The Ways of Womankind

LENTEN FRIVOLITIES.

Bab Chats on Seasonable Topics and Incidentally Writes of Cleopatra and Her Snub Nose.

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As Lent is essentially an improving time, the average woman joins a certain number of classes and is asked to drop in as a visitor at a number more. Being that very common thing, a busy woman, I do not regularly belong to any classes, although I go to several carrying a bunch of violets to give the president as a sort of ticket of admission.

In this way one learns an immense amount. One learns how to listen with one's eyes shut when the Egyptologist talks about the meaning of the queer hieroglyphics and impresses upon your mind that Cleopatra was a very ordinary looking little woman, with fair hair and a snub nose, whose chief charm to the Egyptians was her good complexion. That lecturer wonders why his class is so small the next week and does not realize until afterward that because of this reference to the skin of Cleopatra woman, fickle woman, lovely woman, has gone in a body of 10 or 20 to hear a beauty teacher talk about "How to Manage the Skin."

Then I have learned to stare straight into vacancy while the woman of the present hangs a gavel and talks about "the woman of the future," and I can be quietly enthusiastic on the subject of dress reform. I was not always so. There was a time when to listen to the dress reformers made my angry passions rise and I wanted to go up and tell them what I thought. But now, when some woman who has been living on overdone beef, on too much pastry, on oatmeal eaten in lumps or too many preserves gets up and tells about a well fitting corset being an invention of the devil and a pretty gown an impossibility as connected with brains, I simply smile and give myself a suitable wriggle, which means that there is comfort in properly made corsets.

A speaker of this kind invariably meanders off and asks with much excitement, "What will the coming generation be when the woman of today is satisfied to be merely beautiful?" and I sit there and think of Dr. Schenck and of the fact that beauty is hereditary, and I remember handsome families like the Mays and the Cuttings and the Works and the Carys, and there come to me visions of the loveliest, healthiest babies I have ever seen—babies who inherited their beauty from their mothers, their bravery from their fathers, while father and mother had each contributed toward the intellect. There is untold joy in my heart when the dress reformer talks. She is very emphatic. She is usually the shape of a shingle, and she dismes with a D that is intense all corsets, while she objects to pretty underwear and considers as a special work of the devil a well fitting bodice. She is down on women's hips, those curves which are so essentially feminine and which were made as broad and strong for the purpose of carrying burdens.

The dress reformer does not believe this. She thinks that everything ought to be strung from the shoulders. You are to endure nasty, narrow tapes cutting your shoulders and making the wearing of a low bodice an impossibility so that you can string petticoats and everything else that you wear from them. Ugh! It's awful. I never made a speech in my life, but every time I hear the dress reformer speak I want somebody to get up and say what I think—that is, that nature (the dress reformer prefers to say nature, as she counts God old fashioned) would have made women with narrow hips and broad shoulders if it had been intended that her burdens be carried from them, but it was not. Consequently her shoulders are medium and her hips are big, while man has no hips at all—that is, to speak of—and his shoulders are supposed to be broad enough to bear the burden of feminine heads when feminine hearts are in trouble.

At a hotel where there was an alarm of fire, when we all ran just as we were without the slightest plea, I saw a dress reformer in her nightgown. Oh, but she was a sight! She certainly did live up to her theories. There was no pretty nainsook, no frills, no bits of lace and bows of ribbon. Oh, no! That nightgown was made out of some medicated material the odor of which is best likened to sewer gas, and it was cut as John Gilpin's bottom sent, "straight up and down," with every suggestion of utility, but not a hint of beauty.

If the dress reformers would drop dress reforming altogether and take up eating, which is my special fad, there would be a great deal more good done, as far as the coming generation is concerned. If somebody would have the courage of her convictions and say that women need less pastry and more mutton, fewer fried and more roasted things, less cake and more good bread, and nothing fried, there would be a good outlook for the people of the future.

