

## A Common Marriage Agitation.

The past two years have been very busy ones for the institution of marriage; and the admirers of the system find it no small task to keep pace with its contemporary history.

The free-lovers, too, and those of that leaning, have been furnishing an opening for further argument in the past year and largely improved it. The establishment of a free-love colony on an island in Lake Champlain was alleged to have been under way; but there seems some failure in the machinery, probably through lack of means to complete the purchase of the island.

The divorce laws in several States have also been very largely modified; and the Episcopal church has placed its opposition to all divorces, save for the one cause of infidelity to the marriage vows, upon the more solid foundation of an authoritative edict.

But the most noteworthy agitation that the marriage subject has received has occurred across the water. England has made some strong though ineffectual efforts to amend her divorce laws so as to admit of fuller evidence in the one cause (adultery) now on the statute books, and to admit one or two other causes for breaking marital chains that have become too heavy.

In Germany, under Bismarck's strong hand, changes have been accomplished (at least, temporarily,) that the First Napoleon and several of the Louises found too heavy a task to be thoroughly effected in France. Marriage has been removed from the control of the Church, and made to all intents and purposes a civil institution. The use of the priest is not, by any means, forbidden; but he can be dispensed with, if the marriage is not to his pleasure.

But in Switzerland the change has been even more radical. The adoption of the new Constitution has altered marriage from a right to be acquired only by great exertion or fortunate circumstances, to one open to any one who is willing, of age, and not married already. The French *dot* system, hitherto prevailing in many of the cantons, is abolished, as also is the control of the clergy, and the special interference of National or Cantonal Government.

No impediment, whether founded on religion, want of means, or lack of communal rights, can any longer be put in the way of those who wish to marry, and the government, local or federal, is prohibited from levying a tax or fee on the ceremony. Aside from its marital aspect, the new state of affairs is very interesting, as a complete departure from the principle of Cantonal rights adhered to by the Cantons longer and more stubbornly than "State rights" have been in our own country. The old Swiss Constitution provided especially that marriage was a matter exclusively of Cantonal jurisprudence; but after a struggle of a quarter of a century, the more powerful Cantons have succeeded in this great step toward a centralized government.

Turkey and Russia, also, have both been agitating the marriage subject with a good deal of energy, but no important changes have been effected, save a simplification of the ceremony prescribed by the Greek Church. In France and Spain there have been no changes, save a growing disposition in the former country to do away with the custom altogether, as unnecessary and burdensome.

As to the lesson to be learned from all this change and agitation, we leave that to those who make the topic their specialty; assuring timid people, in the meantime, that with those who think marriage very good as it is, it is likely to remain unchanged for a length of time that may relieve them of all anxiety.—*Cincinnati Times*.

## Corsets and Husbands.

We know we are handling a delicate subject when we take hold of a woman's waist, but what would you have? When women hold mass conventions and display before them the innermost garments of the sex, explaining their make and discussing their material without the slightest indication of squeamishness, and when they insist that the fate of the world rests on the mothers in the world, and that the welfare of the mothers depends on the make of the garments worn by

them, and when stockings, and under-drawers, and outer-drawers, and chemises, and corset-covers, and underskirts, and under-sleeves, and habit shirts, and bustle-supporters are held up, and shaken, and turned inside out, and the manner of wearing illustrated to a crowded audience in a public hall, does it not become the duty of a journalist to investigate a little?

As our readers know, a Woman's Congress has been in session in Chicago, discussing everything, from human rights in the abstract, woman's rights to the ballot in particular, and so down to the question whether the winter under-wrapper should be of merino or red flannel. The affair closed on Saturday last with a dress parade of under-garments by Mrs. Flynt, of Boston, with explanations of what is right and what not right in the make of such articles. Her lecture was interrupted by questions and discussions which made the affair highly interesting.

Of course corsets came up for consideration. Mrs. Flynt disapproved of corsets. She would have nothing to do with corsets. Corsets were woman's enemies. She made that discovery one day when a tight chemise sleeve hurt her and she relieved the pressure with a slight snip of the scissors. From tight chemise sleeves to tight corsets her thoughts leaped in an instant. She took off the corset from her waist and received her customers in a skirt and undervest. All that day she fancied that she was quite nude, and made sundry visits to the mirror to assure herself that she was decently clad to appear before people. The second day she felt as if she had lost every friend she had in the world. The third day the gloom increased. The fourth the clouds commenced breaking; the fifth the sun shone in fitful gleams; the sixth there was a bright and unclouded sky and she was herself again in perfect health. She weighed two hundred pounds; since she had left off corsets she could run up three flights of stairs, mount a step-ladder like a child, and was a thoroughly healthy, agile, active woman, even a prece- ing inflammatory rheumatism having been wholly overcome. To prove her words Mrs. Flynt showed her agility by running up and down the platform, amid the applause of the audience.

