

handkerchief), and so on, increasing the depth six inches at a time, till the dog, if he comes to like it, will eventually fish it up from a depth of several feet.

#### SOCIETY IN CONSTANTINOPLE.

Society renders the place impossible for strangers. When I say "society" I mean the absence of it, and when I speak of "absence of society," I allude to the peculiar characteristics which constitute society, and of which there is not a shadow apparent in the Turkish capital. Constituted as they still are, the Turks must be put out of the question, for, with the exception of heavy dinner-parties, where each devours as much as he can, and then smokes until it is time to be off, there are no other means of meeting. And, indeed, when Turks and Europeans do meet in this wise, there is little conversation possible beyond a more or less genuine inquiry into each other's health, past and present, and questions as to how Constantinople pleases; which are invariably met by an affirmative reply. The principal men in the State sometimes venture upon politics, but that is a ground upon which I cannot enter: nor did the "gros bonnets"—"great guns"—of the place ever invite me to a discussion upon the decreased influence of England, the fear of Russia, the fallen prestige of the Catholic protecting power, and the necessity to encourage the Bulgarian schism as a means of checking the Russian influence through the channel of orthodox. As to Christian population, it consists of Greeks who do not much care for each other, the old Phanariot families having little regard for the newly-made *soi-distant* Greek millionaires, and the Scioles showing considerable contempt for those who are not of their own proud origin. Then, again, the Greeks of Marseilles like to think themselves the kings of finance, and look down upon the Greeks of Smyrna; while the Greeks of Odessa sneer somewhat at all the others. The result shows that a kindred feeling between them is at a distance, and beyond a few formal visits, parties are generally made up of relatives who belong to the several classes I have pointed to. Next come the Armenians. These may be divided into Armeno-Catholics, who deplore the loss of Monseigneur Hassoun, and have no other talk; the Armeno-Catholic Schismatics, who, from the receding the Latinising tendencies of Monseigneur Hassoun, have something more to say, as they naturally have more to explain; and finally, the Gregorian Armenians, who have nothing whatever to say. Then the Levantines, or Perotes, who, in their own mind, constitute the aristocracy of the place, and are composed of the descendants of French, Italian and German settlers. Most of them boast a common origin. Their ancestors appear to have made a little profit out of their knowledge of the Turkish language, and to have settled in the country with a view of making a little more out of the ignorance by the Turks of any other language than their own. If, then, the Perotes will not receive the Armenians, and the latter will not see those of their own origin who differ with them in religious tendency; if, besides, the Greeks are divided as they are, what becomes of society, since the elements of it cannot amalgamate? Add to this the unwillingness of the husbands to dress in evening garb after a fatiguing day's work at the Galata counting-houses, and the total absence of curiosity in regard to the scientific or literary progress of the age, and it will be seen that there is no reason why, there being no court, there should be any society. Apparently a nobody reads. A library of 100 volumes is a huge one. There are no concerts except when some benighted being gives one at his own expense, and then everybody talks or yawns; or when some good-natured diplomatist wishes to encourage an artist, and it is thought the fashionable thing to be present. "What a charming concert! there were so many people and such pretty dresses!" Nobody draws, at least I suppose so, from the fact that there are only three masters, who are still looking out for pupils in a million of inhabitants. Sculpture has never been attempted, because it would be a crime to imitate Phidias, or possibly to excel him. The play is little favored, though there is but one theatre, and the reason given is that the opera was burnt, and the people who went to the opera no longer go to the play, (*sic*). In fact, the thousand and one amusements which are the born of the desire for recreation of an intellectual people are wholly wanting in Constantinople. Of course there are two or three exceptions to confirm the rule, but it would be too long and may be indiscreet, to dilate on the subject and its causes. I end as I began: Were Constantinople 200 years backward, instead of 100, it would certainly be the most charming of all places in the world. Sedan chairs, however, and galoches, do not go well with dresses from Worth, and no roads with spring-carriages from Peter's.—*Jerningham's To and From Constantinople.*

#### THE MODERN INQUISITION.

No one reads without a becoming thrill of horror of the tortures inflicted in the Inquisitions of the past. Human ingenuity was stretched to the utmost to devise means of inflicting the most exquisite pangs and still preserve life. But what we blush most at was that the system was justified; and society, even religion, brought to look upon it as a necessity.

