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"Why BRUNETTES ought to be Abolished"

An Answer to Edna Goodrich's Now Famous Article on "Why Blondes Ought to Be Abolished" by Billie Burke, One of the Prettiest American Blondes

By Billie Burke

WHEN, recently, Miss Edna Goodrich, a very handsome brunette, said to this newspaper that the blonde must go and gave her reasons for the banishing of the fair-haired woman, I would have been overwhelmed if I had accepted the reasons, but I did not.

Undoubtedly the superattractive Miss Goodrich believed those reasons, for she seemed to have written from a profound conviction. But quite as profound is my conviction that all the scientists with whom she bulwarked her beliefs were mistaken. Perhaps every one of them had been flitted, for good and sufficient reasons, by a blonde.

Miss Goodrich's reasons may be good if one grants her premises that the blonde is a disturbing element in the modern world. But who will admit that who knows how much of progress and stability the fair-haired Anglo-Saxon has given to the world? He moved down from the north, overflooded Europe, awoke it from its ages of long slumber and civilized it. He spurred it to progress. He stimulated it to endeavor. He roused it from a sleep that would have been the death of a world.

What was true of the early history of Europe is as true to-day. The individual blonde is, as are the blonde nations, lazy. Her masses of dark hair are, as a rule, the sign of indolence. The dark-haired, dark-skinned person is as disinclined to effort as the dark-eyed, dark-skinned races. The reason? I will give you the reason, and it is, like those advanced by my beautiful opponent, scientific.

The brunette is liverish. Her liver is too large and too lazy to do well its work. Its sluggishness colors the character of its unfortunate owner as it muddies her skin. She is quiet, heavy, inclined to melancholia. Watch the blondes and brunettes as they pass you on their way to the shops and the theatres or on their way to their work. The blonde trips on her way. The brunette drags. The blonde holds her head high. The brunette bends hers in pensive attitude. The blonde is grave, the blonde gay. The blonde is heavy hearted, the blonde light. The weight of the heart corresponds to that of the liver.

The carriage of the blonde is as light and springing as a fawn's. The

brunette's movements hold something reptilian in them.

In a word, the blonde is alert and active. The brunette is dreamy and slothful. If the world's progress were left to the brunette there would not be any progress. All of the world's brilliant history would spell itself backward.

The blonde is candid. The brunette is secretive. A brunette inspired the saying regarding the depth of still waters and what personage therein resides.

I do not wish to be too hard on the brunette. One trait of hers lends her lustre for some minds. She "stays put." Leave her by the hearthside and she will stay there, submitting to all, improving nothing. If domestic evolution had depended upon her for its agent we would still be cave women, wooed with a club, and beaten whenever hunting was bad and our gorilla-like lords required exercise. The blonde does not sit still. Action is her watchword. I'll wager that the first woman to leave her worthless husband and fare forth to build a new life for herself was a blonde.

Brunettes are born conservatives. They preserve fruits and can customs. But every one who thinks at all knows that preserved fruits will, in time, grow moldy, and that customs that too long obtain become outworn and useless. Movement is life. Inaction is death. So, though Miss Goodrich quoted some musty, fusty, old professor to prove that blondes die earlier than brunettes, at least our work lives on.

What is the work of blondes? Organization, in the household and out of it. Who are the best housekeepers in a community? Blondes. Who are at the head of the charitable organizations and otherwise valuable clubs? Blondes. To use a horse-man's term, who are the lead horses in the human teams? Blondes. Who are the followers, the wheel horses? Brunettes.

Who are the society leaders of your town? Don't sneer at the term. It requires a facile brain and a gracious personality, a quickness of perception to be a society leader, and these qualities are comprised in the blonde.

Instead of the blonde going, let me suggest, no, I will most emphatically state, that the brunette must go, is going. For nature and progress



Miss Billie Burke, Who Is Glad She Is a Blonde and Tells Why She Is Glad.

abhor an obstructionist as nature abhors a vacuum. Nature has its own pitiless way of sweeping the obstruction before it. In the tidal wave of progress the brunette will be swept away or will save herself by changing her coloring and her character.

