

WOMAN AND HOME.

A WIDESPREAD AND FORMIDABLE CONSPIRACY AGAINST GIRLHOOD.

Growing Old Prematurely—Need of "Oiling Up"—A Poor Manager—Earning a Living—Tidewater—Hot Water Bath. Good Health—Bits of Information.

There are plenty of girl babies, and, according to all accounts, an alarming overplus of young ladies; but where are the little girls? It is superfluous to tell us that boys will be boys. We realize that fact every time we hear one of the number stamp the snow off his boots and yell at his comrade through the open door: "Bully for you, Jonesy!" Why does not some equally good authority assure us that girls will be girls? Clearly because they will not be girls. The blame should not rest on them, but on their mothers. It is wicked to immerse children under 12 years of age in the conventionalities of artificial life; yet very soon after the girl is able to walk alone she is taught that to be beautifully dressed is one of the two chief aims of life, and to receive attention is the other. It may be a pretty sight, as some mothers assert, to see a little thing of four or five swathed in silks and laces, and almost staggering under the weight of a huge sash, but to think of people it is a depressing sight. It will be had enough twenty years hence for the tiny brain to be added by the vanities of society, but to deliberately dwarf the powers of mind and body by a senseless style of dressing, is a criminal act, that can be excused only on the hypothesis that the mother is as ignorant as the child.

The little girls of today imitate not only the dress and deportment of their frivolous elders, but their language also. The simplest statements are prefaced with "Don't you think?" and "Would you believe," and the subjects upon which their conversation turns are described as lovely or ghastly, simply disgusting or perfectly exquisite. The conspiracy against girlhood is widespread and formidable, and it is only by the resolute exertions of intelligent parents that the evil can be overthrown. If hearts must be poisoned and minds dwarfed let it not be the hearts and minds of little girls, whose lives should be kept ideally sweet and simple and pure.—Bell Thistlewaite in Good Housekeeping.

Causes of Premature Age.

Do women grow old naturally, or is premature age forced upon them by too intense living? We pour life too full and wear out the measure. A quarter of a century ago, three plums, and were held for the honor of the average woman's time is spent in worry over her sewing or in preparing food. As though our backs and our stomachs were the immortal part of us! What would you think of a gardener who should give no thought or time to anything but the weeds and slips were rooted out? Or of a musician who should spend all his time polishing his violin and never once sweep the bow across the strings until their hair is full of nightingales and heaven? Take one quarter the time, my dear, that you devote to fussing over the cut and make of your various suits, tearing around after bargains (as though the saving of a few cents on a yard would compensate you for the wear and tear of the beautiful fabric of life being eaten, or preparing fancy dishes, and devote it to recreation or a walk in the woods, and at 40 you won't look like a lost leaf of Pharaoh's parchment.

Nature never intended that we should live as we do. If she had meant we should cut puff paste, she would have grown it on some of her trees; if she had intended we should spin and weave and ruffle and distort twenty-five yards of goods to make a dress she never would have started us out with a fig leaf. The first thing she did with man, and woman, too, was to turn them loose in a garden with a few birds. The wily inventions of the devil have stranded these free children of nature in a fourteen room furnace heated houses, with servants to wear the patience and the thousand and one non-essentials of domestic torment to precipitate old age before its time. A closer adherence to nature's primal laws as to diet and outdoor living would fill the world in time with a handsomer and hardier race.—"Amber" in Chicago Journal.

The Need of "Oiling Up."

The best supplement of religion is common sense. After having resolved to fulfill the highest possibilities of our nature, the wisest course lies in attempting to reach the mental and physical condition which render noble living possible.

A serene old lady, whose daily living was like noble music, was once asked by a moody young girl how she could exercise self command without an apparent failure.

"My dear," said she, "the first secret of decent living is in the help and support we receive from above; the second lies in taking care of ourselves. When I find that I am more than usually sensitive to the worries of life, I take half an hour alone and read a pleasant book, or even take a nap. If the chariot wheels jar in the gates, I say to myself, 'Come, come, Martha! We must stop to oil up!'"

"When I was a girl, I had a quarrel with my best friend, and all because I had been up half the night before, and didn't know enough to take a nap before finding fault with her!"

"But I should grow selfish if I watched my needs in that way," said her little friend, discouraged.