In these modern days we find that an Inquisition has also been erected. Its victims are moving in our midst, and the chief Inquisitor is an honored person. The old Inquisition was a custom of the time, and so is the modern. Fashion is the name given to the present temple of torture, and women are the chief victims. The boot was an ingenious instrument of pain, in which the foot was squeezed by torturing wedge and band; but it had one merit—it was rarely applied, and the pangs were comparatively temporary in their duration; but now-a-days we find few of our sisters who are not undergoing the same punishment, not occasionally, but permanently, commenced when the victim is yet a child, and continued into old age. Fashion insists that our women shall wear their boots two sizes too small for them, so the foot is jammed into the leather torture, and the sufferer compelled to walk, to perform the usual household duties, and even take her pleasure with this instrument of torture, inflicting agonies upon the nerves of the pedal extremities. The heel of the boot, to add to the pain, is made high, and placed nearly under the centre of the foot, so that the weight of the body is thrown upon the toes, which are forced together, while the ankles become weakened, and the muscles of the calves of the legs ache with the unnatural strain. There is no relief. From eight years of age to eighty, this cruel vice is applied, and the victim is required to smile and declare that she experiences no pain.

Another device for producing pain is placing upon the head a quantity of pads and false hair, which, by their weight and the heat they produce, cause continual headaches. The system of hanging the heavy weight of petticoats, crinoline and dress from the waist, causing a pressure upon the delicate organs of the stomach and producing unwholesome heat, while the extremities are lightly clad in thin stockings and exposed to draughts, is not without its value as a means of destroying health and producing pain; and even the simple plan of tying ligatures round the legs until the veins swell and become varicose is not to be passed without some notice. But the most fiendish torture which the High Inquisitor Fashion reserves for his victims is the corset!

Imagine an ingeniously constructed machine of silk, cotton or other strong material, stiffened and strengthened with ribs of whalebone and flat blades of steel, in which the body is crushed by degrees, by which the ribs are displaced, by which the organs of the abdomen are forced down into the pelvis, and the organs of the chest jammed up into the throat, by which the breathing capacity of the lungs is lessened, and the digestive powers of the organs of the stomach are impaired, and by which the general vitality of the system is lowered. Imagine all these, and you have some idea of the terrible instrument called a corset. It is applied early; and the little girl, before she has left the nursery, is fastened in this fashionable vise, which she is condemned to wear, day by day, until the latest hour of her existence. As she grows older, instead of receiving greater freedom, the instrument is fastened tighter and the waist made smaller. Does she desire exercise, this figure-screw produces lassitude, and she wearies; does she go to a party, an extra degree of tightness has to be submitted to; so that, after each dance, it is painful to see her chest heaving up and down, with the exertion of the upper half of her crippled lungs trying to supply oxygen to her system; is it a fashionable dinner, "grace" before meat is insisted upon, and she picks about as much food as would satisfy a healthy sparrow, and keeps up a false appearance of vitality in her system with an extra dose of wine. Begun in the nursery, followed up in the boarding school, the corset is continued through life, till death frees the victim from her pangs!

Through all this torture woman must make no groan. The agony may be severe, but no cry must pass her lips. Her life one torment, she must never confess it, but while bruised and squeezed and worried, she must smile and be agreeable! Surely woman would be a nobler martyr if the cause were nobler; and Fashion is a cruel Inquisitor whose tortures are commenced so early and continued so relentlessly through the entire life of her victims.

#### GUNNAR: A NORSE ROMANCE.

BY H. H. BOYSEN.

#### PART III.

#### CHAPTER VIII.—Continued.

It was a large, airy hall in which the "confirmation youth" met. The window panes were very small and numerous, and had leaden sashes; the walls were of roughly hewn lumber; and in a corner stood a huge mangle or rolling-press for smoothing linen. On one side of the hall sat all the boys on benches, one behind another; on the opposite side the young girls; and the pastor at a little table in the middle of the floor. Right before him lay a large, open Bible with massive silver clasps, a yellow silk handkerchief, and a pair of horn spectacles, which he frequently rubbed, and sometimes put on his nose. The pastor had thin gray hair and a large, smooth, benevolent face, always with a pleasant smile on it. He had the faculty of making sermons out of everything; his texts he chose from everywhere, and often far away from Luther's Catechism and Pontoppidan's Explanations. His object was, not to teach

