

Practical Information for the Housewife

"A hint is often all that is needed."

All questions regarding this department will be cheerfully answered in this column.—Ed.

The Form.

The form, the "human form divine," as it has been termed by those poetically inclined, is a subject which is open to lengthy discussion, and were it not for the limited space at my disposal, I might be tempted to add more than my mite, and to use much paper and ink over the matter.

For some, the stately proportions generally attributed to Juno are the perfection of feminine beauty. Others see a wondrous charm in the daintily rounded minute form, which might, nay does belong to a veritable sylph in human guise; some declare—from an anatomical and, perhaps I should add, medical point of view, they are undoubtedly correct—that the celebrated statue of Venus, despite the fact that her—or rather its—waist measures considerably more inches than we, speaking for the majority of our sex, would care boldly to own to, at all events in our *premiere jeunesse*, is the ideal of all that is beautiful in woman. Some say that the shoulders should be sloping, others set square, almost like those of a man, and at least many of the tailor-made gowns of the day are padded, to give this effect. Some like a length of limb, particularly of arm and leg, the latter from thigh to knee, which contrasts strongly with the short, shapely appendages appreciated by others, while again some much prefer a complete development of muscle, even until the limbs more resemble those of a miniature Hercules, than of a female, instead of the soft rounded arms and legs, dimpled at shoulder and wrist, knee and ankle, which always appeal so very strongly to me, and are in my opinion, at least, the perfection of all that is womanly. But naturally tastes differ, and well for us that that it is so, as it would never do for one and all to think alike. In decrying a muscular appearance, my readers must not for one moment imagine that it is unnecessary to the human frame to possess muscle. A certain amount is absolutely essential, but however powerful that amount may be, it should be so well covered with flesh as to render the fact of its being there unsuspected by the uninitiated. The development of the muscle means naturally the improvement of the flesh, which should be firm, almost solid, rather than presenting the flabby—if I may be allowed the term—appearance it so often presents, particularly in women who are, or profess to be, delicate, and in consequence of such claim the privileges (save the mark) of an invalid.

Immediately on rising, the wise woman will, providing it agrees with her constitution, or is not forbidden by medical authority, take a cold or at least a tepid bath, but in cases where this is prohibited, it is well to know of a substitute which is almost if not equally as effective—for a delicate constitution at all events. Stand on a folded bath towel, which must be quite dry, then wring a large sponge out of cold or tepid water, the former if possible, and pass it very quickly all over the body several times in succession (never mind the drippings, the towels will catch them) and dry on a large rough towel, rubbing each part thoroughly until quite warm. After this, dress partly, as far at least as petticoats, stockings and shoes, but no corsets, and then have ten minutes or a quarter of an hour's calisthenic exercise, using dumb-bells, by all means, if you have them. Let most, if not all the movements have a backward swing, as this serves to keep the shoulders well set back and expands the chest; and here I cannot do better than give a few useful exercises in the words of an authority who has written a very clever article on the question of "Physical Training" in addition to other things:

1. Bring forward the two arms, raise the forearms, and place the fingers of each hand lightly on the front of each shoulder. Then with a quick movement, without removing the fingers from the shoulders, jerk the arms outwards, then back again, and repeat.
2. Bring down the arms in front, gracefully rounded, the fingers of each hand touching the others at the tips; raise them gradually over the head, where let the hands go apart, and bring them down behind with the arms turned as far as possible outside.

Another is: Stand quite erect; extend the arms above the head, interlace the thumbs, and keep the forefingers in touch. Then, keeping the knees quite rigid, bend the trunk gradually, until, without unlocking the thumbs, the fingers touch the toes. This is a very good exercise, seldom successful without a little practice.

Correspondence.

The correspondence columns are open to all readers of the LADIES' PICTORIAL WEEKLY. Questions relating to fashions, etiquette, literature or any subject of interest to our readers can be sent in for reply. Address correspondence editor in care of this paper.

F. B. D.—For cosmetic enquired about, write Mrs. Gervaise Graham, 103 Post St. San Francisco. The price, which you send by a P. O. Order, is \$1.50. Please use carefully, according to directions. I cannot answer questions privately, even when a two-cent stamp is enclosed. Postage from here is three cents, and a Canadian stamp is required, so you will see your enclosure is perfectly useless to me.

L. D. OSCEOLA AND CARMINE.—Please address your letters and enquiries to the Managing Editor. I have nothing whatever to do with the matter. Cousin Ruth and I are continually receiving letters from subscribers on business matters, with which we are not allowed to meddle.

IA QUIZ.—The supply is pretty good just now. I do not know whether to advise you to send the article or not. I am afraid it is rather too long, but if you send it, perhaps it may be suitable. Put a price on it yourself.