"Oh, bless you, it must be done with discretion! Regard your mind and body as delicate and complicated machines which must be kept in order. You wouldn't expect your watch to keep time if a broadbrim had lodged among the wheels; why should you demand gentleness and patience of this human mechanism if you don't exert yourself to see that it is kept in repair?"

"I once had a fit of the deepest indigo lines, which yielded to an orange, eaten in a little room. The orange was so sweet and the sunlight so dazzling that I couldn't resist the conviction gradually stealing in on me that this is indeed the best of all possible worlds."—Youth's Companion.

Taking Care of the Wages.

And it is foolishness rather than depravity on the part not of the wage earner but of the one who should know how to take care of the wages when they are earned which keeps so many families at the struggling point most of their lives. If the mother has "no faculty," if she is "a poor manager," her husband and children must suffer with herself. People speak of her scornfully, as though it were her own fault, when it is largely her misfortune. If as a little girl she had been treated as a reasonable and responsible human being if she had been given so many cents a week and expected to render a strict account of them, if through the years of girlhood she had been not merely permitted but obliged to take complete charge of her own financial affairs, who can doubt that she would have learned valuable lessons in the art of spending money to the best advantage that would be of incalculable service to her now! The habits of accuracy, order, punctuality and thoroughness, if not

acquired in youth, are nearly impossible to gain at all.

The ignorance of common business principles which women display is a result of the wretched old belief in women's inherent helplessness and brainlessness and general worthlessness. Have not women two feet each as well as men? Then why does not the individual woman learn to stand on them, and why could she not in time learn to walk alone? Are not our hands given us to earn money with, and our heads to show us the best way to invest it? The root of all evil may be made the root of a great deal of good to those who practice the homely virtues of prudence, forethought and discrimination.—Toronto Globe.

Earning Her Own Living.

There is still to be found with some thoughtless people a weak and childish prejudice which causes them to consider that a woman of any social rank has stepped down in the scale of her being if she opens or enters a shop and stands behind the counter, measuring, cutting, doing up parcels, taking money and making change. To the mind of these people—if they can be said to have a mind, or at any rate to use one in this relation—the act is as much beneath her as if it were menial, and if she be of any notable family it requires all the respectability of the past to save her from the loss of prestige and to suffer her to receive a share even of the consideration due a member of her family; as if, like the Brahmin, she had lost caste and experienced defilement by touching what was outside her station.

Certainly we can imagine few things more praiseworthy in a woman than a determination to earn her own living, to live her own life, to meet her own expenses, if she is not a person of independent means, but has to be supported by others, whether or not the others work for their own living as well. And to our own mind it is far more unworthy for a woman to sit down and be supported by another than it is for her to support herself in any honest manner whatever. Meanwhile, as every one cannot go into trade, for want either of the capital or the faculty, there is already indeed from the outset that sort of aristocratic stamp to the occupation, as compared with others, which, if that is what is wanted, ought to be a salve to the feelings of those hurt by what they have thought its plebeian character.—Harper's Bazar.

The Care of Tinware.

Many women spend a good deal of time in trying to keep tinware bright by scouring it with some kind of powder each week. This is a poor plan, as the less scouring tinware receives the better. It removes the outside coating, and though it be kept looking bright by hard labor, it will never look as well as if it were washed in clean, hot suds. To be sure, when the tin is stained the stain will have to be removed by scouring, but only enough should be done to remove the stain. Kerosene and powdered lime, the lime very finely pulverized, is claimed to clean tinware nicely, and wood ashes is also recommended for the same purpose.

A better powder may be made of the soft white cinders that are usually thrown away. After sifting the ashes from the stove, pick from the cinders all the soft white ones. They must be soft enough to crush into a powder between the thumb and finger, and after crushing up fine they are ready to be used. First wash and wipe the tin clean, then with a flannel rub it over with the powder. It is so fine that it does not scratch or wear off the coating, and gives the tin a beautiful polish. Never use eye on tinware, or it will ruin it. Keep an old toothbrush for getting into the seams around the handle and rim. Never put vinegar, tomatoes or any acid substance in tin. When tins are new, first fill with boiling water and let stand for a little while before using. To mend holes in tinware use putty, placing it on the outside.—Boston Budget.

Thankful for Good Health.