theory and doctrine, but, as he said himself, to bring religion down to the axe and the plough; and in this he was eminently successful. In his youth he had visited foreign countries, and evidently once had cherished hopes of a grander lot than a country parsonage. Not that disappointment had embittered him; on the contrary, these glowing dreams of his youth had imparted a warmer flush to many dreary years to come; and even now, when he was old and gray, this warm, youthful nature would often break through the official crust and shed a certain strong, poetic glow over all his thoughts and actions. It was from this man that Gunnar's artistic nature received its strongest and most decisive impulse. He had not been many times at the parsonage before the pastor's attention was attracted to him; for he made good answers, and his questions betokened a thoughtful and original mind. Then some one of the girls had told one of the pastor's daughters that the "Henjumel boy," as he was commonly called, was such a wonder for making pictures; and when, on request, he brought with him some of his sketches, the pastor praised them and asked his permission to take them in and show them to his family. The result of this was an invitation to dinner at the parsonage, which Gunnar, of course, was only too happy to accept. The pastor and the young ladies treated him with the greatest kindness, and gave him every possible encouragement to go on in the study of his art. In the evening they showed him a great many curious books, which he had never seen before, and beautiful engravings of foreign cities and countries, where there were flowers and sunshine all the year round. Gunnar was dumb with astonishment at all the wonderful things he heard and saw, and did not even remember that it was time to go home, until the old clock surprised him by striking midnight. When he bade them all good night they gave him several books to take home, and paper to draw on.

This first visit to the parsonage was a great event in Gunnar's life; for, from that time, his longing took a fresh start, and it grew and grew, until it outgrew every thought and emotion of his soul. He was seventeen years now, tall and slender, and fair to look at. His features were not strongly marked, but of a delicate and almost maidenly cut; the expression was clear and open. His eyes were of the deepest blue; and had a kind of inward gaze, which, especially when he smiled, impressed you as a happy consciousness of some beautiful vision within. Had he known the privilege claimed by artists, of wearing the hair long, he might have been accused of affectation; but as artists and their fashions were equally foreign to him, the peculiar cut of his hair, in violation of all parish laws, might be owing to an overruling sense of harmony in lines and proportions; for the light, wavy contour of the hair certainly formed a favorable frame for his fair and youthful features.

Spring was again near, and the day came for his confirmation. It was a clear, blessed spring Sunday,—a day on which you might feel that it is sabbath, even if you did not know it. And to the young people, who were standing that morning at the little country church waiting for their pastor, it was sabbath in a peculiar sense. First came the deacon, and read the paper giving the order\* in which they were to stand in the aisle during the catechising. Gunnar's name was called first, Lars Henjum's second. Gunnar had long been an object of envy among the other boys, on account of the attention paid to him by "gentlefolks"; but that the pastor should have ventured such a breach on the traditions of the parish as to put a houseman's son highest in the aisle on a confirmation Sunday, was more than any one had expected. And, of course, no one was more zealous in denouncing Gunnar than Lars Henjum; for, as he said, he was the man who had been cheated. Thus it was with unholy feelings that Lars approached the altar.

By and by the congregation assembled; all the men took their seats on the right side, the women on the left. The youth were ranged in two long rows, from the altar down to the door, the boys standing beside the men's pews, and the girls opposite. All were dressed in the national costume of the valley; the boys in short, wool-colored jackets, scarlet, silver-buttoned vests, and light, tight-fitting breeches fastened at the knees with shining silver buckles; while the girls, with their rich blonde hair, their bright scarlet bodices, their snow-white linen sleeves and bosoms clasped with large silver brooches, their short, black skirts with edges interwoven with green and red stripes, formed with their transitions and combinations of color the most charming picture that ever delighted a *genre*-painter's eye. In their hands they held their hymn-books and carefully folded white handkerchiefs.

Every child looks forward with many hopes and plans to the day of confirmation, for it is the distinct stepping-stone from childhood to youth: beyond lie the dreams of womanhood and the rights of manhood. In this chiefly rests the solemnity of the rite.