JOAN.—To make over your black silk, which is gored and worn round the bottom, cut off about two inches, face and put a strip of bias velvet an inch or so in width under the edge, then make a yoke, take off the skirt band, and sew the skirt on to the yoke. Cut off your half long basque a little, and gather a flounce of lace to the edge; as the sleeves are worn at the wrist you might put long cuffs on them—in the PICTORIAL for April 16th, I gave Mamie a few hints which you might look over; for the half cape, have a yoke and collar of mouse-colored braided cloth, and a sort of deep frill of mouse-colored velvet, plainly gathered on, a little raised and frilled over the shoulders. Silk gloves may be worn. A good many dresses have a deep full pinked flower of pinked silk sewn inside the skirt. Contrasting colors are worn, but black is really most *chic*.

AMARYLLIS.—It is no penance to answer questions, I am here for the purpose. A riding habit is rather expensive, you might get one for thirty dollars, but it would not be the very best, only very ordinary. Certainly you would wear trousers under. There is nothing out of the way about that. It would be impossible to sit properly with petticoats under your habit. You can have the whole suit made by any good tailor, almost all of them have a ladies' department.

GRANTHAM.—I do not know how much a second hand safety wheel ought to cost. You should expect to pay at the least half of the original price, if the wheel were in perfect order. Perhaps your best plan would be to watch the advertising columns of the daily papers.

GIRLIE.—A confirmation dress should be white, either of muslin, cashmere or good veiling, made plainly, with high necks and long sleeves. Gloves are usually worn and either a veil or a cap, I much prefer the veil. A rather pretty model was given in April 16th's PICTORIAL.

TYPEWRITER.—I. There are several large agencies in New York who supply typewriters to firms and private parties. I know of several girls who make from ten to twenty dollars a week, or even as high as twenty-five. 2. The Prince of Wales is not expected at the Columbian Exposition, but his son and heir is reported to be coming. 3. The Queen writes a neat, refined and determined hand, which shows rather a fine touch of temper. It is wonderfully clear and firm for so old a lady, but Her Majesty carries her age remarkably. She is very stout and a trifle heavy in her gait.

CHURCH-WOMAN.—Your question is entirely uninteresting and unsuitable for discussion in this column. The very worthy people whom it reflects upon are as far above such criticisms as the sun above the earth.

PEDRO.—Your idea for the smoking party is very good, only don't make your programme too long or formal. A humorous debate is rather a good idea, but you must see that it doesn't become prosy. I am glad you sometimes "glance at" your wife's paper. Please read the Ideal Husbands, and blush—Pedro! The souvenirs for the party could be varied and pretty. Match stands, pocket match-holders, cigarette boxes, or those cute little arrangements for nipping cigars. If you play cards you might have a lightening game of euchre for an hour and a half for a prize, the prize should be rather handsome, a cigar stand, a pipe, or some such thing, the booby prize should be a long "churchwarden" clay pipe.

BABY-LOVER.—It is rather hard on you to have your wee son taken out of his sleep to exhibit to strangers. If your sister or brother try it again refuse to allow it, and if necessary turn the key in the nursery door. Twelve hours out of twenty-four isn't too long sleeping time nor would eighteen be, if the baby liked to sleep so much. Don't try to amuse so young a child, leave him alone. Very young and very old folks love to be quiet.

JACK'S NAN.—I. There is no reason why you should submit to such treatment. It is excessively rude and uncalled for. If the family treat you coldly, quietly tell your *fiance* that you prefer not to go there again, and don't go. So far as you have stated the case, I cannot see their motive.

INNOCENCE.—I have heard of such cases, but don't think the young fellow meant any harm. Overlook it this time, but not again.

Prof. Wickle's Prize Graphological Examination.

Special Notice.

The Ideal Wife Prize Examination closed on Dec. 15th. We shall continue to publish in this column the delineation of the different specimens of handwriting sent in for the Prize Competition until they have been completed.

Delineations.

469 This is quite an unformed hand, probably either of a very young girl or illiterate person. It shows only persistence and temper with imprudence in speech and undecided will.

470 A kindly, deliberate and sweet nature. The will is strong affection ditto, love of home and children well marked, it lacks buoyancy and energy, but the owner would make a very comfortable wife, and apt to be popular.

471 I don't know when I have had such an affected study as this one. The writer apparently spends a great deal of effort to make a good appearance. At the same time, she is not particular enough either in truth or sincerity, would be apt to deceive if deceit helped her ambition, I think she has great desire to lead others but will never succeed on her present platform. Instead of sympathy she has selfishness, and her own interests absorb her. If she gets a good husband he will never be able to trust her, if a poor one she will be a great grumbler at fate. The lady is extremely clever and versatile, and is well worth a better role in life than she at present plays.