Thank the Lord, all ye that can call yourselves healthy. The day has gone by for physically delicate women. This age demands Hobes and young Venuses with ample waists and veritable muscles. Specked fruit and specked people go in the same category in the popular fancy. To the question, "how are you today?" I, for one, always feel like replying in the words of an old Irish servant we once had (God rest her faithful soul where ever it be this windy day), "First rata, glory be to God!" It is such a grand thing to be well and strong, to feel that your soul is riding on its way to glory in a chariot and not in a broken down old mud cart.

Talk about happiness! Why, a well beggar has a better time of it than a sick king any day. If, then, like a bird, your strong wing uplifts you above the countless shafts of pain which that grim old sportsman, death, is ever aiming at poor humanity, count yourself an ingrate if the song of thanksgiving is not always swelling from your heart like the constant song of a bobolink singing for every joy above the clover.—"Amber" in Chicago Journal.

The Hot Water Bath.

If you want to keep your skin nice this summer you will have to persist in the hot water bath. I read a funny thing the other day about Mrs. Langtry using slices of raw meat on her face to make her skin soft and white. I should like to call it a campaign taradiddle, only Mrs. Langtry is not running for president. Her skin is kept soft and white by the use of the very hottest water and the giving of a little care to it when it is exposed to the sun; some simple ointment, perhaps just a little vaseline, is rubbed over it for a while, and as for all the wonderful stuffs she is credited with using, I doubt if they have touched that fair, pure face.

Fliny of exercise, a great deal of bathing and even temper are about as good to keep the skin in order and to keep one young looking as all the cosmetics prescribed from the time when Cleopatra lived. However, when you are in the country, don't submit to the abomination of hard water—I think it would ruin the complexion of an elephant. If you can't get rain water put a little borax or a few drops of ammonia in the bowl whenever you bathe your face.—"Bab" in New York Star.

Care of the Teeth.

The average girl in brushing her teeth puts the upper and under sets closely together and brushes only in the center. This is all very well for a finishing polish, but before that she should take a small brush, give each row its proper attention and be certain that every particle of powder or paste is removed from between the teeth. If it is absolutely necessary that a pick must be used, let it be a very small quill one, or it is better still, if the work can be accomplished, with a thread of silk. Wooden toothpicks are not advised, inasmuch as they are apt to break between the teeth and very often a great deal of difficulty follows in attempting to remove the bits. Gritty powder is not good; it breaks the enamel and lodges between the teeth in a very unpleasant way. A powder recommended by physicians and very easily made is composed of one part of precipitated chalk, one part of powdered castile soap, one part of powdered orris root. A very good soap, and every woman ought to have a good soap,

is just as good for the teeth as it is for the skin.—"Bab" in Philadelphia Times.

The Use of Electricity.

But few recognize the value of electricity in restoring beauty. The trouble is that they cannot have too much of it, and stimulate themselves to dangerous injury. People differ so greatly in the degree they can bear that one delicate woman will take a current which overcomes a stronger but more sensitive one. Some persons cannot come near an electrical machine when it is working without disagreeable sensations not at all imaginary. But a very gentle current daily applied, with other care of the health, rallies the forces and adds flesh and color like magic. I write this for sensible women, not those who, aware of its aid to beauty, rush off to buy a battery as they would a box of face powder and use it without restraint, as they do chloral and champagne. Electricity is no tame cat, but an able fool killer or a strong agent for good as it is rightly or wrongly used.—Shirley Duro's Letter.

To Wash the Hair.

When it becomes necessary to wash the hair take the yolk of an egg, slightly beaten, and rub well into the roots; when nearly dry rinse the head in tepid water, into which is poured a very few drops of ammonia. Then, by the fire, rub the hair with towels until perfectly dry, brush and part the hair with the fingers. The egg renders the hair fine and silken and the ammonia promotes its growth. Or, instead of the egg, use sage tea; put two or three spoonfuls of sage into a cup and pour boiling water over it. When the tea is cold rub the scalp with it and rinse as above.—Atlanta Constitution.

The Baby's Head.

A dark brown scurf sometimes gathers on a baby's head, giving the child an unclean and dirty appearance. This may be easily removed by rubbing a little vaseline or sweet oil upon the spot, and letting it remain for a few hours; then upon washing it in warm water and soap the offending dandruff will disappear and the little head be left clean and white as any part of the body.—Boston Budget.

To Make Cern Cakes.