The average woman needs better bread and butter, especially butter, and less tea—however, I mean less bad tea, for good tea, properly made, hurts nobody. Then, too, the average woman wants to devote a longer time to dinning and less to refinishing the world. Her complexion will be better, her eyes clearer, her hair healthier, and her teeth will remain in her mouth longer if she eats good food, properly cooked, rather slowly and chews mostly in between. I myself believe in reformation, but every person thinking perhaps believes that reform, like charity, ought to begin at home. The woman who wants to keep a man out of temptation in the evening is much apt to succeed by having a good dinner, beginning at 7 o'clock and lasting until 8, than by all the preaching in the world. After 7 o'clock the average man who has consumed a good dinner and is enjoying his smoke and a glass of cordial feels so comfortable that he doesn't want to go out, and a woman must be a fool who can't entertain a man who has had a good dinner. Why doesn't somebody start a society for the propagation of good food? I would be willing to join and to work to make it a success, and I possess a, which's feet and a hare's ears and am said to bring good luck.

I never grow patriotic except when I am talking about the blessings, as far as food is concerned, of the people of this country. We have everything that gives best is that labeled "From America," and English housekeepers, when they see the dainties we have, and the variety of vegetables and the good things that are so plentiful and so cheap in this land of freedom, clasp their hands and say, "What an easy time the American housekeeper must have!" And yet the American woman does not appreciate the comforts of affluence. Bad food has made more trouble than anything else in this world. It has driven men to drink and, worse than that, to dyspepsia, while it has ruined the looks of many a pretty woman. Overdone meat, expensive butter, weighty bread and badly set tables have made men murderers mentally if not in actuality.

It does not cost a cent more to have a decent dinner than to have a bad one. It is true it may take a little more time and thought, but that time and that thought are well expended. The average woman belongs to the proper sort of society, which is the one I suggest should be started, would take proper pride in her dinner table, would get to know the delights of hospitality and would make her home the greatest enemy to the barrooms and all the undesirable and wicked haunts that attract men.

By the bye, if you are feminine, and the chances are ten to one that you are, you will be interested in these dresses that are absolutely new, of which I inclose you the pictures. The girl in the walking dress has on a satin cloth of the new shade of gray, trimmed with black braid and black silk. Her parasol is gray chiffon and her hat gray straw, trimmed with white plume and black wings. Isn't that white dress a darling? I mean the one that is made entirely of lace insertion and dotted muslin. The other gown is a dinner dress of chiffon, embroidered with white pearl beads, with accordion plated chiffon on the shoulders. The hat which makes it certain that the dinner is at some fashionable restaurant, is of cerise velvet, embroidered in pearls, with a bunch of cerise chiffon on one side and a white ostrich tip just behind it. How well those Frenchwomen pose! How careful they are to get the right sort of background! They know how to have the harmonies in life. But there is nothing after all like being in harmony with your background, with yourself and with your fellow man. There are some things we are all in harmony about.

We are all in harmony about the beauty of the close fitting cloth suit if worn by the right woman, whose curves are caught on to even by the irreverent messenger boy.

We are all in harmony about the value of the telegraph, though we fail to see why the ordinary messenger boy can't spell correctly, and if our name is Katherine with a K insists on spelling it with a C.

We are all in harmony as to the beauty of a new bonnet, even if its value as rated by you and me be different from that as rated by the milliner.

We are a pretty harmonious lot, take us all in all, for nobody is anxious to go to war, but if war does come we will meet the people who want to fight and show them just how valuable we are in a fight, won't we? Of course we will. Your neighbor thinks so, and so does her neighbor, who is next door neighbor to

Bab

A NEW DINNER DRESS.

A NOVEL WHITE DRESS.

NEW WALKING DRESS.

WOMEN DETECTIVES.

Nine Bright Women Aid Uncle Sam In Guarding New York Against Female Smugglers.

[Copyright, 1898.]

New York, March 18.—When a big steamship from some foreign port anchors at quarantine for the health officer's visit, the would be smuggler, man or woman, must certainly experience a thrill of nervousness at the idea that the crisis of the voyage is at hand.

If it be the amateur, with some small article stowed away in his trunk or secreted on his person, he probably will feel more fearsome qualms than the experienced smuggler, the thing of whose garments may be padded with fine lace or uncut gems or who perhaps has distributed his goods among the baggage of immigrants in the steerage hired for the purpose of bringing over contraband goods.

Many people have claimed that there is a certain unique pleasure in amateur smuggling; that the idea of eluding the law's vigilance imparts an extra flavor to cigars and liquors, and that satins and laces on which no duty has been paid take on an added luster in the wearer's eyes. Women have always been fond of smuggling, but it is only within comparatively recent years that they have made it a profession, acting in collusion with men who get thousands of dollars' worth of goods into the country each year free of the custom house charge.

