

and sometimes, although more rarely, of whales and porpoises. Hugh Miller tells of Cromarty Bay being on one occasion literally covered with herrings and birds, while no fewer than seven whales, apparently of large size, were seen within the short space of half a mile. The late Mr. Mitchell, in his excellent work on the "Herring," states, on the authority of two intelligent and trustworthy fishermen of Newhaven, that "the herrings take considerable flights out of the sea," and he suggests that in the cases noticed by those fishermen the herrings were probably being pursued by the fiercest of their foes—the dog-fish.

The herring, as might be supposed from its number, is very prolific, the roe of a single female containing nearly 40,000 eggs. To deposit these it seeks the shallow water of our coasts, and there the eggs attach themselves to whatever object they may chance to light upon. These are said to get hatched in two or three weeks after deposition, after which the young fish—known during juvenility as "whitebait"—grows rapidly, attaining according to Mayer, a length of two-thirds of an inch during the first month, and measuring nearly three inches long by the end of the fifth. The importance of the herring harvest is seen in the fact that, exclusive of the enormous quantity of these fish consumed in this country, the value of the herrings annually exported is about one million sterling. The Meteorological Society of Scotland, recognising its importance, have for several years past been endeavouring to procure such information as might enable them to ascertain what connection may exist between the condition of the atmosphere and the water, and the appearance of fish on the coast. So far as these investigations have gone, they seem to show that a high temperature in the water, is unfavourable for the fishery, and that the fishing is most successful along those parts of the coast in which the water is coolest. As the result of such inquiries, it is not impossible, says an American writer, "that before long the herring fishery may be regulated by the thermometer, and that the net will be shot, not at random, as heretofore, but with an almost certainty of finding fish." In a season like the present the fishermen needs not the aid of the meteorologist in order to fill his boat with herrings; but such seasons are the exception, and a year hence it may take both the art of the one and the science of the other to find them.—*Scotsman*.

LADIES ON HORSEBACK.

A large number of letters have recently appeared in different papers, giving accounts of accidents that have occurred to ladies when riding, asking for advice to prevent a recurrence of such unfortunate mishaps, or giving advice on the subject. It is sad to hear of these accidents; but considering the publicity given to everything these days, one may rather wonder not that the number of accidents is so large, but that more do not occur. At the same time there is no reason why, with the exercise of more judgment and the taking of proper precautions, they should not be greatly diminished.

There is no doubt that the teaching of young girls to ride is conducted in the most haphazard manner, with results that are really conducive to accident. The edict goes forth that our daughters are to receive equestrian instruction, and forthwith a commencement is made; the donning of the habit is irrespective of natural qualification. In commencing to learn any other accomplishment it is asked whether the pupil has any aptitude for acquiring it—in music, any ear; in singing, any voice; but in riding all such considerations are totally ignored. Yet in this matter aptitude is of more vital interest almost than in any other. If a girl fails in her playing or singing, she simply breaks down, and there is an end of it; but in riding the failure has perhaps a fatal termination to the pupil. Horse, saddle, and habit are provided, but nerve, or rather the want of it, is ignored, with the result that, in many instances, at the first appearance of danger, all presence of mind is lost, and a fatal accident befalls one who should never have been allowed to be placed on the back of a horse or with reins in hand. It may safely be conceded that at least one half of the accidents to ladies occur in consequence of cowardice, nervousness, or whatever it may be called, which simply amounts to a want of nerve to act with determination at the sudden appearance of an unlooked-for danger. A scream, and the reins are gone; the horse catches the contagion of fear; and a fatal casualty, which might have been averted by one atom of confidence on the part of the victim, is the consequence.

How often in the West-end of London, or at one of our fashionable watering-places, is the man who can ride shocked at the sight of a bevy of young girls being taught to ride—save the mark!—by a riding-master so called, who is in ignorance of the simple rudiments of his profession; who knows not how to hold his reins, or of what length his stirrup-leathers should be, but who appears to consider the whole art of equitation to consist in sitting upon a saddle, and always using the curb-rein, whilst the father, who hires his services, is perhaps looking on with admiration at the performance of his child! In reality the young lady is acquiring all the faults of a man who should be pilloried for presuming to cross a saddle, with perhaps another or two on her own account; laying the foundation in the future of the horrors of which we have recently been reading—a girl hung up by habit or stirrups at the heels of a kicking horse.

