

Woman and Her Work

One reads and hears of so many inflexible cures for female ugliness, the humiliating question is bound to arise in every self-respecting woman's mind—is it possible that as we gain in independence and freedom, we are losing our good looks? Can it be said that lovely woman is gradually losing her claim to the title of the fair sex and becoming by almost imperceptible degrees just as ordinary looking as her natural enemy man? The thought occurred to me with sudden force a short time ago when I happened to be brought into contact with a very large assemblage of women. There were tall and short women, fat and thin ones, young and old, dark and fair, high born and lowly, but oh so few, so very few that were at all fair to look upon. I could perhaps have counted a dozen at the outside, who could have truthfully described as "very nice looking," and perhaps half that number who were pretty, and I grieve to say it, but there were not less than a thousand women present. The great majority were utterly hopelessly plain, and the rest positively ugly. I was a long way from the orbit in which I usually revolve at the time these reflections occurred to me, so let none of the maids and matrons of New Brunswick fall upon me and read me, for expressing my opinion.

I really think it is borne out though by the amount of time and study that writers and scientists must devote to the all-important subject of improving the female face and form divine, and grafting a little beauty on what was formerly hopeless plainness. Every month or two some new cure for plainness comes out, and is vigorously exploited until something newer takes its place, when it is promptly placed upon the retired list, and its successor lauded to the skies as the only true beautifier in the world. Sometimes it is massage, sometimes diet, sometimes exercise; all these fads have had, or are having their day; but the very latest possesses at least the merit of being not only harmless, but nourishing. It consists simply of hot milk both taken internally and applied to the face at bed time as a wash. The candidate begins by drinking four glasses of hot milk daily, one at each meal, and one just before going to bed. After the last has been partaken of the patient bathes her face and neck in what remains and if there should be enough she treats her arms in the same way, jumps into bed, and sleeps like an infant—I mean like a small boy at getting up time—until morning. The milk must be scalding hot, just at boiling point, but must not have been allowed to actually boil, and the candidate for beauty must swallow it as hot as she can, without scalding her throat. I think all doctors will agree that there is no better tonic known than hot milk, that it is health-giving, flesh-making, and most nourishing, agreeing with the most delicate stomachs, and helping to build up feeble digestive organs. So, if it will do all these things why should it not work wonders in the way of changing angles into rounded curves, and transforming a complexion of antique parchment into the rose-leaf freshness of a baby's skin? Do try the hot milk cure, by all means girls, and remember that even if you are of a bilious temperament, and have never been able to touch cold milk, you may indulge with perfect impunity when the milk has been scalded, as heat causes a chemical change in the elements composing the lactical fluid, and makes it perfectly wholesome even for the weakest digestion, and the most bilious system.

I am afraid it is an indisputable fact that where there is no flesh, there can be no beauty! Bones are eminently useful, necessary in fact to the structure of the human frame, but when one is compelled to wear them outside, the result is far from happy; therefore if the patient is so thin that a low evening dress is an impossibility, and half length, or even transparent long sleeves utterly out of the question, the first consideration is the accumulation of a respectable amount of flesh, and in order to do this as quickly as possible the regular daily allowance of hot milk should be supplemented by an egg-nog made by beating up a fresh egg with a little sugar a tablespoonful of the finest old rum, filling the glass up with scalding hot milk, and drinking it the first thing in the morning. The dose should be repeated between eleven and twelve in the morning and at about five in the afternoon. The four regular glasses at meals and bed time should not be neglected, and one lady who has given this remedy a faithful trial declares—and firmly believes, that she gained ten pounds of solid flesh during the first week. I really think she must have put on at least five winter fashions, and heavy boots meantime

but even then the gain is remarkable, for the length of time.

I suppose if the hot milk cure becomes universal we shall soon hear of the great Dances and German warhounds which have been the fashionable ladies' pet for so long being discarded in favor of the equally beautiful, and far more useful Jersey cow. Milk is quite an expensive luxury, and when the well-being of one young lady calls for the consumption of nearly two quarts a day, with external applications of at least another quart—for the addition of milk to the daily bath is an important aid to the process of beautifying—a cow will be found a most desirable addition to every household.

A fashion writer is popularly supposed to make the best of the prevailing modes, describe them faithfully, but at the same time place them in the best possible light before her readers who will probably be obliged to adopt them eventually, and therefore desire to have them made as attractive as possible.

I would fain do so always, but at the same time, to deny that some of the new autumn jackets are superlatively hideous would be stretching the point too far. They are actual nightmares! I saw one girl who was trim and slight enough of figure to look well in almost anything, arrayed in one of the new box coats, and I could not help wondering if she had looked at herself carefully in a good sized mirror before she bought her coat. If she had I am sure the coat would still have been for sale, and its present wearer have invested in a more becoming garment. It was of dark blue cloth, cut quite short, only extending a few inches below the waist line, and it was box-plaited to such an extent that it stood out from the figure like hoops. A short smooth fitting yoke covered the shoulders and then both front and back were attached to this yoke in large double box plaits. A very high flaring collar added to the broad, and short effect, and though it was far from becoming, it was so very up-to-date and fashionable that perhaps other considerations did not weigh with its owner.