Uncle Sam keeps a watchful eye on this department, however, and it was not until women began to smuggle as a trade that he found his duties more exciting than ever before. The style of the dress of women allowed fuller scope for the secretion of goods, and the obstacles in the way of searching and searching women passengers were many.

It was then that Uncle Sam engaged the services of women detectives, or inspectresses, for the purpose of observing women passengers as they left the steamers and examining those who might be suspected of smuggling.

Twenty years ago women were not feared as smugglers as they are today. While there were precautions taken and examinations made when suspicion justified it the profession of women inspectress was as yet in its infancy. Within the last 15 years there have been so many attempts on the part of women to smuggle goods into the country that the number of women inspectors has been increased to nine, who are at present employed by the New York custom house.

Those women have nearly all occupied their positions for 10 and some cases for 12 years. They are all women over 25 years of age, although there is no restriction against younger women. They must pass the civil service examination with success to be eligible for the post of woman inspector and are paid at the rate of $3 a day, working seven days every week. The work, while requiring keenness of perception and intelligence, is comparatively light, the day's duties being completed, except in rare instances, before the afternoon of each day.

Through the courtesy of Surveyor Croft of the custom house I was enabled to learn the names of the women at present acting as customs inspectors. They are Ellen Ellis, Mary McQueror, Marie L. Stuart, Annie A. Walsh, Mary W. Clark, Ella M. Cleary, Christine K. Allen, Gennie Ferris and Mary Darragh.

All of these women, with a few exceptions, have held their positions for several years. Marie Stuart, one of the most recently appointed, going on the list in September, 1895. Ellen Ellis has been inspectress since June, 1897; Christine Allen, since August, 1897; Gennie Ferris, August, 1897, and Mrs. Mary Clark, July, 1897. Mary McQueror has been in the employ of the government since December, 1896, and Annie Walsh's and Mary Darragh's appointments are dated respectively June, 1896, and June, 1897.

It is not every day, of course, that women suspected of smuggling arrive on the ships from abroad. In fact, it is the exception when such cases occur. In other instances two women are detailed to watch the immigrants who are brought in a tug to the custom house dock. As they pass down the gangplank their bearing and appearance are noted, and any suspicious rotundity of person results in an examination.

As a rule, the immigrant woman is lightly clad, and an examination is easily and quickly concluded. In cases where the evidence justifies a case of smuggling the woman suspected is obliged to disrobe. There is no discourtesy of treatment, and this last emergency is only resorted to in cases where there is actual evidence of attempted smuggling.

A woman inspectress also observes the cabin passengers as they land on the dock. Where there is suspicion information is privately conveyed to the inspectress before the passengers embark, and she requests the suspected woman as politely as possible to step into the cabin for the purpose of being searched. In justice to the inspectresses it be only right to say that innocent people have never been subjected to this search. Indisputable evidence is generally secured before this is resorted to.

One of the women, who has been for many years in the employ of the custom house in New York, told me that no means needed to be used to induce smugglers in their efforts to get goods into the country free of duty were so ingenious that they compelled admiration.

"The woman smuggler," she said, "is the merriest type of criminal. As a rule, she is working in collusion with some man, although there have been instances where dressmakers have attempted to smuggle in laces and things of this sort entirely for their own profit. The bustle was one of the most favorite modes of conveying smuggled goods ashore, and when the very large bustle was used a person or two ago it was possible for a woman to get in a whole piece of silk and rolls of lace in the way.

"Then linings were utilized to secure lace and other fancy articles in, and in some cases so secure did the would be smuggler feel of herself that she hardly made any effort to conceal the destination; at least it would seem so to the trained eye of the inspectress, who could at once detect something wrong in the hang of a shirt or the set of a jacket.

"When detected, the woman smuggler as a rule resorts to tears and then 'gives away' her male accomplice, for if she be an old offender her master is that of all criminals, cool and defiant. These women are invariably richly dressed and have plenty of money and jewels, so it would seem that they make it pay in spite of the precautions that are taken.

"One of the strangest cases we ever had was that of a German immigrant woman whose baby's body was wound around with more than 50 yards of lace. She had been employed by a woman smuggler in the cabin and hardly understood what her offense was when she was confronted with the evidence of it. This baby, by the way, was the youngest smuggler on the records being only 12 months old. It was allowed to go with a reprimand.

