

Of Interest to Women

It is the same old question of Christmas presents—"What shall I give?" and nobody seems to know. Today, as I was standing waiting for change in a large store, a girl, who was evidently one of the shop-girls having her lunch hour, came up to the girl who was serving me, and said: "Say, Annie, what'll I get for May? You know I've got to get her something, and she has about everything she wants now."

"Get her something to wear," suggested Annie.

"Oh, what's the use? Unless I got her something expensive, she wouldn't appreciate it, and I can't afford it."

Annie, to the rescue again—"Why not get her a pretty box of soap?"

"Why, she never writes any letters! What's she writing letters for, when her fellow's here in town? I'm not going to waste my whole noon-hour talking to you, if you can't do better than that," and off she marched, whereupon "Annie" at last remembered that I was still waiting, and consented to get me my change.

I was very much amused, and yet it is the same old story—"What can you do when your purse is slender and your friends many?" It is certainly a difficult problem. I am very much opposed to this idea of giving to people, because you "simply must give them something."

Christmas seems to be a time of the year for children only in this degenerate age. Children, the dear little ones, think they are passing rich, with 25 or 50 cents to spend, and great is their excitement and planning over such an enormous and unheard-of sum. They buy a five-cent handkerchief for mother, a package of hairpins for one big sister, a little pin-tray for another, and so on.

They think they are giving you the most beautiful presents, and the mother and sisters are sure to think so, too. Last year, a very dear little brother had the huge sum of three dollars to spend on his Christmas presents. He had earned the money himself, and I am sure he never had so much money before in all his life. He came home a day or so before Christmas, quite exhausted with the necessary planning and thinking and shopping, and, throwing himself on my bed, he said: "Well, I've got all my Christmas presents."

Silence for a few minutes, and then he said, "I bought you a beautiful present. I paid more for it than I did for anyone else, and when I tell you that I paid fifty cents for Daddy's, you can just imagine how much I paid for yours."

Silence again, and then there was no use trying to keep it back any longer, the magnitude of the thing was too much for him, and he burst out with, "I paid a whole dollar for yours."

Needless to say, I was properly overcome by such an undreamed-of sum, and, also, needless to say, it was the most beautiful and the most prized Christmas present I ever received.

Novelties.

Chameleon silks, in a shimmer of soft, pale shades, change with every light into new beauty. Each is a combination of several colors, yet each is dominated, though ever so slightly, by one of them.

New corsets carry out the two-tone idea, being made of flowered brocade and lined with pink or blue.

Handkerchief linen, embroidered by hand, makes the newest and best of the new blouses.

Deeper cuffs are in evidence.

A new toy for babies is a "mechanical ring," a small hoop wound with ribbon, with half a dozen rubber animals—the kind that whistle—hanging on.

Evening hats are growing prettier, especially those with two-toned brims, trimmed with the fluff of marabout feathers, or with pink roses and plumes.

China silk slips, sheer and cool, are made to wear under the lingerie blouses. White, or the palest shades of pink or blue, are the only colors worn for slips.

Silk hosiery comes in the loveliest shades and is even more distinctive in its rough weave than pongee. But pongee is lovelier than ever, too, in new shades.

A great poke bonnet is fascinating in white tulle, faced with delicate frills of pink lace, with long pale pink ribbons that are twisted so that, in tying, a ribbon rose is brought directly under the chin—to the left, of course.

Concerning Old Letters.

