance, the largest landlocked body of water immediately available. Count Zeppelin has been at work for some years upon his invention. About two years ago he was conducting experiments with a small balloon near Bessau when the generating cylinder burst. No one was injured on that occasion, as the balloon was worked from the ground. In the July experiment Count Zeppelin will be the only passenger, and he will have no connection with the ground.

LOOKING AHEAD. And so you have decided to name your baby James, have you? Yes, but, of course, we shall call him Jim right from the start. Why have you such a decided preference for that name? Well, you see I want to give him a name that will stand for him in all his life, and Jim, vim, trim, prim, shim, whim, dim, lamb, swim, and probably a lot of other words that I can't think of just now; so if he ever does anything worth mentioning the poets will not be likely to overlook it.

SOLID FLOORS FOR STABLES. Whenever there is a crack in a stable floor where horses or cows are kept, fertility, which is really money, is constantly being lost as the liquid excrement runs to waste. There are under many old stables several feet deep of soil filled with this excrement, which if drawn out on the fields makes the richest kind of manure. The stable floor should be solid, either made with matched plank, or better still, in cement, which will not absorb the excrement or rot as it lies upon it.

HOPELESS BANKRUPT. I'm all broke up! I've filled my pockets with "Jitted me" Here are letters from six girls to whom I promised graduating presents.

HINTS FOR THE FARMER. HOW TO MAKE A CEMENT TANK. In building cement water tanks it is preferable to make them either square or oblong, for convenience in constructing the frame in which to mold the cement. For the foundation dig down until solid is reached, or below any danger of frost, and then fill this excavation with small stones up to within seven inches of the top, or if the bottom of the tank is wanted above the level of the ground it can be filled up as much as three or four inches more. After this is done put on five inches of concrete, which is made of six parts clear gravel and one part portland cement, just damp enough to firmly pack. This is a part of the work to be very particular about, as the firmer you pack it the better the job will be when finished. As soon as the concrete is put down, and before it dries any, put on a top coat of one inch of concrete, which is made of two parts sharp clean sand and one part cement thoroughly mixed and just wet enough to be like common mortar.

THE SLEEP OF SORROW. It is surely one of the most beautiful and tender mysteries of our human life that grief should weigh heavy on the eyelids, and that, at the very moment when the human begins to exceed our power of endurance, the anguish of hearts bereaved and broken should lapse into the blessed unconsciousness of sleep. In the bitterest miseries we are capable of suffering we seem to walk most nearly on the brink of that deep and assuaging oblivion.

It can not be that the physiologist and the physician have formed for themselves some more or less satisfactory physical theory to explain how it happens that the most vigorous sorrow lies so close to a forgetfulness of all sorrow; but if they have discovered the secret they do not appear to have popularized their knowledge, and one is left to form one's own conjecture whether the sleep of sorrow is not due to the full heart overflowing to its own sustenance the warm stream of life and leaving the brain depleted; or whether it results from the absorption of the soul in itself, and the consequent closing of those channels of the senses by which the stimulus of external world plays on the organs of the mind.

Whatever the physical account of the phenomenon may be, the slumber of grief is none the less a divine inheritance; and the dew of its mercy falls on babe and graybeard, on man and woman alike. Who that has read Palmer's poignant little poem, "The Toys," but remembers how, the small child having been chastised and dismissed with hard words and without a good-night kiss, the father, "fearing lest his grief should hinder sleep," But found him slumbering deep, With darkened eyelids, and his lashes wet From his late sobbing wet.

Who, indeed, that has been blessed with children of her own but can tell how sleep has suddenly closed the lids, and a slumber with tranquilized grief, troubled breath into a soft and regular respiration, and have we not ourselves had each of us more than one experience of that heavenly touch of unconsciousness while the tears were still wet on our faces?

Yet how strange it is that reference to this solace of human misery is so rarely to be met with in literature—least in a form worthy of its beautiful and compassionate beneficence. A casual phrase here and there—the "halm of hurt minds," the knitting up of the "tearful eyes," the "other avenged set down the mere fact, but the saintly hakim, skilled in the maladies of the human mind, deemed it needful to explain how it was that in that supreme hour of agony and desolation, the angels devoted followers of the Master had apparently yielded to a selfish ease, and left him alone with that dereliction of soul to which only an angel from heaven could administer consolation. They were "sleeping for sorrow."

Whether she awakened free from grief the story does not tell, but this too is among the healing mysteries of the sleep of sorrow. Some five centuries ago the writer of the beautiful poem "Pearl" tells how, when he fell asleep in despair on his little child's grave, saw her in a dream, and awakened with a heart made wondrously sweet by a strange experience had occurred once at least—probably many times—in our own days.

LIVING IN VENEZUELA. Any one going to Caracas with an idea of economy had much better scan a few figures which the Venezuelan Herald prints. It costs a good deal to maintain any sort of social position, and, therefore, to settle in Venezuela on a small salary is to partake of the life of the immigrant. A little house for two—small, clean and comfortable houses are very rare—costs at from \$10 to \$25 per month. A cook costs \$10 per month, and a maid, who does not know how to sew on a button, and it requires three meals to perform badly the service of one untrained Lincolnton girl. Marking is very high, and clothing exorbitant. There is no such thing as a ready-made suit. Clubs cost 80 cents an hour, gas 20 bolivars per 1000 feet, and the hotels charge from \$2.50 to \$10 per day, and are second rate at that.

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