"The restrictions that are enforced at present by the customs officers make smuggling a more difficult task than ever before. The examinations are no longer superficial, and the inspectresses watch kept on board ship during the voyage. No doubt women of respectable appearance who are clever enough to avoid suspicion will always be able to get in small articles such as lace, lace, jewels, etc., for it would not do to accuse people wrongfully. But since the employment of women as inspectresses the women smuggler has ceased to be as daring as of old.

"There are some important cases of attempted smuggling on the part of women who are about to start from the other side with goods which are to be smuggled into this country if possible, and in some of these cases a cable will call an inspectress to the port from which the suspected woman is to sail. She is observed closely during the voyage and her acquaintance sought for by the inspectress, masquerading in some other role for the time. In this way many smugglers have been detected."

KATE MASTERSON.

The Retort Hostile.

At a recent Washington reception there was a short but sharp interchange of courtesies between the wealthy wife of an ex-congressman and the wife of a far from rich bureau chief.

It was a crowded afternoon affair, and the ex-congressman's wife was assisting the hostess in receiving guests. When the wife of the bureau official was presented, the hostess said to the woman of the receiving party: "You know Mrs. Blank, don't you?" "Certainly," said the ex-congressman's wife. "I would know her anywhere by that pink dress."

The cheeks of the bureau officer's wife were suffused with a rosy glow, but she turned on her tormentor and said: "Probably, if my husband had been mixed up in as many questionable transactions as yours, madam, it would not be necessary for me to wear my pink reception dress as often as to cause comment."

Every word rang out clear and sharp upon the ears of the astonished guests. Inasmuch as there has been frequent criticism of the ex-congressman in his connection with questionable land transactions, the force of the bureau official's wife's retort can readily be imagined.

The Ideal Hostess.

Ideal hostesses are rare, and opinions differ as to what constitutes them, as two definitions being exactly alike. In a recent discussion of the subject several society women recited their ideas of the various qualities an ideal hostess should possess, as follows:

She must make you feel individually that you are the favored guest. She must make you feel perfectly at home. She must see everything and yet possess the art of seeming to see nothing. She must never look bored. She must know how to keep conversation always going. She must never let any one be slighted or overlooked. She must know when to ask the amateur musician to display her or her talents. She must be perfectly unselfish about her own pleasures. She must not neglect her guests and at the same time must not give them too much of her society. She must remember that nothing is so tiresome, so surely death to all enjoyment, as the feeling that one is being "entertained."

In short, the ideal hostess must, above everything, possess patience and that almost indescribable quality known as tact.

ALL ABOUT WOMEN.

Miss Margaret Long, second daughter of Secretary Long, has passed a brilliant examination and matriculated in the medical department of Johns Hopkins university.

Governor Lowndes of Maryland has called the legislature's special attention to the excellent work done by Mrs. Anne D. Jeffers during the two years that she has held the position of state librarian. The governor states that this was the first important state appointment to be held by a woman and declares that the results have fully justified this departure from established precedents.

The Iowa women are organizing to have the word male struck from the constitution of the state.

Miss S. M. Barche and Miss Mamie Fussett, stenographers and typists in the office of C. H. Thompson, United States marshal, are the first women deputy marshals to do active field work in Oklahoma.

The Natural Foot society is gaining ground in China. Chinese ladies who have amputated themselves with modern notions are among the leaders in the new movement. A school for Chinese girls has been opened in Shanghai where no girls with bound feet will be admitted, and only daughters of upper class families may enter.

The friends of Mrs. Theodore Thomas consider that they have achieved a victory in the election of Mrs. Ole as president of the Federation of Amateur Musical Clubs.

Though always elegant and perfectly dressed, the Princess of Wales by no means sets on the side of extravagance. Her royal highness has been known to wear a gown three successive seasons when it suited her and remained fresh and handsome.

The sarcophagus which is to contain the body of Mrs. Grant has been placed beside the sarcophagus which holds the remains of General Grant in the tomb in Riverside park, New York city.

Mrs. Minnie Cushman, a white woman teacher in the Fort Shaw schools, has been married to Garrett White, a full blooded Piegan Indian. The bride is a daughter of C. C. Bateman, chaplain at Fort Belknap and formerly of Fort Assiniboin.