

# WOMAN and HER WORK.

I have often wondered why it is that even in some of the best regulated households, the spare bedroom is the most uncomfortable spot in the whole house? I am not making an unsupported assertion. I am merely referring to a well-known and oft-lamented fact, which is of such antiquity, that it might almost be spoken of as historical by this time.

From the very earliest Colonial days, the notable housewife has always regarded

Between the deepest windows stood a chest of drawers, also of mahogany finished in brass, and a spotless and well starched toilet cover of white marseilles covered the top. On this reposed a huge and magnificent pin cushion without any pins in it and a swinging mahogany framed glass, flanked by two miniature "hour glass" tables each containing a brass candlestick and wax candle. An immense mahogany wardrobe stood on one side of the room, and so



STYLISH SPRING TOILETTES.

The dress on the right is of lilac faille, with the skirt draped and with combination of white Spanish lace over maize taffetas. The costume on the left is for grand occasions or for a ball. The over dress is of moss green velvet and the under one of pale blue chiffon with small blue flowers and green leaves. There is also a trimming of imitation jewels.

her guest chamber as the crowning glory of her house, and on it was expended more care and thought than upon any other portion of the realm she ruled over so wisely. It was the pride and joy of her heart, and it, in her desire to make it stately and splendid, she overlooked such a common place trifle as comfort, the fault was one very common to those busy times when no one was supposed to have much time for rest, or any luxurious yearnings after a comfort, which, after all might result in temptation to idleness and indolence.

I remember seeing just one such temple of cold, clean, good housewifery, as the hearts of the old Colonial matrons used to delight in, and I have never forgotten either its imposing stateliness, or the peculiar chill which seemed to form an integral part of its splendor, and to freeze the very bones of anyone who occupied it.

This especial guest chamber was in an old stone mansion, the property of one of the oldest loyalist families of this province, and it had been preserved by its owner, a lady who had seen 90 years of life, just as it had always been kept in her early youth. To begin with the bed, which was the most important piece of furniture in the room—it stood out well in the middle of the floor, the headboard being at least a foot from the wall, instead of resting close against it as in modern times, and it was so high, that in order to reach the ocean of feathers which crowned it, as the snow crowns the summit of Mont Blanc, a set of bed steps were necessary, and they stood carefully covered with Brussels carpet, tacked on with brass-headed nails, close to the headboard. The bedstead itself was of carved mahogany, in the ancient four post design which our forefathers probably thought appropriate to the wooing of "death's beautiful brother, sleep," on account of its resemblance to a hearse. Around the lower part of the bed was a plaited flounce, or valence, of snowy dimity, over which fell the counterpane of heaviest and finest marseilles, reaching nearly to the floor; the sheets were of heavy linen, sweet to smell and cold to touch, while the long rather narrow pillows were stuffed to a hardness which made them rather uncomfortable, were encased in frilled pillow slips also of linen. The bolster was very round and hard and heavy, for the good housekeeper of fifty years ago had a horror of "thin" pillows and a skimping of feathers.

Entirely surrounding the bed were curtains of old-fashioned chintz which could be drawn closely so as to exclude every breath of air, while above the high frill which finished these curtains at the top rose a tester or canopy made of the chintz gathered to a point like a tent; each of the four posts ended in a cheerful brass ornament at the top, and the foot was finished with a sort of brass claw.

To imagine anyone sleeping peacefully in this structure, or having sweet dreams, would be indeed a hard task.

highly polished was its surface that you could see your face and figure in its long doors; at the other side was an old fashioned double washstand, while in one window stood one of those chairs which it would be sarcasm to call easy, and yet which served as resting places for people of the last generation. It was of wood covered with damask, its tall straight back reaching far above the head of anyone sitting in it, and its perfectly straight arms much too high to rest the elbows upon; indeed it was so high in every respect that it barely allowed the feet of its occupant to touch the floor, and lounging in it was utterly out of the question, if you did not sit bolt upright you would be sure to tumble out. Curtains of chintz shrouded the windows, which were



THE LATEST MOURNING GOWNS.

The gown on the right is a home toilette of silk warp henrietta and courtail crepe. The back is cut princess style. The dress on the left is of endora cloth, trimmed with courtail crepe and dull jet fringe at the waist. There is a flat bonnet with jet trimming and veil. This costume is for second mourning.

protected by inside shutters of white painted wood. The carpet was the only modern innovation the room displayed and it was of old fashioned heavy Brussels in solid scroll pattern of dark green and oak color, such as people used to send to England for forty or fifty years ago, and have brought out to them in one of their own vessels. A chilly looking little octagon

shaped table of the prevailing mahogany, stood close beside the bed, and unpleasantly suggested medicine bottles and illness, and four solid straight backed chairs of mahogany and haircloth completed the furniture, but did not invite repose.

All was cool, sweet, solid and expensive, but alas neither cheerful nor comfortable, and so painfully fresh and neat that one was almost afraid to sleep between the icy sheets or crumple the fine damask towels, and it certainly failed to convey a home-like feeling to the visitor who, if she was at all nervous, must inevitably have gone into hysterics at the mere thought of occupying that funeral looking bed.

Now I don't mean to assert that the modern guest chamber is anything like the one I have just described, but it certainly is a little too fine and artificial looking to be occupied with any degree of comfort. Just fancy a weary visitor coming in late at night after a day of sight-seeing, wound up by an evening at the theatre, and having to remove a quilt, sheet and pillow shams of lace, lined with silk, from the bed and carefully fold them up and put them away before she could lay her weary limbs to rest! Imagine her fumbling, half asleep, with the towel rack, in order to remove the towel sham with which the towels were covered, before she could find a towel to dry her hands upon! And then sitting down on the floor to remove her boots, because she was afraid of disarranging the multitudinous array of lace trimmed antimaccassars on the chairs or the frilled and lace ruffled cushions on the sofa.