Twice since have I seen a still worse example of the extent to which an unbecoming fashion can be carried. It also, was a box coat but it had been grafted on a Russian blouse, and the effect was far from happy. The back was a full blouse held in place by a belt and the front was laid in a triple box plait, and flared out in a manner perfectly indescribable. The cloth of which the garment was made was very thick and the bunchiness resulting would have destroyed the figure of a Hebi.

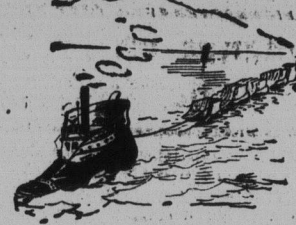
The half long jackets with close fitting backs, skirts pressed into close plaits at the back, loose double breasted fronts, and smart flaring collars are of all odds the prettiest and most stylish coats seen. Fawns, and light, and golden tinted browns, all more fashionable than the darker colors, though of course black always holds its own. Perhaps the greatest change in the fashion this season is apparent in fur garments, which seem to have been literally revolutionized. It seems odd to hear about a fur blouse, but all the same that style of wrap is very much in evidence amongst the autumn furs, and fashion authorities assert that it is destined to be very popular also. Not only are the furs made up in which have hitherto been considered only suitable for indoor garments, but they are trimmed with lace, and jewelled embroideries, and provided with belts of every description. For example, a Russian blouse of seal skin has a high flaring collar cut short under the chin, and faced with ermine, short epaulettes over the shoulders are also faced with ermine, and the coat itself is held in place at the waist by a jewelled belt thickly studded with emeralds. Emerald buttons placed in a double row down the front fasten the garment.

A fancy which only wealthy women will be able to indulge in, is the fur dress. One of these luxurious costumes is of seal skin, the skirt very much narrower than those of ordinary materials, and the bodice a loose blouse slightly pouched over a black velvet waist-band. A little tabbed basque extends below the waist and is lined with mauve silk, which also appears in a soft full frill beneath the fastening of the coat at the left side. Besides these blouses there are Eton coats, little box coats extending only to the waist line, and with big cap sleeves, long coats reaching to the foot of the gown, and others to the knee. The long coats seem to be regulated by common consent to middle aged and elderly women, while the younger ones affect the jaunty short garments. A very handsome coat for an elderly lady is of seal skin, three quarters length the collar and revers faced with sable, and large pearl buttons fastening it up the front. A pretty little Eton jacket of seal skin has a collar and deep-revers of sable turned back from a vest of white Persian lamb.

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The revers extend to the waist-line, and the rest is embroidered in bronze beads. The cap sleeves are of seal lined with white satin. The muff, which goes with this jacket is of sable, and the toque has a band of the white fur embroidered with the bronze beads, about the brim. A Russian coat of seal skin has turned-back fronts which display a dainty vest of point de Venise lace. The high collar reaches above the ears, and close sleeves flare over the hands. The belt is profusely studded with turquoise.

Some of the close fitting coats have vests of ermine with the little tails laid in regular stripes across them to form straps, the collars are lined in the same way.

A smart little coat which is only becoming to a very slim and youthful figure is of mink and reaches just an inch or two below the waist. The high collar is finished in front with four handsome sable tails which reach from the throat almost to the bottom of the jacket.

The capes are of varying lengths. Some of the shorter ones are finished with a deep collar and a frill of handsome lace. There are not many shown, as the fur capes are supposed to have had its day, and be going out. The cloaks are quite long, some reaching to the knees.

In trimming the possibilities of fur are almost boundless; almost every variety will be used for trimming dresses the rich simplicity of the fur adding greatly to the elegance of most woolen fabrics. White Persian lamb is a decided novelty, and will be very much worn this season by those who are fortunate enough to be able to afford it, as novelties are almost always expensive.

As yet, according to 'Tit-Bits,' there is only one professional woman diver. She is now thirty-eight years of age, and for the past ten years has been engaged in diving for sponges off the coast of Florida. Her husband is named Pedro Cemez, and comes of a large family of sponge divers. He was taught scientific diving by an Englishman in Madeira, and going to Central America met the woman who is now his wife. After their marriage she took to diving with the greatest zest, and now performs the most hazardous and dangerous parts of the work. She carries less armor than her husband, and has invented a helmet with a system of air-pipes, the secret of which is alone known to herself and her husband. With this helmet on she can wander about a sunken wreck without the least fear of the air communication with the upper world ceasing, and boasts proudly of having made a thousand descents into the depths of the sea.