When the hymns were sung and the catechising at an end, the venerable pastor addressed his simple, earnest words to the young, exhorting them to remain ever faithful to their baptismal vow, which they were this day to

\* It is regarded as a great honor to stand highest in the aisle on confirmation Sunday. It is customary to have the candidates arranged according to scholarship, but more than proper regard is generally paid to the social position of the parents.

repeat in the presence of the congregation. His words came from his heart, and to the heart they went. The girls wept, and many a boy struggled hard to keep back the unwelcome tears. After the sermon they all knelt at the altar, and while the pastor laid his hands upon their heads, they made their vow to forsake the flesh, the world, and the Devil. Then, when all were gone, the pastor called Gunnar into his study, where he talked long and earnestly with him about his future. There was, said he, an academy of art in the capital; and if it was the wish of both Gunnar and his father that he should cultivate his talent in this direction, he would be glad to do anything in his power to promote his interests. From his university days he knew many wealthy and influential people in the capital who would probably be willing to render him assistance. Gunnar thanked the pastor for his good advice, said he would consider his proposition, and before many weeks bring him back an answer. But weeks came and went, and the more he thought, the more he wavered; for there was something that kept him back.

The next year, Ragnhild and Gudrun were confirmed.

#### CHAPTER IX.

#### THE SKEE-RACE.\*

The winter is pathless in the distant valleys of Norway, and it would be hard to live there if it were not for the skees. Therefore ministers, judges, and other officers of the government, do all in their power to encourage the use of skees, and often hold races, at which the best runner is rewarded with a fine bear-skin or some other valuable prize. The judge of our valley was himself a good sportsman, and liked to see the young lads quick on their feet and firm on their legs. This winter (it was the second after Gunnar's confirmation) he had appointed a skee-race to take place on the steep hill near his house, and had invited all the young men in the parish to contend. The rifle he was to give himself, and it was of a new and very superior kind. In the evening there was to be a dance in the large court-hall, and the lad who took the prize was to have the right of choice among all the maidens, gardman's or houseman's daughter, and to open the dance.

The judge had a fine large estate, the next east of Henjum; his fields gently sloped from the buildings down toward the fjord, but behind the mansion they took a sudden rise toward the mountains. The slope was steep and rough, and frequently broken by wood-piles and fences; and the track in which the skee-runners were to test their skill was intentionally laid over the roughest part of the slope and over every possible obstacle; for a fence or a wood-pile made what is called "a good jump."

It was about five o'clock in the afternoon. The bright moonshine made the snow-covered ground sparkle as if sprinkled with numberless stars, and the restless aurora spread its glimmering blades of light like an immense heaven-reaching fan. Now it circled the heavens from the east to the western glaciers, now it folded itself up into one single, luminous, quivering blade, and now again it suddenly swept along the horizon, so that you seemed to feel the cold, fresh waft of the air in your face. The peasants say that the aurora has to fan the moon and the stars to make them blaze higher, as at this season they must serve in place of the sun. Here the extremes of nature meet; never was light brighter than here, neither has that place been found where darkness is blacker. But this evening it was all light: the frost was hard as flint and clear as crystal. From twenty to thirty young lads, with their staves and skees on their shoulders, were gathered at the foot of the hill, and about double the number of young girls were standing in little groups as spectators.

To be continued.

\* Skees, or skiers, are a peculiar kind of snow-shoes, generally from six to ten feet long, but only a few inches broad. They are made of tough pine-wood, and are smoothly polished on the under side to make them glide the more easily over the surface of the snow. In the middle there are bands to put the feet in, and the front end is strongly bent upward. This enables the skee, when in motion, to slide over hillocks, logs, and other obstacles, instead of thrusting against them. The skee only goes in straight lines; still, the runner can, even when moving with the utmost speed, change his course at pleasure, by means of a long staff, which he carries for this purpose. Skees are especially convenient for sliding down hill, but are also for walking in deep snow far superior to the common American snow-shoes.

THE girls in a Springfield, Mass., factory, are supplied by the proprietors with chewing gum, in order that they may not waste time in talking.

WHEN a country editor is exhausted for news, he puts in a paragraph telling how some beautiful ladies have called on him and cheered his toilsome path with sweet flowers. Then his contemporaries revile him, and he answers back, and business becomes brisk again. Thus are our Greeleys and Raymonds trained.