The brunette boasts of her brown eyes and asserts that they spell fidelity. Yes? I have heard, you have all heard, brown eyes described as the eyes of sentiment. Yet Catherine de Medici, who was said to have ordered the massacre of St. Bartholomew, had brown eyes. So had the

poisoning Borgias. Martin Thorn, who slew her lover, Guinevere, said he did so under the spell of Mrs. Mack's brown eyes, and those same eyes admittedly watched and directed the dismembering of her former lover's corpse in the lonely Long Island cottage. In the end, I believe, Mrs. Mack did not stand by. At any rate, Martin Thorn was executed, and she, having served a short term, is at large.

Mme. Steinhil, the mysterious alleged murderess of her husband and mother-in-law, was a brunette; so

deeply brunette that at her trial she was alluded to as "The Black Panther of France." The wicked Marquise de Brinvilliers, executed for her sins, was a brunette.

Mrs. Suratt, charged as a conspirator at the death of President Lincoln, was a brunette. Martha Place, who slew her stepdaughter because she was jealous of her husband's affection for the daughter of his first wife, was a brunette.

The brunette says her dark eyes duplicate the fidelity that is mirrored forth in the eyes of a dog. I like



Lucretia Borgia, One of the Infamous Family of Poisoners, a Brunette.



Catherine de Medici, One of the Cruellest Women of History, Who Was a Pronounced Brunette.

dogs as well as any one should. I keep four of them, and am in good standing with them. But knowing dogs I know that their faithfulness is unreasoning and not always commendable. I shouldn't want to love as a dog loves. It isn't the highest nor most complimentary affection.

The brunette loves a man as he is. The blonde tries to make him worthy of her love. Which is the worthier affection? Every woman should be the inspiration of the man who loves her. The woman who is satisfied with him as he is, who regards him as a demigod, is a brake upon his efforts.

I have read that women are of two classes—the sword woman, who leads a man up the height waving the shining sword of progress before him, and the cushion woman, who represents to him perpetual rest. One is the spirit of progress, the other the spirit of retrogression. Need I say that the blonde is the woman of the sword? The brunette says her affections are truer and stronger than those of a blonde. I reply that it is not well for a man to be loved too much. He requires the uncertainty of affection to spur him on to worthiness. Men do not want to be loved much, but sanely, and blondes are, above all, sane.

I do not care what that nearsighted old chap with his nose between book covers said, that the blonde's brain is smaller than that of a brunette. I retort with the assertion that it isn't the size of the brain, but the texture that signifies. There are records at the Academy of Medicine in New York of imbeciles who had brains larger than Napoleon's.

To place a further thorn in the self-esteem of the brunette let me remind her that men prefer blondes. Else, why are so many brunettes trying to become blondes? I refer you to any hairdresser in any city. Peroxide is for sale in every hamlet, but no woman dyes her hair black, except the woman whose hair has become gray.

That the blonde is more beautiful than the brunette the number of paintings of blondes testifies. Painters prefer to paint pictures of blondes, and the public prefer to look at them,

Madonnas and angels are almost always painted with sunshine colored hair.

A last argument for the perpetuity of the blonde, one that should raise the discouraged head of every blonde that has been bowed by Miss Goodrich's nearly overwhelming argument. I got it from the census man. He says that there are no blonde old maids, while there are many brunettes unclaimed in matrimony. The gray-haired ones, he finds, once had dark tresses. Let this encourage us. For since we marry and reproduce our kinds the dreaded extinction of the blonde will not take place.

These letters were called forth by the article on "Why the Blonde Should Be Abolished."

Dear Sir—The blonde should be abolished? Indeed! Then why doesn't Miss Edna Goodrich have us all lined up and shot? Yours,

A BLONDE (Natural).
Dear Sir—The article, "Why the Blonde Should Be Abolished," is so interesting that I shall refer to it in my lecture on "Character" at the Harlem Young Men's Christian Association.
R. C. A.

