

WOMAN and HER WORK.

Once upon a time there were old maids in the world, and one heard them frequently alluded to both by young maids, matrons and men as a sort of necessary evil, a deplorable result of modern civilization, and the preponderance of the female

that of Gilbert and Sullivan's policeman, was "not a happy one." She was unselfish, patient, devoted and cheerful, but yet all these qualities which would have been so charming in a matron or a young girl, were neutralized by the



OUTING COWNS FOR EARLY FALL.

The gown on the left is of shirring pink reps with girde and figaro of mordore velvet, the waist being elaborately trimmed with lace and folds. The central figure is a costume of ribbed voluta, blue and crimson. The figure in the background is of figured wool and acordon plaid taffetas. The child's frock is of white cotton crepon with trimming of brocade and a little embroidery above it.

over the male sex. People almost invariably referred to an old maid in terms of contemptuous pity, and treated her with only half-veiled toleration, unless she happened to be wealthy; when all other sentiments on the part of her relatives were submerged in indignation that she persisted in living when she might have retired from a world in which she had no especial place, and left her money to those who would know how to spend it much better than she.

When the old maid was not wealthy, she was sure to be one of two things, either a governess or a poor relation who spent her time in visiting around from the house of one relation to another, and filling the post of an unpaid and unthanked drudge in each household. When she grew too old and feeble for work, the walls of some home for the aged swallowed her up, and a plain funeral, with one coach following the hearse, ended the dull story of her life.

one unhappy fact that she was an old maid, and so she was looked down upon and considered of no account in the world simply because, as far as the outside public knew, no man had chosen her to be his life companion, and so set the "guinea stamp" of masculine approval upon what could scarcely be considered true metal without it, however pure the gold itself might be.

The mere sound of the word "old maid" calls up a vision of its own, a vision of a pale thin woman with a sharp face and scant gray hair, worn in unbecoming ringlets, who affects black silk aprons and is addicted to black lace mittens, spectacles, and little prim looking reticules. We not only clothe her to suit our own imaginations, but we insist that she shall have a mincing walk, a prim mode of speech, and be eternally instilling prunes and prism maxims into the minds of the younger generation. Poor old maiden aunts of fiction and imagination, what caricatures they were,

conception than any other influence, for who could look upon the stage representation of the ideal spinster, without a feeling of impatient contempt? She never changes, this stock character; ages may pass, dynasties be overthrown and kingdoms crumble into dust but still the melodramatic maiden aunt continues to gambol across the stage on the tips of her toes, shaking her corkscrew curls, fluttering her muslin flounces, mincing her words and uttering bashful little squeals every time she encounters a young man. She still tries to take her young niece's lover from her, and imagines every man in the piece is desperately in love with her, just as she did in the days of our great-grandmothers, and as she will doubtless continue to do long after the present generation has ceased to take an active part in the affairs of this world. She is one of those dramatic properties which seem indispensable to the success of a certain style of drama, and in which the stage is singularly behind the times.

Perhaps the day may come when some unknown dramatic author will suddenly leap from obscurity into eminence by exterminating the stage old maid and putting on the boards instead the bachelor woman



FOR MAMMA, AUNT AND THE BABY.

The baby wears a long cloak of gray merino, with a crocheted wool cape in blue and gray over it. The cap is of surah with lace border. The mother's dress is of cheney silk, entirely self trimmed. The gown on the left is of gros grain figured with mottled diagonal stripes, and is trimmed with gros grain ribbon to match and cream white guipure.

of today, as she really appears; but I fear it will not be very soon, such an iconoclast would have too much to contend with.

It is a sad and solemn fact that the old maid is fast becoming an extinct genus, and what the human family will do without her, when she finally disappears, I scarcely dare to think.

Her place is being taken by a creature whose life is too full of broad and living interests to allow her to sink into a state of despondence; who has too much pressing work of her own to be any longer at the beck and call of every relation who happens to need her services, and who is of too much importance in the world for anyone to dream of snubbing, or undervaluing her. In short, the scornful term "old maid" has not only ceased to be generally used, but its unpleasant significance has departed, and the woman who has remained single, either from choice or necessity, has just as good a place in the world, and is just as much respected as any wife and mother in the land. She works for her own living and is beholden to none, therefore she is naturally much sought after, and being free from the many cares that tie down the married woman, she has more time to spare for social intercourse, and more to devote to her friends when they stand in need of help or sympathy, and as her services are now given quite independently, of her own free will, instead of as an equivalent for her board and lodging, they are appreciated and gratefully acknowledged. She is no longer a burden to anyone, but a self-supporting institution, and one who has to be sought and approached with respect.

In short, she bestows favors now, where she received them in former years, and her position has changed so greatly that it looks almost as if the bachelor woman was destined to be the curled darling of society at no distant date, and as if the "Woman of the Future," of whom we hear so much, might possibly be none other than the very one who was held up to ridicule a few years ago, under the contemptuous title of the Old Maid.

ASTRA.

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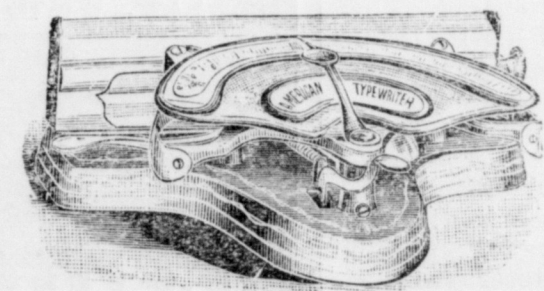
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TOILETTES FOR ELDERLY AND YOUNGER LADIES.

The costume on the left is of black crepon trimmed with guipure lace and a purple satin vest and revers. That on the right is striped iridescent taffetas with a narrow ribbon ruching. The waist trimming is of chiffon edged with lace. The center figure shows a Scotch plaid outing suit with a double cape of brown covert cloth.

Of course there were exceptions, and households in which the maiden aunt was loved and appreciated as she deserved, but they were as rare as most exceptions, I am afraid, and the lot of the old maid, like

and how utterly unlike the originals who were often the Florence Nightingales and Grace Darlings of the world!

I think perhaps the modern drama has done more to perpetuate this strange mis-