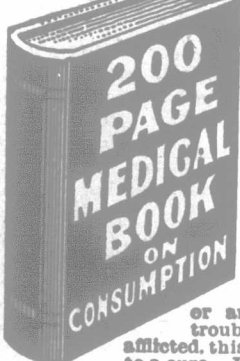


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Our Ingle Nook Page of Opinions.

This month, the subject discussed is, "What do you think of the custom of wearing mourning?" We are sure that the letters which follow will be read with much interest, and some profit, too, for, as one of our writers notes, the custom of wearing mourning has surely been "subject to much abuse." In this matter, private feeling must govern. My personal opinion is that quiet clothing is quite as "respectful" to the memory of the departed, as shrouds of black, and much less gruesome. We have no right to force our disapproval on other people, have we? However, as we said before, this is a matter in which freedom must be given. The point is, LET freedom be given. Do not let mere custom compel people who do not feel that wearing black is necessary, into what may be a needless expense and worry at a time when there is worry enough.

Next month our subject will be, "Beautifying Canada."

My Opinion of Wearing Mourning, or Thoughts of a Farmer's Wife.

I do not know of any custom among Canadian women which is subject to more abuse or more misleading than the practice of wearing mourning, and we note that it is rapidly falling into disuse. How often do we see black clothing worn when we have every reason to believe that there is thankfulness in the heart. Our friends die and leave our hearts and homes desolate for a time; we cannot prevent it, or would it be best if we could? But mourning to my mind is of the heart, not of the wearing apparel. Where there is profound grief, no robes are required or needed. It is only right that every family should clothe themselves as they think best, but conforming to custom has, in many cases, been a burden and financial difficulty for years, because, feeling that they must comply to fashion's vogue, much money is spent, and becoming clothing laid aside that we may, seemingly, display our grief before the world.

Often mourning is placed upon young children who barely realize the cause of the change of costume. I well remember many years ago inquiring of one of my young friends why she had laid aside her pretty clothes and come out in a black outfit; and she replied that her "mother's aunt was dead." I well remember thinking that if my aunts were all to die, and my other relatives too, I might have to wear black all my life.

We are aware that there are reasons given by some that it affords protection to the wearer from awkward questions, but no more awkward than the inquiry, "Who is dead?" Most of our friends who are interested in our families, soon learn of the demise; if not, what is to hinder explaining the date and circumstances? It does not seem consistent to be able to parade around in black clothes for a year or more for one whom we are not able to speak about.

Wearing the dress or appearance of grief is mockery, and misleading in many cases. There are some who think that black is the color of heaven, and the more they can make their faces and costume look like midnight, the holier they are. Then there is the old plea that it shows respect to the dead. The dead are not with us, and our regard should have been shown long before this late date. They neither recognize nor require it now.

Our sisters on the American side seem to be in advance of us in the movement in favor of modern dress reform in that they do not wear mourning to the extent that we Canadians do; they have learned that it is unnecessary, hard to care for, and not beautiful unless the quality is first-class. We are pleased to note that the custom is rapidly passing away. We have made long strides since the days of hired mourners. In this vicinity, there are not the long, flowing hat-bands and the yards of black veiling, and handkerchiefs bordered with black, worn, that there were twenty-five years ago.

We would not attempt to set the usage aside by coercion; the expression of public sentiment is all that is required. But in going to funeral ceremonies, it is only proper to wear quiet clothing, and it is bad taste to appear in gay garments, and as if on a festive occasion.

MRS. JAS. GARDNER.

Kemble, Ont.

Some Reasons Why Not.

The wearing of mourning to express grief for the decease of friends, is an ancient custom. The usages regarding it varied much in different times, and in different countries. The period of grief to the Jew was seven days, which was sometimes lengthened to thirty. During that time, he cut off his hair and beard, smote his breast, walked barefoot, wept, and even refused to wash or anoint himself. We read in Genesis where Jacob rent his clothes, and put sackcloth upon his loins, and mourned for his son many days; when he thought Joseph had been killed by wild beasts.

Among the Greeks, the external indications of mourning were shown thirty days, and in Sparta they were limited to ten. The relatives of the deceased wore black, secluded themselves from the public eye, and in more ancient times, cut off their hair as a sign of grief.

Only a few days did the Roman Republic wear black or dark blue, the same for both sexes. Under the Empire, the mourning color for men was black, and was worn only a few days; for women it was white, and was worn a year, if the relative was a husband or parent.

To-day, the black is still worn by many as a sign of respect, but not nearly to the same extent that it was used some years ago. One now seldom sees mourning garments trimmed with crepe, or crepe head dresses and veils.

The subject of the wearing of mourning is open to controversy. A good many things can be said against it.

It is but an outward sign of grief. True, mourning exists in the minds and hearts of the bereaved ones. It has a time limit, which is but a form or fashion, existing for outward appearances only. Can anyone measure the length of time you respect the beloved who have passed from this life?

The donning of mourning usually makes the wearer more conspicuous. The curiosity of the stranger is at once aroused.

From a practical point of view, it sometimes is a needless expense. Hats and garments are cast aside, and the one in trouble has to turn her attention to the milliner and the dressmaker, when she little feels like the ordeal. She has to give her time to such things when, perhaps, those about her need her more. People of limited means are obliged to use money in that way, and, consequently, have to sacrifice what otherwise brings more pleasure and comfort to them.

Occasionally you see bands worn on hats and sleeves of jackets. Personally, I do not care to see such. No need to impose your grief on others. The world is sad enough, with so much suffering and pain in it.

Might I offer a suggestion as to the kind of garment? To go to the other extreme, and perhaps appear in a bright red or showy blue costume, would be conspicuous indeed, and the wearer would probably take little pleasure in such. Quiet colors are always in good taste, and if you get black, which is always worn, and usually serviceable, let it be one not suggestive of mourning. Avoid black frillings. Whenever you can, wear white, it is so becoming to both old and young. The passing away from this life to the life beyond, is the inevitable, and with the hope Christ has given to us in immortality, should we radiate sorrow from our lives.

South Simcoe.

In Favor of Mourning.

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She had talked for ten minutes without a break.

"But what were you going to say, Regulus, when I interrupted you?" she asked.

"Bellatrix," said the young man, looking at his watch and grabbing his hat, "I was going to ask you to marry me, but I shall have to put that off until the next time. I have less than three minutes to catch the last train. Good night!"

WORKED WONDERS IN THIS CASE

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The Doctor helped Mrs. Stephen Roy, but there was no complete cure till she tried Dodd's Kidney Pills.

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