We wonder if the time will ever come when people will realize the futility of keeping their letters after they have been read and answered. Even as a matter of sentiment it is a useless thing, since, if the writer lives and remains true to all the protestations of love or friendship, there is no necessity to go back to old letters to assure oneself of his or her feelings. If, on the contrary, the writer's sentiments have changed, then there is nothing more painful than to reread pledges of eternal affection which have proved false. The case is still worse if the person who wrote the letters was so much prize to be dead; since there is nothing more heartbreaking than to read the expressions of a loving heart when that heart has ceased to beat and the hand that traced them is cold in death. If we would spare ourselves many bitter or painful or sorrowful moments, it is well to acquire the habit of destroying every letter, unless it be an important business one, the moment it is answered. Within the last few days, in a murder case in Virginia, the letters of a husband and wife were read in court and admitted in evidence; but this publicity of a private correspondence may have been necessary in the circumstances, one cannot help feeling a thing it is to drag into open court letters which both the writers intended for no other eyes than those of the person to whom they were addressed.

—Charlotte News and Courier.

Why can't we go back to the childhood theory again? There is so much of this commercial spirit in our giving and taking. Last year, so-and-so gave us an expensive present. This year we must give her an equally expensive one. Somebody else gave us a little cheap thing—"Oh, well, we won't bother this year—a card will do for her."

Over and over again you hear people say: "Oh, dear! I wish Christmas were over. I'm poor as I can be. This is the most awful time of the year."

Is that the spirit of good old St. Nicholas, fat and jolly and happy?

There is no doubt that Christmas is a drain, the way it is managed these days, but if we could only get away from the commercial spirit and come back to the frank, honest, childlike one.

It is on the same principle as the Scriptural text, "Better a dinner of herbs, where love is, than a stalled ox."

A little dainty gift that costs but a few cents or, if you cannot afford even that, simply a letter to your friend, so that it will reach her on Christmas Day, telling her that you love her, and that you hope she will have just the jolliest Christmas Day, and the happiest New Year that she has ever had.

Somebody said to me once, when I suggested that she should have her photograph taken and give it to her friends for Christmas, "Oh, but that's such a conceited present."

I don't think it is. It seems to me that it is rather a compliment to your friend to send her your photograph. It is not everyone to whom you would give your photograph, and if you love her enough to give it to her, and to wish to have your photograph in her room, she should be flattered. If you can add a simple, inexpensive frame to it, you are giving her what she should value more than anything you could give her—a picture of yourself.

Everyone has good ideas for Christmas, but do try to give something that will be useful. Better to give the busy housewife a dozen iron-holders or a kitchen apron rather than a fussy little ribbon and lace thing to hang on her chandelier.

Try to make your gifts appropriate. Don't give the girl with red hair a pink hair ornament or a red collar.

Don't give the girl who is proud of her violet room a blue hairpin tray.

Don't give the man who doesn't smoke a cigar case.

Don't give the man who never reads anything but newspapers, magazines or the latest novels, a set of Ruskin.

Don't give the maid a new cap or apron, and above all things, don't give the man to whom you are not engaged, too expensive a present. It embarrasses him and puts you in a false position.

Be sensible in your choice, exercise a little individuality, and you can't help but choose aright.

The Manly Man.

The average girl does not look for an ideal man in these days, and for this reason: She knows that he does not exist; moreover, she is aware that, even did he exist, and she had the chance of capturing him, he would make a poor husband. He would not be practical; he would be a cut above this very prosaic age. She pays no heed either to good looks, except she be very young and inexperienced, for she knows that the most perfect face will not compensate for a poor table, and she is quite enough to understand that the good-looking man is a poor hand at keeping the larger full.

What your girl of today wants is a man who can keep her in comfort, in the first place; comfort in married life, she believes, is really the most important of all factors in making marriage

a success. Naturally, then, a girl looks out for a certain man, either of business or profession; a brainy type of man; one who shows promise of being able to better himself in the world.

This just means that she looks out for an up-to-date man. Now, this kind of man does not make what you would call an excellent lover; he is not given to handing over presents; he does not lavish gifts on his sweetheart. But your sensible girl does not want that; she prefers to do without presents, etc., for she argues that it is more to her advantage if he adds the money to his banking account, so they may thus be able to marry the sooner.

Again, your present-day girl does not want a too sentimental lover; a kiss now and then is all she desires. Rather, she talks pure sentiment she prefers to discuss the man's prospects, to encourage his ambitions, to talk of things calculated to spur him on.

