

# WOMAN and HER WORK.

When I read *PROGRESS* last week girls, and came across one of the choicest productions of my own "facile pen" embellished with the signature of "Geoffrey Cuthbert Strange," in which my respected spouse was made to go through the extraordinary performance of appearing as a dual personality addressing himself as "Geoffrey" and then responding as "Astra": I first wished with all my heart and soul, that the equality of the sexes was sufficiently established for it to be considered the correct thing for a woman to swear heartily, under certain provocation! And next, I breathed a fervent prayer that something might prevent Geoff from seeing that particular article. But nothing did prevent it, and it was the very first thing he read! To say that he was angry, fails utterly to express his state of mind, he was simply furious, and I regret to say that his language was so intemperate as to cause the pup to retire under the table in wild haste, and lie there, whining dismally, evidently making a personal application of his master's remarks, under the impression that he had been found out, either in chasing cats, or stealing the kitty's milk; two temptations he has never been able to resist, though each breach of discipline is followed by swift and certain, though mild, punishment.

Geoffrey said, with perfect justice, that he had never read such a column of utter nonsense in his life, and when I pointed out that nothing was required but my own signature to make perfect sense of it, he refused to be comforted, and said it was a great mistake to have two literary people in the same family, especially when they were both addicted to writing for the same paper, and he supposed he might expect to see his name signed to a recipe for a new method of mashing potatoes, any day now. I really don't wonder that Geoffrey was annoyed, and I cannot say I blame him for using a little strong language, but still I think I have reason for complaint also! It is a little hard to expend your best efforts in writing an attractive column for your own page, and then see it come out signed with your husband's name. And it is harder still to learn his opinion of your work by hearing him swear over the possibility of being suspected of its authorship.

I cannot imagine how the mistake arose, I am sure, except that we both write exceedingly bad hands; but I hope this explanation will help to straighten the matter out a little, and make my small disquisition on the peculiarities of human nature read more intelligibly.

I see by a late paper that a society for the prevention of cruelty to birds has been formed in England, of which her Grace the Duchess of Portland is president. It is, of course, composed of ladies, and the object of the society is to prevent the wearing of feathers belonging to birds which are not to be eaten. Of course this is a step in the right direction, but it cannot fail to strike any thoughtful person as being a sort of half measure, especially when one remembers that the upper ten of English society are not averse to eating song birds, and frequently have larks served up in various different styles on the tables of both West End clubs and West End mansions. It would almost look as if these humane ladies were willing to sacrifice more for their vanity than for their appetites were it not that some of the members endeavored to have ostrich feathers placed upon the list of forbidden luxuries, but were voted down, the charm of the lovely ostrich plumes proving too great a temptation for these dainty reformers. The society will no doubt do some good in a small way; but as long as feathers and stuffed birds of any kind are worn as woman's headgear, so long will countless birds be sacrificed every year to woman's vanity. Wear ostrich plumes, girls, if you like and can afford them; the ostrich suffers no pain in parting with her plumes, which are only plucked when they are "ripe"; but leave the stuffed birds for barbarians.

I think the amount of nonsense which has been going the rounds of the American papers lately, concerning that long-suffering infant, known to an equally long-suffering public as "Baby Ruth" Cleveland, is nothing short of nauseating to all healthy minds. At first sight it is difficult to see what purpose these senseless effusions can possibly serve, unless it may be to show other countries just how ridiculous a great nation can make itself, without ever discovering the fact, that the rest of the world is laughing at it.

But a careful consideration of the matter shows another and more cheerful view, also a lesson which we may all learn something from, if we are so minded, and that is, not to make either national or personal foibles of ourselves in the eyes of the world, should we ever be placed in the same position as our American cousins, and have for our chief ruler, the fortunate papa of a very interesting baby. As far as I can remember, there never has been a baby at Rideau Hall, at least, if there ever was one during the reign of the Earl and Countess of Dufferin, the outside public never heard very much about it; but if there should ever be another there, I hope the public career of "Baby Ruth" will be a warning

to the Canadian press, and that no Canadian paper will ever be guilty of publishing such inane babblings as are constantly appearing even amongst the special correspondence of some of the best American papers. The following extracts are taken from the letter of a special correspondent at Washington, signing herself "Margaret Hener," which was recently published quite seriously by a Canadian paper.

