

Woman and Her Work

"Our cousins across the border" as we are fond of calling them seem unwearied in their search after novelty, and somehow they always manage to find it. The ordinary skating around a rink to the strains of a band, which is all a Canadian asks in the shape of healthful exercise, is not sufficiently exciting for them, they must have some object in view to give an added zest to the amusement. The latest device of this kind originated in New York, and is now the most popular game for skaters, in that city. It is called The Ribbon Chase, and is as pretty, as it is exciting. Five posts are set up at one end of the rink, and to these are attached so lightly that they can be very easily pulled off, a number of bright colored ribbons, each about a yard in length. The object of the game is to secure as many of the gay trophies as possible, while skating at full speed past the posts. Only one must be detached at a time, and from but one post, the skater not being allowed to slacken speed in the least, in securing the ribbon. The players follow each other around the rink at a rapid pace, grasp the ribbon as they pass, and pin it upon the breast.

When the last ribbon has disappeared there remains attached to the centre post a long white silk scarf, which no one is allowed to touch until the signal is given by the leader of the game. Usually it comes just after the posts have been passed and the skaters are at the top of their speed; then the player who is most expert at wheeling around quickly has the best chance of securing the coveted scarf and with it the first prize. Second and third prizes are awarded to those who have secured the greatest number of ribbons, and the game is considered a delightful one, combining as it does, exercise, excitement and fun.

Clever "Kit" of the Toronto "Mail and Empire" makes the novel but practical suggestion that every man who wears hair on his face, be it a full beard or merely a modest little mustache, should be compelled—I suppose by law—to shave for one month out of each year in order that those who are brought into intimate contact with them may be able to see them as they really are, bereft of all hairy disguises, with their features exposed in utter nakedness to the full light of day even as cubs are, and all the indications of good and bad qualities which are apt to be stamped upon the lips and chin plainly visible.

The mere threat of such a thing is enough to arouse consternation and rebellion in every properly constituted male mind! Why the beard and mustache have long been to some men what the club of Hercules was to that renowned athlete what her girdle was to Venus, or his invulnerability was to Achilles, their shield and weapon, without which they would be powerless—to captivate; many a full drooping mustache hides a mouth that is simply wolfish in its coarseness and cruelty, or else so weak, loose lipped and sensual that nature seems to have especially designed it to serve as a warning that all who gazed upon the repulsive feature, must heed; and many a trim pointed beard gives prominence and character to a chin that never really had any existence, except by courtesy, but simply sloped gracefully from the under lip into the throat without one intervening angle! Who does not call to mind the shock produced by the first view of some masculine friend's upper lip shorn of the manly growth that fringed it? I knew a very decent sort of a man myself once, a man who was considered a model of all the virtues, and who had such a very small curly mustache that no one would have believed it could change his expression in the least. In an unlucky hour he decided that it was too thin for beauty and would be vastly improved by shaving, and getting a fresh start. I shall not soon forget my feelings the first time I saw him after he had put his idea into practice, nor the meanness, selfishness and deceit revealed by his upper lip, and the lines around his mouth, they stood out as if written in printed characters and I am afraid they told the truth. Even the cut of the hair is not without significance, and it really plays quite a prominent part in our estimate of a person's character. The old man, for example who wears a long white beard, and flowing silver locks has a benevolent and patriarchal appearance which may not be at all borne out by his character; while the old gentleman who sports a bushy white mustache and clean shaven cheeks and chin, and whose snowy hair is closely cropped, and parted in the middle is credited with being quite a gay old boy, "one of the boys you know, and able to hold his own with the best of them." Very likely he is far more eligible for the position of a

church elder than the patriarchal one, if the truth were known, but his hair is against him, likewise his mustache, and he must bow to popular prejudice.

There was that whitened old sepulchre in "Little Dorrit." I cannot think of his name just now, but I know he was the father of the artless "Flora Finching" and the most heartless and unscrupulous old usurer that ever lived, but he wore his white hair flowing down on his shoulders under a wide brimmed hat, and being blessed with large eyes, he went about with his hands piously folded and the air of a medieval saint. All the time he was grinding the very lives out of his poor tenants in "Bleeding Heart Yard" through his agent, and his agent was getting all the blame. But one day someone who was smarting under his rascality conceived the brilliant plan of waylaying the old miser and snipping off his long locks, cutting off the brim of his hat, and I believe, curtailing his long coat—and he stood forth the canting old hypocrite he really was.