Does the maid of today not like to be courted as did her sister of yore? She does, but times have changed, and people with them. What passed muster as courting long ago would do now.

Adays. The up-to-date girl would consider it the purest drive, she does not want to hear reiterations of love; she knows that the man loves her that is quite sufficient. She wants something more practical.—New York Journal.

Christmas Odds and Ends.

The time is drawing near when all thoughts center upon the Christmas entertainments. The shops are full of pleasing odds and ends this year, not only for the giving of gifts, but for the decorations of the table. Christ-

GREAT WOMEN OF MODERN TIMES

—MADAME DE STAEL.

Madame De Staël is interesting at the pioneer of the school of brilliant women writers who flourished in the latter part of the eighteenth and the first half of the nineteenth century, and included Hannah Moore, Jane Austen, Mrs. Dufferin, Charlotte Brontë, George Sand, and George Eliot.

She is interesting as being the most gifted of women conversationalists. She is most interesting of all, perhaps, because of the ten years' duel which she carried on with Napoleon when she was at the summit of his power. Her character was marked by a few characteristic traits of the age. But despite the narrowish sentimentality, dubious virtue, and habit of grandiose posing, which dominated her, she was a woman of noble heart and mind, striking personality.

M. Necker, her father, was the rich and popular finance minister of Louis XVI. Her mother, the beautiful Suzanne Curchod, had been loved at Lausanne in girlhood by Gibbon, the historian of the Roman Empire. A sentimental and precocious child, she steeped herself in romantic novels. Under her mother's austere care she also read heavier works, including those of Rousseau, of whose political and social gospel she became a devotee. She was one of the richest heiresses in France and a great marriage was wished for her. Among her suitors was William Pitt, the younger. Her parents' choice fell, when she was 20 years old, on a Swedish Baron de Staël-Holstein, whom Gustavus III. of Sweden promised to keep as his ambassador at Paris for twelve years. Staël was 17 years older than his wife, cold, dull, a gambler,



Revival of Knee Breeches.

She—And it is true that men are going to wear knee breeches with evening dress? He—Well, some of us are in favor of it, but the others are so beastly shy.—The Sketch.

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mas trees of all sizes and several kinds are to be purchased, horns of plenty and bells come in sizes suitable for the table, and there is no reason why the largeness of any hostess should be greatly taxed for decoration this year. Tiny automobiles, engines, Santas, caride roses, tiny suit cases and trunks, beads, birds and flowers—in fact everything which mind can conceive comes in toy form and may be used for place cards and souvenirs or give a prettier effect to the table than the small trees—the very tiny ones with the red berries. One at each place with the name card on its top, bearing some sentiment appropriate to the occasion, with red ribbon running from the central tree out to the smaller trees would make a stunning table, provided the ribbon was not too wide—otherwise if the party chanced to be very large, there would be little space left for the placing of the dishes. This is one thing to be avoided in the decoration of a table. I can appreciate the men who find no beauty in high central decoration of a table. There is absolutely nothing more tantalizing than to be habit of strewn her cloth with ferns or flowers it absolutely tires a guest out in his efforts to keep the ferns from accidentally adhering to his butter or making sure that he has set his glass on a flower or fern, only to find it strewn his cloth through the centerpiece. A guest at table really has some rights to which beauty of decoration should be sacrificed.

In 1807 Mme. de Staël was ordered away from the neighborhood of Paris.



NOT UNLIKELY.