For corn cakes without milk or soda, put a pinch of salt into a cupful of corn meal, then scald; add the yolks of three eggs and one tablespoonful of flour; beat together and stir with cold water. After beating, the whites of the eggs very stiff, fold them into the mixture gently and bake. The flour can be omitted.—Good Housekeeping.

Badly Shaped Mouths.

Half the badly shaped mouths that are the sorrows of the young women of today result from their being permitted when they were children to suck their fingers. One of the prettiest women in town has coarse, thick lips, that come from having been allowed when she was going to sleep to put her thumb in her mouth.—"Bab's" Letter.

Blood Stains.

Remove blood stains from linen by soaking the article in clear, soft water over night, then washing the usual way and drying in the sun. The vessel in which they are soaked should be rinsed, as the least particle of soap or any other washing compound is apt to set the stain.—Good Housekeeping.

Removing Ink Spots.

We have removed the very worst ink stains from carpets of very delicate colors by rubbing them with skim milk, and when they are almost effaced, washing them with a cloth wrung out in boiling water without soap. Then cover the place with a dry cloth and let it remain for a day.—Boston Budget.

Good Dish Cloth.

For a dish cloth "par excellence," make a cloth about twelve inches square of four or five thicknesses, of common white musquito netting; then sew across and back and forth on the machine, to hold it firmly together. Thus it is very soft and will hold no grease at all.—Good Housekeeping.

To Renovate Silk.

To make silk which has been "tumbled" and wrinkled appear nearly like new, sponge it on the surface with a weak solution of gum arabic on white gloves, and iron it on the wrong side. Strong black tea, cold, is a good thing to clean black silk.—Boston Budget.

Moths or any summer flying insects may be enticed to destruction by a bright tin pan half filled with kerosene set in a dark corner of the room. Attracted by the bright pan, the moth will meet his death in the kerosene.

If the gums, as frequently happens after illness, become very sore a gargle of myrrh in a little water is to be commended, and as this has a good, wholesome odor one need not mind using it.

It sometimes costs less to have a badly soiled room renovated after a moderate use of the mop and brush, than it does to have it scrubbed and scoured.

All advice to the contrary, the best brush to use is the one that suits your teeth; usually too large a brush is chosen and the corners of the mouth are hurt.

This matter of bathing cannot be made to fit any rigid rules; for it is rare to find two persons who are affected alike by contact with water in a bath.

Tea or coffee stains will come out at once if they are taken immediately and held over a pail while boiling water is poured upon them.

To darken light mahogany and cherry, blacromate of potash dissolved in water is excellent, and gives it the appearance of age.

A very thin coat of what is known as French picture varnish will restore chromos and oil paintings to their original brightness.

Where a daily bath of water is not well borne or not obtainable, a good sharp rubbing with a dry towel is next best.

To polish nickel plated goods after becoming black and not worn, use rouge or whiting on a rag with a little oil.

Egg shells crushed and shaken in glass bottles half filled with water will clean them quickly.

Salt and vinegar brighten brasses as well as any more modern and expensive potions.

Carpets will look much brighter after sweeping if wiped off with a damp cloth.

Hang a small bag of charcoal in the rain water barrel to purify the water.

SHORTHAND WRITERS.

SOMETHING NEEDED BESIDES QUICK FINGERS AND WITS.

The Rocks Upon Which the "Shorthand" Reporter May Split—Difficulties Which Arise When Notes Are to Be Transcribed—Ludicrous Errors.

Now, why will you only get five men in 100 to reach 130 words (and those words in common use a minute, only four in 100 to touch the verbatim speed line (they being limited to the higher range of familiar speech), and only one in 100 to be equal to any requirement of speed or style of speech, technical or classic, as well as general or popular? The answer is, that you may combine dexterity of finger and mental quickness, however great, and then you will fail to reach the full stature of an expert verbatim reporter unless you have read, marked, learned and inwardly digested volumes upon volumes of the same stores of learning from which the speakers you are to report have drawn their supplies. For example, you study shorthand, and at last, after eighteen months of industrious practice, by dint of dictations read to you from the daily newspaper or some handy book, you time yourself, and find that you can actually get down 130 words a minute, and transcribe it correctly. Now you are happy, and you will go to the nearest editor and say: "I am ready for big work; I can write shorthand and take down speeches literally."