Then Mrs. Livermore rose and propounded a serious question to Mrs. Flynt. What was she to do when, after an enormous strain upon her system, she had to come upon the platform with an all-gone feeling. There is not a woman living who doesn't know what that is. She was forced to assume corsets sometimes as a remedial agent. She could not rest with her work to do, and she could not stand without this extraneous support. She seemed to have "no stomach at all." One lady, not of the crusading kind, suggested "a little wine for the stomach's sake." Mrs. Livermore replied that after fainting four times upon the platform one day, her physician had said she must take wine and egg. She did so. The first hour she felt very high and lofty. She could not talk fast or fluently enough. Everything was at a very exalted altitude. At the end of that time the reaction came, and she not only wanted to die, but considered suicide a Christian duty. Corsets seemed to be her only help for the all-gone feeling. Mrs. Flynt said a little warm milk and water sweetened was her tonic, and she talked all day on that stimulant from eight in the morning till six at night.—*Cleveland Herald*.

AN ENCOURAGING ACCOUNT FROM THE OSAGES.—Agent Gibson, of the Osage agency, Indian territory, in a letter to Friend Enoch Hoag, Indian superintendent, dated the 4th instant, says:—"A great revival in the civilizing line has been prevailing and gaining force every day. Big Chief and Black Dog called for and obtained a supply of axes and iron wedges for their bands, and said they had decided to split rails and build houses. Wa-ti-an-ka sent a letter requesting twenty-two axes and handles, and his brother ten. Hard Rope has also been in and obtained a supply for his people and the governor also. The governor was out with a good lot of his braves with axes, spades, mattocks and pikes, improving the road between the station and the agency. I encouraged Virgil Hizard, a half breed, to purchase a good sawmill for the benefit of

the Little Osages on the Canna. He had done so, and the mill will saw this week. They have decided to scatter out all of their bands, and under no circumstances to permit them to herd together in villages. I have agreed to pay Hizard \$1.50 cents per hundred all the lumber they can use properly. I request that a portable saw mill be purchased at once for the Salt creek station."

DIXON AND FREE LOVE.—Hepworth Dixon, in the course of some remarks at a recent dinner at the New York Lotus Club, is reported to have said—

"Truth being truth, let me say at once that the book called 'Spiritual Wives' was written to prove that the aberrations called Free Love, the Higher Law, and other names, arose in Germany and had a brief existence in England before they attracted notice in the United States. That these aberrations exist in America I hardly suppose that anybody in his senses will deny. To an editor who asks for information on the subject, my answer is simply, Inquire in Brooklyn." [Laughter and applause.]

THE DEAD FORMES.—The New York Herald states that a cable dispatch announces the death of Theodore Formes, the German operatic tenor, instead of his brother Carl, the great operatic basso, who, at last accounts, was enjoying excellent health. Theodore was born in 1826, and was for many years the favorite at the Court Theatre, Vienna, playing all the principal tenor roles, his Raoul being considered one of the finest impersonations in Meyerbeer's works in Germany. About a year ago his mind failed and he was placed in a lunatic asylum on the Rhine. For some time previous to his death he had been in very feeble health.

## NEWS NOTES.

Mattie Smith, of Chesuncook, Mass., stabbed herself with a pen-knife because her young man would not wait for her at the front gate.

Grandma Victoria has now her twenty-fifth grandchild, born of the Duchess of Edinburgh, and the eldest of the two dozen is but sixteen.

The Prussian Government has given an order for no less than a hundred million rounds of metallic rifle cartridges to the Westley Richards Company in England.

Mrs. Chase, of Ohio, was arrested the first time she appeared with her trousers on, and now she's going to mortgage her farm and see whether this is a free country or a monarchy.

While Mrs. Shallcross, of Coatsville, Pa., was engaged in preserving, a large swarm of bees attacked eight pounds of sugar cooking on a stove, and many of the insects were scalded or burned. The kettle was set off the stove, when the bees consumed nearly all of its contents.

The remark in the Shah's diary that "the people of London think very much of their police; anybody that shows any disrespect to the police must be killed," would have been quite accurate, says the New York Evening Post, had the Shah been writing of New York.

Miss Emma Callender, a practicing physician of Middlebury, Vt., formerly Professor of Physiology and Hygiene in Mount Holyoke Seminary, at South Hadley, Mass., has been elected a member of the Vermont Medical Society, and is the first woman that ever belonged to that organization.

At our primary election, one of our sturdy sons of the mountains came into town to exercise his right as a free sovereign of a free State, and cast his vote for the man of his choice. He approached the polls and handed in his ticket. "What is the name?" asked one of the judges. "Johnson," was the reply. "Yes, but what is your other name?" The mountaineer became indignant, and declared that he had but one name, evidently thinking the official took him for a repeater. "Yes, but what is your Christian name?" said the judge. "My Christian name?" said the bold backwoodsman. "Why, if you want to know that, why, I am a Baptist." And so the man and vote were registered "Johnson the Baptist."—*Tusculum Chronicle*.

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S. S. BARNON, Administrators. W. E. JONES, Administrators. Paragonah, Oct. 19th, 1874. w29

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