Dear Sir—The most beautiful women on earth are blondes, and the writer of the article in the Sunday American of May 25 must indeed have a horrible disposition to be so jealous. Brunettes, in their hearts of hearts, know that fair hair is the crown of beauty. Otherwise why do they imitate them by bleaching their hair?
R. M.

Her Mother's Daughter.
"You must not talk all the time, Ethel," said the mother who had been interrupted.
"When will I be old enough to, mamma?" asked the little girl.

Crushing!
Lady (with very big hat)—I beg your pardon, but I forgot my opera-glass. Would you kindly lend me yours just a moment?

Tyrant Man (in a seat behind)—Very sorry, madam, but I need it to sit on.

Why Men Get New Minds During Revolutions. By Gustave Le Bon

"THE Psychology of Revolution" (G. P. Putnam's Sons, New York), is a most interesting and suggestive work by Gustave Le Bon, the author of "The Crowd: A Study of the Popular Mind."

The result of the psychologist's study of revolutions is very hostile to them. He finds that they are essentially irrational and a hindrance to rational progress, which must be gradual and orderly. His observations are based chiefly on the French Revolution, but they apply in various degrees to all others.

Especially interesting is his explanation of the strange and often incomprehensible behavior of people during revolutions. We find revolutionary crowds behaving with amazing cruelty and violence, and yet we know that they are composed in the main of ordinarily good-natured people.

The explanation is that people acquire new minds during revolutionary disturbances. A man's normal mentality is composed of those parts of his mental machinery which are called into use by his normal existence, but since all the conditions of life are changed by a revolution, a new and unknown set of mental qualities is brought into operation. Fear, hatred, terror, greed and ambition come to the surface, and the better qualities of the man are smothered.

Every individual possesses, besides his habitual mentality—which, when the environment does not alter, is almost constant—various possibilities of character which may be evoked by passing events.

The people who surround us are the creatures of certain circumstances, but not of all circumstances. Our ego consists of the association of innumerable cellular egos, the residues of ancestral personalities. By their combination they form an equilibrium which is fairly permanent when the social environment does not vary. As soon as this environment is

considerably modified, as in time of insurrection, this equilibrium is broken, and the dissociated elements constitute, by a fresh aggregation, a new personality, which is manifested by ideas, feelings and actions very different from those formerly observed by the same individual. Thus it is that during the Terror we see honest bourgeois and peaceful magistrates who were noted for their kindness turned into bloodthirsty fanatics.

Under the influence of environment the old personality may therefore give place to one entirely new. For this reason the actors in great religious and political crises often seem of a different essence to ourselves; yet they do not differ from us; the repetition of the same events would bring back the same men.

Cruelty, for example, was displayed by the French revolutionists in a most surprising manner, for Frenchmen at ordinary times are less cruel than Anglo-Saxons. During the massacres of September in Paris the prisoners were slowly chopped to bits by sabre-cut in order to prolong their agonies and amuse the spectators, who experienced the greatest delight before the spectacle of the convulsions of the victims and their shrieks of agony.

Similar scenes were observed all over France, even in the early days of the Revolution, although the foreign war did not excuse them then, nor any other pretext.

The revolutionary monster has always been easily dominated so soon as a strong power has opposed it. If its violence is unlimited, so is its servility. All the despots have had it for their servant. The Caesars are certain of being acclaimed by it, whether they are named Caligula, Nero, Marat, Robespierre or Boulanger.

The hatred of persons, institutions and things which animated the men of the Revolution is one of these affective phenomena which are the

more striking the more one studies their psychology. They detested not only their enemies but the members of their own party. "If one were to accept unreservedly," said a recent writer, "the judgments which they expressed of one another, we should have to conclude that they were all traitors and boasters, all incapable and corrupt, all assassins or tyrants." We know with what hatred, scarcely appeased by the death of their enemies, men persecuted the Girondists, Dantonists, Hebertists, Robespierriens, etc.

One of the chief causes of this feeling resided in the fact that these furious sectaries, being apostles, in possession of the absolute verity, were unable, like all believers, to tolerate the slight of infidels. A mystic or sentimental certitude is always accompanied by the need of forcing itself on others, is never convinced, and does not shrink from wholesale slaughter when it has the power to commit it.