Queen Mary's Lap-Dog.

Mary, Queen of Scots had a favorite lap-dog, which was said to be present at the execution of its poor mistress in Fotheringay castle. After the royal lady had been beheaded, the faithful creature refused to leave her dead body and had to be carried out of the hall by force. At that period lap-dogs were the pets of men as well as of women. Dr. Boleyn, a relation of the unhappy Queen Anne Boleyn, owned one, "which," as it is written, "he doted on." Anne once asked him to grant her one wish and in return he should have whatever he desired. Knowing his affection for the dog, she begged it of him, and, of course, the doctor had nothing to do but give it to her. "And now, madam," he said, "you promised to grant my request." "I will," quoth the queen. "Then give me my dog again."

Kissing The Baby.

One of the things upon which careful mothers insist in engaging a nurse for young children is that indiscriminate kissing of her charges must be prevented. Many persons consider that a baby or sweet-faced little toddler met anywhere is a legitimate object for kisses and fondling, a practise which cannot be too much discouraged. A writer recently made the startling statement, credited to a physician, a specialist in treating croup, that an adult with a simple case of catarrh can give a child membranous croup. It is probable that this statement needs qualification, that certain conditions are necessary beyond the mere contact of breath to develop the germs, but even the remote possibility should be sufficient to warn parents and friends of their responsibility.

A physician's wife said not long ago, in regard to the same matter:

"I was surprised, in securing a nurse for my first child, to have my husband object to one who came to me on trial. She was efficient and neat in every way, but she had very poor teeth. They were discolored, and evidently in poor condition, and my husband insisted I should discharge her at the end of her trial week. 'The mouth,' he said, 'was a hotbed for septic germs even in its most perfect condition.' He would certainly have no nurse about breathing into his child's face, who could not at least show a sound set of teeth. And our next nurse, whose teeth were promising, but not quite perfect, he sent to our dentist for care, while she remained with us."

The Queen's Dining Room.

The queen's dining room, says the *London World*, always presents a very bright and brisk aspect; for in addition to the crowd of servants in their royal liveries, and some of her majesty's Highland and Indian domestics, there are the head functionaries of the kitchen and the clerks of the cellar in their respective uniforms. The clerk of the kitchen, who is at the head of the cuisine department, receives £700 a year, with his board and lodging, and he is provided with a staff of four assistant clerks and a female menial, who is officially known as "the necessary woman."

The chef is aided by four master cooks, two yeomen of the kitchen (one of whom is the confectioner), two bakers, two roasting cooks, two coffee women, and a perfect regiment of assistants, male and female of their kind; apprentices, scourers, kitchen maids, two steam apparatus workers, two "green office" men and a store-keeper.

The cellar is a different department.

There are plenty of delicacies at the queen's dinners, as a matter of course, and always an adequate number of the elaborate "made dishes" which Mr. Osborne termed "ongtreys," but there are also invariably some plain joints, both hot and cold. Prince Albert, like Sir Alexander Cockburn, was always pleased to see a cold sirloin of roast beef on the sideboard, and the queen has throughout her life shown a marked preference for perfectly simple fare. Prince Albert and the late duke of Cambridge greatly liked that good old-fashioned dish, a roast sucking pig served with prune sauce.

There have been "dine and sleep" visitors at Windsor Castle every day during the queen's residence there, but the list of people to be asked (exclusive of the royal, official and diplomatic guests) is so long that there will have to be another succession during her majesty's next sojourn there in order to clear it off.

The invitations are usually sent out by Sir John Cowell (often by telegram) and as a rule only a few hours' notice is given. The guests are expected to arrive in time to dress for dinner, and they leave after breakfast next morning.

The rule is for guests to appear in the corridor in the full dress at 8.30, the dinner hour being 8.45, and the queen comes in from her own apartments just as the clocks chime the quarter, bows to the company, and proceeds into the oak room, where dinner is served.

After it is over the company usually stand about the corridor, or proceed into one of the three drawing rooms which adjoin it; the queen speaks for a few minutes to each person in succession and then retires, and the guests see her no more, as she never appears in the morning; so that a visit to the castle does not involve much personal intercourse with her majesty.

After the queen has gone to her rooms the company remain in one of the drawing rooms for music and whist; and when the ladies retire the men adjourn to the smoking room, in which there is a billiard table.

A missionary on his way to Liberia gives the following as part of the cargo of the steamer that carried him:

"Ten thousand casks of rum, eleven cases of gin, four hundred and sixty tons of gunpowder and fourteen missionaries—all on their way to Africa."