Suppose the editor believes you, and you are engaged as a shorthand reporter. Then suppose your first assignment is to give a column report of an historical lecture. You attend, and the lecturer begins with a few commonplace, which you find yourself quite able to get down. But now he advances into the heart of his theme. He is talking of the events that led up to the American revolution, and he drags in the names of the leading men in the different colonies who stirred up the spirit of independence and paved the way for 1776. He mentions their places of residence, in Virginia, or New York, or Delaware, or elsewhere, and quotes from their letters extensively. You follow him in shorthand, and you think you have got him. But when you go back to the office you open your note book and discover that here are dozens of names of men and places that you never heard of before, because you have never given any time to reading up the ante-revolution history of these United States. In that case you may write out your notes after a fashion, but how the lecturer will state when he reads it; and what letters the editor will get after he publishes it; and how soon, after you have made one or two messes of that kind, you will be sized up as good for office work, dictation, and the five for a quarter brand of public meetings, but on important work no good whatever.

Stenographic skill alone can take down words, but it requires the something more which we call general intelligence to write them out properly. That general intelligence is only possible to the man who has, as Bill Nye would say, "coiled up his brain" with oil drawn in liberal quantity from standard literature of all kinds. The lecturer on the ante-revolution period will perhaps talk of the Townshend acts of 1767, of Governor Sharpe, of Maryland, and Governor Montagu, of South Carolina, and their proclamations in the name of the king; then he will go on and tell what such American leaders as Gadsden, Laurens, Rutledge, Lynch and Pinckney did about it.

But, assuming that you have given no careful reading to the history of that period, how can you transcribe your notes, no matter how faithfully they were taken, so as to save yourself from grotesque errors of spelling, if of nothing worse. Your notes say "Governor Sharp," but will you omit that final "e"? Very likely you will, because you don't know any better. Will you write it out Governor "Montagu," or "Montague"? Will you write "Laurens," as it should be, or "Lawrence," as it should not be? Will you surely spell Pinckney with the "e" before the "k"? Will you write "Rutledge," or "Rutledge"? If you are without any previous reading on this subject you are just as likely to write these names one way as the other.

Illustrations might be multiplied without end. Go and try to report one of Joseph Cook's lectures without enough previous reading to give you an idea of what he is talking about, when he quotes from the leading English, German and French philosophers, and see where you will come out. Go and report some after-dinner speeches of a society of scholars, and let there be a few Latin quotations, and you may get them down as they sounded to your ears; but, if you have never taken a course of Latin, let us see how you are going to transcribe it. The old story of the half-educated reporter who took down the famous quotation, "Amicus Plato, amicus Socrates, sed major veritas," and then, never having gone with Caesar through the Gallic wars, transcribed it, "I may cuss Plato, I may cuss Socrates, said Major Verityus," and who later inquired whether this Major Verityus was of the regular army or the volunteers, was probably an invention, but things just as absurd have happened. It will always be true that a stream can rise no higher than its source; that what you have never heard you cannot know, and that what you don't know you can't tell anybody.

The Boston newspaper owner who threatened to discharge his staff because he had used the word "oblivion," which he took to be a word unfit for the family circle, was not especially stupid. He had never been introduced to the word "oblivion" before, and at first sight it had a nasty look to him; that was all.—James W. Clarke in The Writer.

The Tenor Forgot His Lines.

On the stage the prompter is the safety from forgetfulness, but in the concert theatre lapses take place. Even a great living tenor has been known to retire in the middle of a song he had been singing every week for almost a lifetime, because all memory of the words he wanted was gone. Such a case of sudden forgetfulness took place in one of the London theatres early in the present century. During the performance the gods in the galleries called for their favorite song, "The Sprig of Shillelagh," though it was not announced in the bills, and John Henry Johnstone, a well known Irish actor and vocalist, came forward with alacrity and good humor to comply with the wishes of the gods. Accordingly the music played, but the singer stood silent and confused. The symphony was repeated, but there were the same silence and confusion in rather an increased degree. The symphony was performed a third time, but to no purpose. At length Mr. Johnstone came forward to the front of the stage and said: "Ladies and gentlemen, I assure you that I have sung this song so often that I forget the first line." A roar of laughter greeted these words and a shower of good natured voices began to prompt the singer, who immediately gave the favorite song in good style and gained increased applause.—Chambers' Journal.

For the 25,000 soldiers in the army of the United States there are only thirty-four chaplains.

The Plattsmouth Herald DAILY AND WEEKLY EDITIONS.

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