"Well, well! And was baby frightened of his daddy, den?"

whither she had gone to arrange for publishing her book, "Germany," and three years later, after she tried to publish her work on Germany, her friends were ordered to stay away from her and she was practically made a prisoner at Coppet. She escaped across the Swiss and Tyrolean mountains to Vienna. She went from Vienna to St. Petersburg, from St. Petersburg to Stockholm, and finally, in June, 1817, she reached London. She had been married three years before, when she was 47 years old, to Albert de Rocca, an army officer. Three years later, her husband died, but had conceived the fact, Rocca accompanied her on her travels. Her progress through the northern capitals was a continuous triumph, and she became an object of the most enthusiastic admiration to that country's statesmen and literary men. But she pined for Paris, and when Napoleon abdicated she immediately returned to it. Napoleon's arrival from Elbe again drove her forth. She returned once more after his overthrow, but her life rapidly ebbed away. She was stricken with apoplexy in February, 1817, and died three months later.

Mme. de Staël's best works were "Germany" and "De l'Allemagne." She was regarded by many of the most discriminating among her contemporaries as one of the greatest literary geniuses of any age; and the verdict of her contemporaries has in the main been upheld by several able critics of later times. However, she is not much read now, even in France.—S. O. D., in Chicago Tribune.

She was allowed to return to Paris in April, 1815. Among the guests at her dinners were Lueten and Joseph Bonaparte. Their brother, the young conqueror of Italy, was about to return, and, homely as she was, Mme. de Staël dreamed of fascinating him as Cleopatra had fascinated Julius Caesar. The first time she came under the gaze of the stately-eyed Corsican her foolish hopes died. One look from him completely dried the voluble river of her eloquence—a river that never was dried before. Instinctively they began to hate each other. She sarcastically called Napoleon "the bourgeois gentleman on the throne," spoke of his manners as "a combination of the bad grace of a parvenu and the audacity of a tyrant," and said his genius was only charlatanism. She talks back in a way I don't like," said Napoleon.

She became suspected of plotting with disaffected Frenchmen, such as Moreau and Bernadotte; and at last, in May, 1816, she was ordered to keep at least forty leagues from Paris.

M. Staël had died the year before. His widow was now free to marry Benjamin Constant, whom she met in

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Having thrown buckets of cold water over his consumptive chief, a Mori medicine man at Gisborne, in New Zealand, was charged with manslaughter and lived so.

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To bear us above the stones that wound our feet by the way.

The step that is hardest of all is the one that is just before us.

And the path we dread the most may be smoothed another day.

First Women's Rights Meeting

The first recorded public meeting in the interest of "woman's rights" was held in the town of Medford in 1790. The gallery of the church was crowded by the young unmarried people of the congregation, one side and one-half the front gallery being given to the young men, the other side and the other half being given to the young women. But in the seating in this eventful year the young men were given the entire front of the gallery as well, and the young women were only allowed one side of the gallery.

Then it was that things began to happen. Treatment like this wasn't to be tolerated, even for a moment. The blood of the future mothers of the revolution was fully aroused, and the young women made such an uproar and commotion that it speedily became a town matter, and a town meeting was called to restore to them their rights in half of the front gallery.

The young men of the day were bitterly opposed to extending any new privileges

to women, and the fight extended beyond Medford. Shortly after the introduction of "pious" into the churches, by which families were separated from the remainder of the congregation, the selectmen of the town of Newbury gave permission to a group of young women to build a "pew" in the gallery of the church, upon their own side of the house. This extension of privilege was resented by the young bachelors, to such a degree that they broke a window of the church, forced an entrance and hacked the pew in pieces. For this act of sacrilege the young men of Newbury were fined \$5 each and sentenced to be whipped or pilloried. But they were manly enough to confess their folly and ask pardon, so this part of their punishment was omitted. So you see the "woman's rights" movement isn't a modern one.—Boston Herald.

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One of the prettiest curtains seen for a set of shelves was of brown burlap with trimmings of red. The curtain was thrown over the brass rod in such a way as to form a deep imbricatin at the top. The burlap was lined throughout with the red. Red felt was used for the border. The top and bottom was feather-stitched to the burlap with red worsted in clusters of six quite long stitches, the middle one longest, and the others graduated toward each end. The clusters of stitches were about an inch apart.

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