Governor Tanner, of Illinois, says the 'Union Signal,' has seen fit to remove Mrs. Florence Kelly from the position of state factory inspector, and to appoint as her successor a man said to represent a corporation which has persistently endeavored to oust her from office, because her vigilance made it impossible for them to employ young children in their workshops; a man, too, who belongs to the labor organization in the state which opposed the passage of the present child labor law. The action has roused the indignation of

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all philanthropic men and women, and we are glad to see that the press of the state generally, irrespective of party affiliation, denounce it not only as unjust, but as impolite and arbitrary. Mrs. Kelly, by her efforts for the enactment and enforcement of the law, has earned a national reputation as a poor children's friend. But Illinois, in the person of its governor, must bow the knee to corporations, and the Illinois Glass Company had at hand a politician who, for \$1,500 per annum, was willing to assume the burden of non-enforcing the obnoxious law—so the political axe was wielded and Mrs. Kelly, who is neither a voter, nor a representative of voters, lost her official head. Which goes to show that the political axe is a dreaded factor in public affairs, in other places besides "Our Canadian Home."

ASTRA.

LEAVING THE QUEEN'S PRESENCE.

It is a feat that often exposes one to laughable embarrassments.

A correspondent of the New York Tribune has some interesting things to say about the difficulties and dangers attendant upon the walking backward which etiquette makes imperative upon those who are leaving the presence of Queen Victoria, and other European sovereigns. Let any one try to walk backward along the full length of a big hall, bowing every few steps, never looking backward, and yet keeping in the proper direction, and he will see how difficult it is to preserve either one's dignity or one's bearings; and very often the walking backward has to be done, not merely on the level, but also up and down steps and stairs, which is still more arduous, and requires an immense amount of practice.

On one of the rare occasions on which Queen Victoria presided at the opening of parliament she was attended by the Duke of Argyll who, doing duty for the nonce as Lord High Steward of the realm, carried the crown on a velvet cushion. At the conclusion of the ceremony, during which he had occupied a place on the dais of the throne in the House of Lords, he proceeded to move backward from the presence of Her Majesty. He forgot, however, the dais he fell backward, all huddled up in his long and heavily ermine-barred, red peer's robes, from the folds of which he was extricated with difficulty. The crown shared in the mishap, for it rolled from its cushion to the ground, and a number of the stones dropped out. The Queen whose face showed more concern than amusement, although the gravity of those about her was sorely taxed, spoke a few kindly words, expressing her hope that the duke was not hurt, and begging him not to be troubled about the affair, and then swept out with her cortege.

No sooner had she left the gilded chamber, however, than those present comprising ambassadors, great officers of state, peers and peeresses of the realm, prelates and judges, were requested by the officials of the House of Lords not to stir from their seats, or to approach the throne until the stones which had dropped from the crown had been collected. Of course, the object of this precaution was to prevent the gems from being injured by being trodden on. But it sounded for a moment as if the officials entertained apprehensions lest some impetuous peer or shady diplomat should take advantage of the clumsiness of the Duke of Argyll to pocket a crown jewel.

Sometimes this walking backward gives rise to rather pretty and even pathetic devices on the part of those who desire to avoid accident. Thus I recall the case of a relative who on return from active service, was summoned with several brother officers to Buckingham Palace to receive from the hands of the sovereign the Order of the Bath.

He had lost his right leg so near to the hip joint that there was no means of wearing an artificial limb, and he was consequently dependent upon crutches.

When he entered the royal presence it was noticed that he held, fastened apparently to the hand rest of either crutch, a couple of lovely bouquets. A third of the distance up the long room he stopped, made the regulation bow as best he could, and dropped one of the bunches of flowers to the floor. Then he made his way up to the queen, tendered her the other bouquet which she graciously accepted, received his Order of the Bath, which she herself fastened to his uniform with many a kindly word, and then he proceeded to withdraw from her presence. If ever there was a case in which the walking backward might have been dispensed with, it was there, and the faces of the queen and of those around her betrayed signs of anxiety, lest some mishap should overtake the colonel. He, however, backed away, displaying some hesitation until he reached that part of the room where he had purposely left the first bouquet on the ground.

That gave him his bearings. He knew where he was then, and leaving the flowers there he reached the door in safety, the queen kindly nodding and waving her hand to him in appreciation of his somewhat arduous act of homage.

He Made a Lawyer.

The following anecdote is told in the 'History of Annapolis County.'

A young man, anxious to become a lawyer, made application for a position in the office of a barrister, whereupon the following unconventional dialogue ensued:

'Well, young man, and so you'd like to be a lawyer?'

'Yes, sir; I think I would like to be one.'

'Where's your gun, my boy? I want to see your gun, my young gentleman. Fond of sporting, eh?'

'I have no gun, sir; don't know whether I'd like gunning.'

'No gun! Well, you keep a boat then? Like boating?'

'I do not own a boat, sir; do not know how to use one.'

'You wear a watch, or keep a dog?'

'I am too poor to wear a watch, and I have no dog.'

'You'll do, my lad, if you persevere in the course you have begun. The law is a jealous mistress, and cannot be won except by undivided attention. Remember this, my lad, and I will insure your success. You can rely on my assistance I can render you.' The young man entered the office, and in time became a famous lawyer.

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