

The Young Woman and Her Problem

by Pearl Richmond Hamilton

THE BONSPIEL BROTHERHOOD

Since women figure in our Bonspiel sport of curling, a bit of history of the game may be of interest. Following the footsteps of the early fur traders of the Northwest, curling was first played in Canada in 1807, on the St. Lawrence. To the uninitiated, curling is simply a jumble of words and meaningless phrases, but to the Scot and to the real lover of curling, the game is the synonym of good fellowship and sociability. For wherever found, no matter how heated the contest when the "roarin' game is over we're brithers a'."

No other game so well illustrates the patriotism of the Scotch people, or tends so much to its healthy development. Curlers are the truest exponents of their national character for the Scotch humor, keenness, love of independence and sociability are all reflected in curling. The history of the game has an intimate connection with the history of the people. It has taken firm hold on their nationality and has drawn round it a literature of its own, well worthy of attention. It can be traced back about four hundred years. In the beginning

of the middle of the eighteenth century it became a truly national game.

Curling has a clean record; archery was a game of war—football has a record of bloodshed and crime—but curling—the game of honor and good fellowship—comes down to us with no stain or blot on its good name. Golf is a game of the rich, but curling is a game of the poor. Though many of the gentry were keen curlers, they followed their cottars rather than their kings. We hope that it will not get beyond the reach of the poorer classes, by expensive ponds or exclusive clubs—if this shall ever be the case the glory will have departed from the game. It will then have lost the grand power it now possesses of uniting in the closest brotherhood the different classes of the community.

"It boots not whence the curler hails,
If curler keen and stanch he be,
Fra Scotland, England, Ireland, Wales,
Or colonies ayont the sea;
A social brotherhood are we
An' after we are deid an' gane,
We'll live in literature an' lair,
In annals o' the channel stane."

When the game first began, curlers must have been giants of strength for they used as stones rough boulders from the mountain side. It was the giant age of curling for the stones were of enormous bulk and weight and required great strength to handle them.

They must have been stronger in physical force than modern curlers. Herein lies the difference between the ancient and the modern game. The curler of to-day has something else to do than make a display of athletic strength—because the circular stone requires scientific skill. Though the ancient game lacked polish, it formed the foundation of solid rock for curling meetings—the bonspiel of to-day. The introduction of the circular stone was a complete revolution in curling. By it the game was raised into a position of national importance, because it required all the elements necessary for a national game—chance, force, fellowship and skill.

The game of curling was a greater factor in uniting the Scotch people than most people realize. At first it was played in one parish—then a neighboring parish came to play for contest. In an old statistical account of Scotland we have the following:

"We have but one general amusement, that of curling on the ice. After the day of rivalry, we all meet around one big table where old ties of brotherhood

are strengthened and new friendships are formed;" thus the pillars of the bonspiel were established. Their attendant festivities marked the dawn of Scotland's better day. The honor of the evolution of curling belongs to Scotland. It is a game that both old and young, rich and poor may play with equal skill—clean, wholesome and fascinating—a game that young women may well learn, for it encourages the feeling that "when the roarin' game is over we're sisters a'."

THE BLESSINGS OF A CANADIAN WINTER

There is a charm in pictures of nature in wintry garb. Look where you may, beauty in some form can be seen. The mantle of pure white that covers Western Canada's great outdoors promises a rich harvest from our productive land. It keeps the air pure and wholesome from a winter's dust and provides our young boys and girls a winter of honest sport, for what pleasures can compare with snowshoeing, tobogganing, skiing and skating? Surely Canadian environment cannot be equalled anywhere! Perhaps it may be cold at times but such is the climate that creates energy and stimulates brain power.

It is the obstructed current in the river that produces power. Effort makes progress. The climate that makes us move is the climate that develops character. Activity means growth and development. Inactivity means decay and death. When one is in an environment requiring the constant exercise of intelligence, he is naturally creative, resourceful, inventive, original. These qualities fit in perfectly with those which are the result of the health that outdoor Canadian sports create. The girl who has a good digestion, a good circulation, who breathes deeply, and whose health is robust and positive will be optimistic, hopeful, eager and courageous. When a girl who is in the office or store or the house all week comes to me and asks if it is wrong to skate or snowshoe on Sunday, I say: "Skate and snowshoe until your body is on fire with fresh blood and your lungs are full of life-giving oxygen. Your morals will be greatly improved if you get out in the open and breathe God's pure air."

The psychological effect of feeling that you are not strong is a great handicap. Two English women were in the party which explored the tundras of Siberia along the Yenisei River and found the Tungus who are a branch of the Mongolian race. The temperature varied from 60 to 90 degrees below zero. Facing weather that dips below the zero level is one of nature's best tonics. And so I say: "Long live the Bonspiel and all the winter sports that it encourages."

THE PROBLEM OF HER FUTURE

Some employers tell me that girls are laying their hard earned dollars in the hand of the professional fortune teller. Girls are anxious to know just how their problems are going to be worked out, so they go to the fortune teller.

Now is it true that our method of living leaves lines on our face, our countenance and our hands. It is easy for anyone to pick out the face that reflects immoral poison or on the other hand a face that reflects a beautiful soul. Think of the face of the professional fortune teller and in contrast the picture of the nation's heroine—Edith Cavell. Do you see the contrast?

All the cosmetics in Winnipeg's drug stores cannot erase the marks of selfish, lazy habits of the fortune teller. But the cream of spirituality that made beautiful the face of Edith Cavell comes straight from the Divine storehouse.

I mention this to impress the possibility of understanding human nature. It is necessary for every girl to be able to detect the sincere from the false but she must get her information from honest sources.

It is when we value the prophecy of a professional fortune teller above the interpretation of Divine will that I declare fortune forecasting by professionals—the profession that profanes God. Yes, I believe when a girl goes to a fortune teller she is taking the promises of God's protective power in vain.

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