Does that sound very much exaggerated? Well it does, let me assure you that I have come home in a fog or a shower of rain, and been unable to find one spot in my room except the floor, where I could venture to sit down without being afraid of spoiling something with my damp clothes, because a wet serge skirt would scarcely improve the appearance of an easy chair or sofa covered with blue and white saten, and decorated with ribbon and lace, and as I have occupied that humble position, and painfully unbuttoned my sodden boots, I have wondered very earnestly why the tenderest hearted people will persist in making the place they reserve for their guests, the most uninhabitable, and unhome-like spot in the house! What a visitor, or any other human being longs for is comfort, not grandeur; and I am sure the most exacting guest would prefer a bare floor, a well worn leather arm, or rocking chair, and an undecorated bed, and towel rack, to all the magnificence I have mentioned.

NANCE, St. John—I was going to drop your letter into the waste basket unread, as you wrote on both sides of the paper, and the rule against doing so has been so frequently repeated, and is so easy to comply with, that there seems to be no excuse for its frequent disregard. But something about your epistle caught my eye. I fancy it was its clearness and legibility which saved it, and I "held my hand" for just this once.

Do you know that you wrote me a very charming letter and one which gave me great pleasure to read. I am sorry that you were disappointed about the Platonic love, but really I think if you knew as

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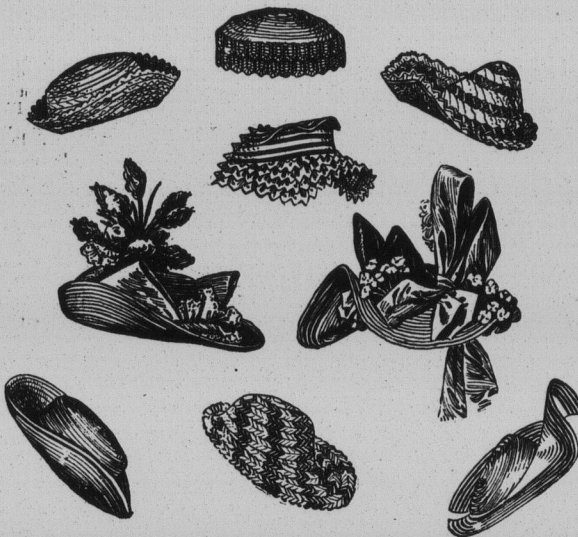
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cordially. I do not think there can be any fixed rule about the "idols," sometimes it is the first and sometimes the last, but I believe there is but one love in every life that is, but one "grand passion" and after that no other can seem the same; and that

and has heard that they are to be obtained in Sussex but is uncertain as to the proper person to apply to. I would strongly recommend the native bees myself, and I fancy they could be easily obtained in New Brunswick.



NEW SPRING HATS.

The hat at the right is of dark green straw, trimmed with green ribbon and primroses. That on the left is of brown straw, with white lace buckle, tan ribbon and hop blossoms. Above and below are several of the new shapes, untrimmed.

one is very often the first. There is a something about the first love I know, which never comes again, even though the love itself may have been foolish and misplaced. Yes, again, the very pretty girls are usually too much absorbed in themselves to be very popular, or take much trouble to win love, the world was made for beauty you know and if a girl is very lovely, she does not have to trouble her head about much else. I not only believe that woman is capable of such self sacrifice, but I know it, for one case of the kind came under my own observation, and I heard of another which I had no reason to doubt the truth of; woman may be weak, sometimes frivolous, and often vain, but she is still capable of the most sublime self sacrifice even in these degenerate days. I am glad you take such an interest in my page. I too often wish for the good "Talks with Girls" again. I should like to hear from you again sometime.

Rex, St. John.—How did your letter happen to be dated March 11th, when the postmark said "St. John, April 12th." Surely no one could have carried it around unposted for a whole month. I cannot give you the information you require but perhaps some one can through this column.

Will some kind friend tell "Rex" where he can procure either native, or Italian bees, and also what is the usual price for a swarm. He does not wish to send either to the United States, or Ontario for them

One of my correspondents has evidently made a mistake in writing to me, and put a short private note intended for some one else and signed with her name, into the envelope addressed to me. Of course, it does not matter in the least, as all names are quite safe in a newspaper office, but if one of the girls should be surprised at not getting an answer to her communication, she may safely conclude that she is the one referred to. I wonder who got my note?

Pearl teeth not only add much to the appearance of the lady or gentleman but enhance one's health and enjoyment generally. No one need be without the aid to keep the teeth in good condition, there are so many preparations for this purpose on the market. Amongst these none ranks higher in popular esteem in Canada than "Teaberry" a tooth powder that has been before the public for a number of years and which is in use from the Atlantic to the Pacific. Its ingredients are pure and wholesome and its flavor being agreeable it is a pleasure to use it, imparting as it does a refreshing feeling to the mouth.

A Lottery for Life.

In 1768, fifteen sailors were condemned to death in Portsmouth, England, for mutiny, because they had simply complained of the quality of their provisions. The halters were being fixed when they were informed that his majesty had shown mercy on fourteen; lots were drawn to decide who should be the sufferer. The second man drew the unfortunate chance, and was run up to the yardarm.

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