So, on the whole, I think we will not adopt "Kit's" suggestion, but continue to hag our illusions, and let our male relatives retain the protecting disguise which kind nature has made possible for them.—"Where ignorance is bliss, 'tis folly to be wise"—too wise that is.

Amongst other resurrections of bygone fashions the reticule stands foremost just at present bidding fair to rival even the night-cap, in its popularity. The necessity for this quaint little revival is said to have arisen since the sleeves became too tight to admit of the handkerchief being tucked in at the wrist and as most women object to the bulky appearance of a pocket the reticule came into vogue as a substitute. The greatest variety is displayed in these ornamental little bags, some of which are hung from the waist, while others are carried in the hand. The very newest style is of course that which reaches farthest back into antiquity, and resembles most closely the reticules our grandmother wore hanging from their wrists when they went abroad. They are made of network, woven silk if possible, and drawn in at the top either with rings or ribbons. The very swiftest shopping bag or "toggie," as it is called, is made of black silk, crocheted by hand, and beaded either in jet or steel, and is finished with a silver top and clasp, and some women have jewels set in the silver. This bag is suspended from the waist by a chain, or can be hung from the wrist, and it will easily hold a pocket book, handkerchief, and memorandum book. The handkerchief bags are always worn hung at the side, and many have belts attached to them, these belts are crocheted in silk and beaded as the bags are, costing the mere trifle of twelve dollars, while the bag which goes with them is considered cheap at eighteen dollars; so they are not likely to come into very general use.

Small leather bags are almost equally fashionable however, and are very much cheaper, besides being more durable; they are very convenient for carrying the handkerchief and purse.

To come down to the real practical bag which is within the reach of the woman to whom eighteen dollars means the price of a spring dress, the large department shops are showing full lines of really beautiful shopping and handkerchief bags ranging in price all the way from the exorbitant, to the absurdly cheap, and as is often the case, the imitations are almost impossible to detect from the genuine. Fancy a handkerchief bag of handsome brocade, with top of imitation silver gilt, and studded with jewels for the modest sum of two dollars, and twenty-five cents, and the same bag without the jewels for a dollar, and ten cents. A new and very inexpensive shopping bag is made of black satin. It is of ample proportions and decorated with a bow knot of gold cord and violet spangles, finished with black satin ribbon bows on each side, and hung by ribbons from the belt, or else carried in the hand. One of its chief charms is the fact that it can be made at home with the greatest ease, and at very small expense. In fact many of these little reticules could be made by any woman who knows how to use crochet needle, and was enough skill in beading, to apply steel or jet beads in some simple design, after the

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bag has been crocheted in the proper shape.

I think I remarked some time ago that there was no hope of arresting the stuffed-bird-in-our-bonnets—even until fashion stepped in, and effected the reform that nothing else could bring about? Well, it seems fashion has stepped in at least, and is doing what all the sermons, all the reformers, and all the societies have failed to do. The bird, as a decoration for woman's headgear is going out, and the leading establishments are importing very few birds this season for millinery purposes. This is indeed good news, but it is a pity that the reform should be the work of fashion instead of good feeling. In France the people have awakened to the danger of exterminating the song birds, and have protected them. The Dean of Manchester recently delivered an address on the subject, in the course of which he said that the custom should be stamped out by act of parliament; and I believe the English are about to protect the birds also. In Canada Lady Aberdeen is taking a deep interest in the subject, and using her influence to discourage the wearing of stuffed birds, and now that Dame Fashion has declared herself on the side of the helpless songsters. I have no doubt the custom which has been a disgrace to womanhood for so many years will soon die out.

The organies and laws for next summer's wear are already being bought, the importers seem to be so much earlier now than they used to be about getting in goods that in order to get a choice, one must pick out her summer dresses in February or March, when the mere thought of a thin dress gives one a chill. Large patterns are to be fashionable next summer, and one new design in printed organies shows pink and asters in natural size. Tulips will also be a very fashionable design in light summer materials. A favorite way of making the sleeves of thin dresses is to put a shirring on both the inside, and outside seams, thus making them wrinkle all the way from shoulder to wrist.

SOUTHERN MOUNTAIN TYPES.

Customs of a Queer People shut Off from Civilization.

It is surprising and gratifying to find how well the mountain folk have maintained the ideals of civilization which they brought into the hills generations ago, says a writer in the Ladies Home Companion.