"If the hatreds that divided the men of the Revolution had been of rational origin they would not have lasted long, but, arising from affective and mystic factors, men could neither forget nor forgive," says M. Le Bon, "their sources being identical in the different parties."

Fear, according to M. Le Bon, plays almost as large a part in revolutions as hatred. During the French Revolution there were many examples of great individual courage and many exhibitions of collective cowardice.

Facing the scaffold, the men of the Convention were always brave in the extreme; but before the threats of the rioters who invaded the Assembly they constantly exhibited an excessive pusillanimity, obeying the most absurd injunctions, as we shall see if we re-read the history of the revolutionary assemblies.

All the forms of fear were observed at this period. One of the most widespread was the fear of appearing moderate. Members of the

assemblies, public prosecutors, representatives "on mission," judges of the revolutionary tribunals, etc., all sought to appear more advanced than their rivals. Fear was one of the principal elements of the crimes committed at this period. If by some miracle it could have been eliminated from the revolutionary assemblies, their conduct would have been quite other than it was, and the Revolution itself would have taken a very different direction.

In normal times the influence of various affective elements, such as ambition and envy, is forcibly contained by social necessities. Ambition, for instance, is necessarily limited in a hierarchical form of society. Although the soldier does sometimes become a general, it is only after a long term of service. In time of revolution, on the other hand, there is no need to wait. Every one may reach the upper ranks almost immediately, so that all ambitions are violently aroused. The humblest man believes himself fitted for the highest employments, and by this very fact his vanity grows out of all measure.

All the passions being more or less aroused, including ambition and vanity, we see the development of jealousy and envy of those who have succeeded more quickly than others.

The effect of jealousy, always important in times of revolution, was especially so during the great French Revolution. Jealousy of the nobility constituted one of its most important factors. The middle classes had increased in capacity and wealth to the point of surpassing the nobility. Although they mingled with the nobles more and more they felt, none the less, that they were held at a distance, and this they keenly resented. This frame of mind had unconsciously made the bourgeoisie keen supporters of the philosophic doctrine of equality.

Most entertaining is M. Le Bon's contention that a typical revolutionist is really a mystic,

like the leader of a new fanatical faith, and not a reasoner.

The chief characteristic of the mystic temperament consists in the attribution of a mysterious power to superior beings of forces, which are incarnated in the form of idols, fetiches, words or formulas.

The mystic spirit is at the bottom of all religious and most political beliefs. These latter would often vanish could we derive them of the mystic elements which are their chief support.

Grafted on the sentiments and passionate impulses which it directs, mystic logic constitutes the might of the great popular movements. Men who would be by no means ready to allow themselves to be killed for the best of reasons will readily sacrifice their lives to a mystic idea which has become an object of adoration.

The principles of the Revolution speedily inspired a wave of mystic enthusiasm analogous to those provoked by the various religious beliefs which had preceded it. All they did was to change the orientation of a mental ancestry which the centuries had solidified. So there is nothing astonishing in the savage zeal of the men of the Convention. The principal heroes of the Terror—Couthon, Saint-Just, Robespierre, etc.—were apostles. Like Polydeutes, destroying the altars of the false gods to propagate his faith, they dreamed of converting the globe. Their enthusiasm spilled itself over the earth. Persuaded that their magnificent formulae were sufficient to overturn thrones, they did not hesitate to declare war upon kings. And as a strong faith is always superior to a doubtful faith, they victoriously faced all Europe.

The mystic spirit of the leaders of the Revolution was betrayed in the least details of their public life. Robespierre, convinced that he was supported by the Almighty, assured his hearers in a speech that the Supreme Being had "decreed the Republic since the beginning of time." In his quality of High Pontiff of a State religion he made the Convention vote a decree declaring that "the French People recognizes the existence of the Supreme Being and the immortality of the soul." At the festival of the Supreme Being, seated on a kind of a throne, he preached a lengthy sermon.