"Miss Ruth is one of the best natured children to be seen. Since she came to live at the White House a man who was calling on Mrs. Cleveland wanted to see the baby, of course Miss Ruth was sent for. Now the man is very jolly looking, with a round, smooth face, and the moment Ruth caught sight of him she began to express her approval by smiling. She laughed at everything the man said to her, when a laugh was not in order and when he talked to her mother, Ruth still laughed, till the gentleman had to laugh too. Mrs. Cleveland couldn't modify Ruth's delight by any scheme, and felt mildly put out with Ruth, when the man made a special effort, and, shaking his finger at her, said, 'Now Ruth, I shall go home and tell Bessie that you laughed at her papa all the time, and she'll feel hurt.' But Miss Cleveland only smiled the harder till the caller said good day. Then she subsided into real dignity and looked very much satisfied with herself. She is always full of fun. One of her greatest joys is to capture a pencil, which she sticks down her own throat, or that of anybody who will submit until they are on the verge of suffocation. Then she is delighted. For herself, she will go round half the day with the pencil in her mouth unless she can find a piece of paper. If ever she could secure access to her papa's desk state papers and treaties and appointments would be signed by her in short order. On one occasion at Lakewood she was reaching round for what she might find when she struck the doctor's prescription book, which he had left on the table while he went upstairs. When he returned Miss Ruth had filled half of it up with prescriptions which were just as plausible as the doctor himself could write. And the doctor only smiled—for what else was there to do?"

Nor could human foolishness go much further than those three paragraphs go? Imagine the everyday sayings and doings of Mrs. John Smith's baby girl being written up and sent to the daily papers, and then try to imagine the effect on the general public, if the papers published those interesting sketches, which of course would be full of importance to the Smith family but intensely dull reading for the public.

Of course none of us are going to dispute the fact that little Ruth Cleveland is a very wonderful child—in the eyes of her own family, as it is perfectly proper that she should be, what first baby ever failed to be a paragon? But still to the rest of the world she is only just the president's baby daughter, and very much like other children; so it is high time the American journalists called common sense to their aid, and ceased to chronicle the most ordinary doings of "Baby Ruth" just as if she were the baby hippopotamus, or infant elephant, in some menagerie.

A few years ago plaiting was considered the only correct form of trimming there were, kilt plaits, box plaits, side plaits, and knife plaits. But now all is changed, and ruffles are the order of the day. Everything is ruffled from the most elaborate ball dress with its frills of filmy lace from the hem to the waist, the ever simple night robe, the hem of which is now finished with three or four tiny ruffles. I saw the oddest dress the other day, which illustrated the rage for ruffles to a very remarkable degree. It was of the new black silk called Amazon, a beautiful fabric, soft in finish and thick in substance, which is superceding surah; and it was made entirely of ruffles; that is to say the skirt was flounced to the waist with ruffles about five inches deep. These flounces were made with very little fullness, and each one was edged with narrow white lace. The bodice was a blouse of black and white chiffon made, of course, over a lining of the silk, and with braces of the silk over the shoulders; the sleeves were very full and gathered into numerous frills and puffs at the elbow. The belt was of black satin, and for out of door wear there was a cape to match, reaching to the waist and composed entirely of frills edged like the skirt, with white lace; the frills, of course, were sewn on a plain foundation. It was a very striking costume, though scarcely a pretty one.