The standard of propriety, virtue and morality, while different from ours is still a real standard. One may spend weeks in the hills, lodging in the same room with large and miscellaneous groups of people and see nothing to cause a blush. The early marriages of the girls are in

many ways regretted, but they are an undoubted safeguard to virtue.

"The conventionalities of life are nowhere more rigorously observed. On the hottest summer day the mountain woman wears her wollen mitts to 'meetin,' for the same reason an Eastern woman wears the latest fashions of fashion—'because it is the thing.' And we confess to a peculiar admiration for the girl that wears a sunbonnet. Her face is not public property; it must be sought for. The turned up 'hat' perched on the top of the hair far from protecting its owner, seems rather to be saying: 'Look at me!' But the sunbonnet preserves the complexion of the wearer and has, withal, an air of modesty. If you wish to see the face of a girl, you must get at just the right angle, and when it is revealed you behold it framed and shaded like the heart of a violet.

"The hospitality is that of the frontier everywhere. At every stile you are asked to 'light'. The standing formula is: 'Come, stop with us. I hope you can stand for a day or two, what I have put up with all the time.' Truthfulness and honesty are the cardinal virtues. A surveying party never loses a tool which may be carelessly left around. And the man who calls another a liar must expect to be shot. In fact, there is a tradition current of a man who was adjudged by the court to have committed suicide in the following peculiar manner: He called Ike Suttle a liar 'bout having' his pistol cocked. 'To a large extent barter takes the place of purchase and sale and the people get along with very little money. The pioneer fashion of appointing a funeral for a day long after the interment is another curious survival. Originally preachers were scarce.

In the mountains the postponement allows friends from a distance to plan to come and the time will be one favorable for travel. A great deal of the mountain religion gathers about these funeral occasions and the general tone of piety is doleful."

INSOMNIA.

Three Months Without Sleep—Wasted in Flesh and Given Up to Die. But the Great South American Nervine Soothes to Rest With One Dose and Effects a Rapid and Permanent Cure.

Mrs. White, of Mono Township, Beaverton, P. O., was dangerously ill from nervous trouble. She was so nervous that she had not slept a night for three months. She was so low that her friends despaired of her recovery, in fact, had given her up to die. She was persuaded to try South American Nervine. Her relief was so instantaneous that after taking one dose she slept soundly all night. She persisted in the use of this great cure and gained in health rapidly, so that now there is not a sign of the nervousness, and she feels she is entirely cured. If you doubt it, write and ask her.

SPARROWS RESCUE A SPARROW. The One in Need of Help Came Into His Flight Through Greed.

The English sparrow is perhaps the shrewdest bird going, and rarely ever gets into a tight place, though, yesterday, and but for the shrewdness of his friends would doubtless be there now, or worse. A careless colored cook of the house adjoining mine had spilled some raw rice, perhaps a quart or more, in the back yard of my neighbor's premises. In order to hide her carelessness from her mistress, and so to save herself the trouble of picking up the rice, the resourceful cook simply turned an empty box over the little pile, thus putting it out of sight, and went her way rejoicing.

Presently a bevy of sparrows chanced that way and took possession of my neighbor's backyard. Ere long an adventurous one of the number discovered a convenient knot hole in the overhanging box, poked his inquisitive little head therein and forthwith spread the news of the rice find. Then things were pretty lively thereabouts. First one, and then another of the birds would pop down through the hole, to bob up a few moments later with his crop full of rice. They were all mighty gay over the matter, and most of them made two or three trips inside before they were satisfied.

By and by something seemed to have gone wrong. The birds fluttered and chirped and chattered in an agitated manner, crowding upon and about the box so thickly that it was some time before I could see that one little brown head kept bobbing up frantically through the knot hole from the under side and getting no further. Some greedy little fellow had laid in an over-supply, and so made himself too big for an exit through the hole.

The case really seemed a pitiful one, as nothing but time and the slow process of

nature could relieve the poor prisoner of his predicament. At least that is what I thought, and I marvelled that so clever a creature as a sparrow should get himself into a hole. Meantime I had forgotten to reckon upon the ingenuity of the birds on the outside of the hole. They lost no time in bringing this qualification in evidence, however, for pretty soon I discovered that they had set to work to dig this little prisoner out of the hole. Having selected the most vulnerable spot of the surrounding ground, first one and then another of the birds would scratch and peck away, each one taking his turn, and working energetically till by and by a hole was made big enough for even the overloaded fellow on the inside to creep through.—Philadelphia Times.

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