

What Makes an American Beauty?

Miss Gladys Cooper, Whose Beauty Is of the Fair English Type Not Infrequent in American Families.

PHOTO BY RIVA MAETHY LONDON.



PHOTOS - MARIE A. BUTLER - N.Y.

A Pose of Miss Cassassa Showing the Lines of Her Neck and Arms.



Miss Florence Cassassa, Winner in the "American Beauty" Competition for "Electrical Prosperity Week" at the Panama-Pacific Exposition. She is Photographed in a Pose of "Electra," the Symbolical Figure for That Occasion.

A Modern "Judgment of Paris" by New York's Most Famous Artists—and Why They Gave the Golden Apple to a "Melting Pot" Type

THE selection of Miss Florence Cassassa, daughter of an American mother and an Italian father, from a large number of beautiful contestants to represent American beauty during "Electrical Prosperity Week" at the Panama-Pacific International Exposition in San Francisco, gives timely interest to the question, what makes an American Beauty? Is beauty to be weighed, measured determined by physical standards accepted by painters and sculptors? If so, if proportions in detail and prescribed physical "lines of beauty" have standardized beauty, where in does American beauty differ from that of any other nation? If complexion, tints of the skin and color of the eyes and hair are factors to be considered, it will be admitted that American beauty embraces all color types, with variations virtually indigenous in the West, East, South and North of the country. And so does beauty in other nations. What, then, differentiates the American type?

Probably there are Old World judges of beauty who will deny the existence of such a thing as a separate and distinct American beauty type, for the reason that there is no such thing, ethnologically, as an American—except the American Indian, who has never entered into such competition. They will remind you that "Americans" are a crucible product, a result of persistent and generous use of the "melting pot"; that they are an amalgam of all nations under the sun, and can only be considered as such. Therefore "American Beauty" should be hyphenated in the beauty catalogues—English-American, German-American, French-American, Italian-American, and so on.

Yet "American Beauty" is famed the world over. You hear the term—even with inflections of rapture—in every European capital. It is freely acknowledged that the type is not only distinct, but admirable, the equal of any, ancient or modern. Why is this?

Does the answer depart from the physical standards, dealing with the psychology of the subject? Is it the mind, the spirit, the moral nature, the character of the American beauty, shining through and illuminating her physical charms which

distinguishes her from all other types of beauty?

May it not be true even so short a time as three hundred years—ten generations—have developed in descendants of the old Puritan stock character, inner elements of beauty which now express themselves outwardly? Never in history has there been quite such an opportunity in the development of a race to bring out the beauty-forces of character.

Do these qualities become attenuated when thrown into the "melting pot"? Does marriage with aliens of widely differing races tend to blot out these characteristics, or are they potent enough, like the Biblical "little leaven that leaveneth the whole lump," to persist, and even gain force, in the offspring? The facility with which the first generation born of such marriages takes on the characteristic American semblance is everywhere remarked. After the first generation the "hyphen" is obliterated. There are only Americans, and the beauty is only American beauty.

Of such origin is Miss Florence Cassassa. The committee of celebrated artists who selected her to impersonate "Electra" during "Electrical Prosperity Week" at the Panama-Pacific Exposition, frankly acknowledge her to be a product of the great American "melting pot"; nevertheless she is selected for her superiority among beauties who are American. She is tall and "queenly," with the artist's ideal in features, called "regular," and those features are animated by those beauty factors of the soul, mind and character which distinguish American beauty wherever it is seen.

Of course, Miss Cassassa had to pass the purely physical tests always applied by artists, the artistic standard being the Venus de Milo. Here are the measurement comparisons:

	Venus De Milo	Miss Cassassa
Height	5.4	5.8
Weight	122	139
Neck	12.5	12.9
Chest	33	34.7
Chest, Full	35.1	37.4
Waist	25	28
Hips	38	35.1
Thigh	22.5	23.3
Knee	19.8	14.6
Calf	13.2	14.1
Ankle	7.4	7.5
Upper Arm	12.5	13.1

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Fore Arm	9.5	9.5
Wrist	5.9	5.5
Shoulder	34.8	37.5
Foot, length	8.9	8.9
Arm, outstretched	63	69

Mr. Alonzo Kimball says that the American type must possess a beautiful mind, a pleasing temperament, without which nobody, no matter how physically perfect, can be anything but insipid, and uninspiring. He believes that the true American type is of medium coloring, light brown hair and clear complexion, and of medium height and figure. Hence after much mental travail he finally cast his vote for Miss Cassassa.

Nickolaki, the artist from Greece, the very birthplace of the beautiful, believes that the American type of beauty is in process of evolution. After the American girl has adapted her complexion to withstand the over stimulation of the climate, she will be even more beautiful. She is a composite of many races, but perhaps, the most typical is the combination of the Anglo-Italian, the result of the fusion of the Teutonic and Latin races. Miss Cassassa is a perfect example of this union, a wholesome type, athletic of figure, with lovely teeth, and great vivacity and intelligence. She comes nearest to the American ideal of the future.

O. Warde Traver believes there can be no beauty without refinement, character and health. She should embody the ideal of the higher life of harmony, and must therefore possess an instinctive understanding of the laws of health and happiness. This kind of girl by just being herself uplifts American thought; from herself she evolves the flower of beauty, grace, loveliness. "That is the kind of girl," said Mr. Traver, "I like to paint. I must fall in love with her just a bit, or how can I understand her? and she must be—sym pathetic, or how can I fall in love. It's part of the game. Miss Cassassa appeals to me as fulfilling the most exacting requirements of what she must and must not be."

Probably never again will a prize beauty of any nation enjoy such exploitation as Miss Cassassa is achieving. The electrical exhibitors at the exposition are scattering postcards of "Electra" broadcast in millions.

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Palmira Ceccani, a Typical Italian Stage Beauty.



Senorita Valencia, the Spanish Dancer, Shown in Turkish Costume. She is a Representative Beauty of That County.



Mile. Renouardt, the Paris Footlight Favorite and a French Beauty Type Much Admired in That Country.