The Empire style is still seen in evening costumes, though it never has been, and never will be popular as a street dress. White satin is the favorite material, as it lends itself so gracefully to the statuesque lines which constitute the chief, in fact, the only beauty of the Empire gown. A very lovely Empire evening dress, recently worn in New York was of creamy white satin, thick and rich in texture. The foundation was a closely-fitting slip of the satin, made with a wattleau plaited back, and moderately long train. The front and sides were draped in sheer creamy white net, heavily bordered with gold embroidery; this drapery fell straight from the bust to the feet, and gave the desired Empire touch. The train was edged with the same embroidery, and the low square neck was also finished with it, while the short balloon sleeves were gathered into a band of the same, midway between the elbow and shoulder. A charming dress, if rather more expensive than most girls will be able to indulge in.

Fashion's latest edict says that purple veils have gone out, I don't know whether green veils have come in or not, but I do know that everything else about woman's attire, which can possibly be green, is green, especially in hats and bonnets. A lovely hat for a young girl is of pale green fancy straw, trimmed with pale pink roses, and a soft shade of green velvet. Just under the brim two small pink roses rest against the wearer's hair in front.

The smallest and daintiest cape worn this season is called the Derby; it is made either of velvet or the same material as the dress with which it is worn. It barely reaches over the shoulders to the arms, and then points narrowly to the waist line, back and front, with a box-plait on each shoulder, and side plaits turning towards the centre, back and front. The collar is a satin rib-

bon ruche, or feather band, and the lower edge finished either with a very fine galloon, a plaiting of narrow satin ribbon, or a milliner's fold of satin. The milliner's fold has become so popular a trimming that it can now be bought in some dry goods shops by the yard. When the Derby is made of the dress goods, it is lined with silk and trimmed to correspond with the trimming of the dress.

Speaking of wraps, there is a decided revival of the sleeveless wraps of the early eighties; many of the most elegant wraps this season have no sleeves, and the probable cause of this revival is the difficulty of preserving the immense puffed and frilled sleeves from being crushed by the wrap, no matter how ample the sleeves of the latter may be; while many fashionable women have grown tired of the endless variety of capes seen everywhere in such profusion that they are already growing common. The sleeveless jackets are not only very jaunty and stylish looking, but they possess the decided advantage of being cool for late spring and early summer. A very pleasing variation in blouses will be worn this summer in the shape of plaid silk, blouses and short waists of which, will be worn with dark skirts. They are to be purchased ready made, at the largest dry goods houses, and are made with full ruffles down the front and large loose, puffed sleeves. They may be worn either outside the skirt or inside, with a pointed or folded belt. Their great advantage lies in the fact that they do not need to be laundered, and are therefore invaluable for travelling, boating, and generally, as they are cool and light. They would be a boon for those who wish to spend an economical week at the World's Fair.

The idea of leather being used as a trimming seems very odd at first, especially as the trimming referred to does not mean the stiff ungraceful vests, collars and cuffs of tan leather occasionally seen on some dresses for the past year, and which always conveyed an unpleasant suggestion—and small—of the sadler's shop to me. Nor yet does it mean the soft pretty chamois collars, and vests, which are so universally becoming, and get so horrible dirty before you have worn them three times. The leather trimming I mean, is a regular galon of tan colored Russian leather embroidered with a scroll pattern in gold cord. And applied to a basinet colored cloth dress as a border for the hem of the skirt, collar, cuffs, girdle, and revers, it is not only original but a very beautiful trimming. I suppose we shall soon be wearing trimmings of carved wood, or something equally surprising.

ONE WHO KNOWS, St. John.—Thank you very much for the trouble you took in hunting up all those addresses for me. So many kind friends have sent me addresses of the various teachers' bureaus in the United States, since I asked for them, that I shall be a perfect encyclopedia of knowledge in the future. I fully agree with your sensible remarks as to the uselessness of such institutions. Though you never wrote to me before I hope you will write again some day. ASTRA.