If a girl be possessed of good nerve, teach her to ride by all means—not otherwise, as it is flying in the face of Providence; but do not allow her for a moment to imagine that in the curb-bit, the pommels, and the stirrup there is safety. First let her learn to sit square upon the saddle, and to ride with a light hand upon the rein—the lighter her hand the less her horse will pull, and *vice versa* (at using force against force she has no chance); and let one of her first lessons be to ride without a stirrup, so that at any time she may be independent of it, and never so ride upon it that her foot, driven home, cannot be extricated in a moment. The safety-stirrups are perhaps well in their way, though there is good reason to distrust them. The rivet or cloth with which they are usually lined causes the inner stirrup to become so small, that in a moment the foot is tightly jammed, and if anything be amiss with the safety-arrangements, woe betide the rider! It must be recollected, too, that a trifling want of care causes most of these things to work badly. A little rust or collection of dust, and the stirrup becomes a trap; and both dust and rust are often there. A good sized ordinary stirrup is the best thing for a girl to ride with—not big enough, under any circumstances, to slip over the foot. The habit should be of sufficient length only to cover the foot; and the *équestrienne* should be able to ride with one pommel and a crutch, without following the lead of her predecessors, and using a dangerous number of pommels. Then we might look for a woman in a fall escaping all danger.

The above are only a few rudimentary points of education that are often neglected. Without a full knowledge of them no woman can be fairly at home when on horseback; and simple means though they be, their adoption would tend greatly to reduce the number of accidents to ladies when riding. Girls ought also to be taught to ride in turn upon each side of the horse. Thus there will be obviated in the case of the young a tendency to grow awry, which has been the cause of many a figure being partially spoilt.—*World*.

THE TWO.

As to the question of the sexes, I think that woman's *love of dress* is the stamp of her inferiority. It ends the discussion with me. I can't respect my sex as I do the other while we are such creatures of dress. Here a man and his wife are projecting a journey. The man is equipped in an hour, and his attention is free for the higher considerations of the occasion, but the woman must have a week for her preparations, and starts off fagged out with shopping, and dressmaking, and packing. Go to Wilhelm's concert. The gentlemen performers are not distinguished at all by their dress, unless it is by its simplicity. Wilhelm's black coat is buttoned across his breast up to his collar, and his wristbands are quite inconspicuous. But the lady singer comes in dragging a peacock's tail unsprung, and tattooed from head to foot with colours and frills and embroidery. What is a wedding to a woman? It is a bride's satins and laces and jewels. The sentiment of the circumstances is all smothered in dress. She can neither feel solemn nor gay—she is a spectacle of clothes. You bring me Scripture for her relief: "Can a maid forget her ornament, or a bride her attire?" I don't say she can any more than a leopard can change his spots; I only say it is something which stamps her inferiority.

If you quote revelation, I will quote nature. According to nature man should be appareled in brighter colours and with more fanciful decoration than woman, and should think more of his appearance. See the peacock and gobbler and rooster, and the male birds generally. The lion cultivates a flowing mane, but the lioness wears her hair as meek as a Methodist. The human female seems to have lost her natural prestige, and is fain to make herself attractive in meretricious ways.

Imagine a man compressing his ribs with stays, or trammeling his legs with skirts; let alone swathing them after the mummy fashion of to-day.

Imagine him spending an hour every morning in fixing his hair for a day-long torment. He *will* have his dress subservient to health and comfort and freedom of breath and motion. You say he is in bondage to the changes of fashion as much as the women are. But he contrives to keep these conditions intact. His new styles are not allowed to intrench on his comfort and health and the higher interests of life. If he changes the cut of his hair, he still keeps the sweetness and unconsciousness of short locks; he does not let them grow inconveniently long, or canker his head with a frowsy chignon. If he changes the fashion of his coat, it is almost unnoticeable, and you may be sure it is at no sacrifice of ease. His pantaloons may be cut a little more bagging or a little more statuesque, but never with trails or any impediment to his natural gait. His hat is always the same serviceable sun-shade, and his cap the same protection from the weather, no matter what the details of style.

Well, you say that the women dress to please the men, and if women are foolish men make them so. My answer to that is, that men are as fond of pleasing women as women are of pleasing men, and more so; but they have wit enough to accomplish their object without the monstrous sacrifices women make. Whether any amount of education and opportunity will give women this wit, or diminish the advantage man has gained, remains to be seen.—*Socialist*.