Always Keep Engagements. Girls, keep your engagements! We do not mean your matrimonial ones, for advice on that score is hardly necessary, but the everyday ones that are apparently made to be broken, so careless are you of the promises and appointments that mean so much to those whose time is limited and whose word is not as pie-crusty as your own. It you have to wear your old hat in order to be on hand promptly at some place of meeting, wear it. Do not at the eleventh hour start to trim another one, which operation will tend to make you late, and even though the new bit of millinery is far more becoming than the old one you will not look half as sweet and pretty in the eyes of the one whom you have kept waiting as you would have done had you worn the old one and been on time.

There is nothing so gratifying to a man as the habit of promptness on the part of the woman whom he is beginning to admire. His regard will increase with every manifestation of it on her part, and he will experience more real pleasure in taking out one who is ready when he calls than he will ever get from doing escort duty to a woman who invariably lets him cool his heels, if not his temper, for half an hour before she descends to the parlor, where he is waiting in a fever of impatience.

Five minutes may not seem much to the person whose time is practically of no value, but to those whose business instincts have taught them that promptness is the controlling power of their lives it means a great deal. Be an hour too early rather than a minute too late; cultivate the habit of exactitude in all your engagements, of whatever character, and once you have made a promise keep it, if you have to break your neck to do so.

What Should Young Girls Read? A Boulogne-sur-Mer correspondent of Sala's Journal answers this important question. This is the list of books which "Amomala" (that is the correspondent's name) says she should recommend for young girls:—Novels: All of Charles Kingsley's, H. Kingsley's, Geoffrey Hamlyn, of course Dickens, and Thackeray, if liked; any of W. Black's and Blackmore; all or any of the historical works of Edward Bulwer, Lord Lytton; Besant and Rice *ad libitum*, some of George Eliot's—namely, "Silas Marner," "Scenes of Clerical Life," "Brother Jacob," "Mrs. Oliphant's" "nearby All"; "The Little Pilgrim in the Unseen" is nice for good people—according to religious denomination; any of Miss T. M. Peard's. For poets: Any modern according to taste, but not too strong; as for Byron, adulterated specimens; for ancient, Coleridge, Goldsmith, Southey; all Sir Walter Scott's novels and poems also; of course, Cowper, Wordsworth, Tennyson, Longfellow, and a host of others. For novels strictly avoid "Molly Bawn" style, unless you would have your daughter think, "Oh, it would be so nice to be naughty just for once." "I could go on for a month," says the writer, "and then not put down a hundredth part of the books which may be safely read, always remembering, 'milk for babes; strong meat for men.'"

Lady Barbers a Failure. "The lady barber," remarked a male member of the craft, "cannot be called a success. In almost every city ladies have opened barber shops with a great flourish of trumpets, and have been patronized very liberally by the youths of the city, who regarded the idea as distinctly novel."

but the cases where the project has proved anything like a permanent success are very rare. I have been shaved twice by a lady barber, and would not go through the ordeal a third time, even if paid liberally for so doing. It is not because a lady cannot shave, so much as because she cannot keep a razor in good condition. It looks very easy to strop a razor, but every man who has tried to shave himself recoils how he has absolutely failed to produce the desired effect, in spite of the most vigorous applications of energy and what he regards as skill. A lady is at still greater disadvantage, and can seldom sharpen even a penknife, let alone a hollow-ground razor. The only possible chance the average lady barber has is to keep a man busy sharpening her razors, and by so doing she has to pay away the bulk of her profits in the way of superfluous wages. In addition to this, most men who are expert stropers are also expert barbers, and prefer to complete the operation themselves."

Buried Treasure. Nearly one hundred years ago the Jesuits were banished from Mexico. It was known that they had immense hoards of gold, but feared to tempt cupidity by taking it all with them. What they did with the bulk of their savings has just been revealed by Pierre Guirre, who says that treasure of the value of over £4,000,000 was buried beneath the old cathedral in the little town of Typozottan, and is believed to be there yet.

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