

WOMAN and HER WORK.

"Please burn, as soon as read." Is there any injunction more common, and more frequently disregarded than this one? We read it written in red ink across the last page of a letter if the writer be a man, and in pencil heavily underlined, at the top of the first page if it is a woman who writes it. And we lay the letter aside, with the best intentions possible. "Burn it? Of course! Why certainly I will, I would not have Mary's confidences fall into any other hands than mine for the world; but I must just keep it till I copy her new address." So the letter is put aside in some safe place, and very soon it is forgotten. With the lapse of time the injunction to burn it is quite forgotten also, and it by chance it is ever discovered by its owner it is just as likely as not, to be tossed into a waste basket with a lot of other old letters and carried into the kitchen to be used for kindling the fires.

Some years ago I noticed a number of written pages fluttering around our back yard, hither and thither by a high wind. I lost no time in investigating, and was horrified to find that the pages belonged to a letter addressed to myself by one whom "I shall meet no more, 'til the sea gives up its dead." It was the old story, taken out of the kitchen to be burned, but the fire happened to be out, left until it should be lighted again and forgotten. No one can tell how letters are mislaid, or when! You hold the letter without replacing it in the envelope and lay it in your work basket for future reference: A puff of vagrant wind catches the sheets when you are not looking and they scattered to the four winds in a moment. Or perhaps the baby takes it into his head to investigate the little drawer in your cabinet which you thought so private, and so secure; he is wonderfully ingenious about getting the envelope off, and by the time he has torn the sheets apart and sent them fluttering out of the window, there is no longer anything private about that! Literally he who runs may read it.

"Where in the world is that letter? I put it in my pocket I am sure, and I can't imagine where it is unless I pulled it out with my handkerchief! I would not have mislaid it for the world!" How often one hears such a remark made, and how often the precious letter is dropped in the middle of a busy thoroughfare, or perhaps on the floor of a crowded shop; and we all know that the human race in general seems to be devoured with curiosity regarding other people's letters and few are strong enough to resist the temptation to read them if it comes in their way. I don't think one ever realizes the importance of taking care of letters until the calamity of losing a valuable one, and betraying the trust of some friend, teaches the offender a sharp lesson, such as the episode of the letter in the back yard taught me.

I don't know why we should be so careless about those little white messengers, for which we all look so anxiously, and which are always so welcome when they come! There is something so sacred about a letter, the very fact that once it has passed out of the writer's hands and been dropped into the post, for it ceases to be the property of the sender and belongs absolutely to the person to whom it is addressed, should make the receiver doubly careful of the trust reposed on him. How often we have written letters on the spur of the moment which were scarcely posted before we would have given worlds, to recall them? But it was out of our power and the only consolation that remained for us was the hope that the plea "Please burn as soon as read" would be respected, and no harm would result.

A letter may mean so much that it is always a sort of sacred mystery to me; it looks so innocent and yet who can tell what fateful secret may be contained within the cover! We watch and wait for it and greet it so eagerly when it comes, a loved hand has written it and we linger a moment to study the address before opening it, smiling over some familiar trick of the well known writing; and then we read it and find a stone instead of the bread we looked for, and even the light of the sun never shines so brightly for us again! I saw a girl open a long-looked-for letter once, and I have never forgotten the sight. It was from her lover, and she had been fretting her heart out because it had been so long in coming; she was sure he must be ill or he would never have left her so long without a letter. Not a doubt of his truth ever dimmed her perfect faith in him. But when the letter came she gave a little shriek of delight and then she kissed it, and then she hugged it. "It is very thin" sheet said anxiously, "I thought he was ill, and I am sure of it now."

Then she opened her letter, one poor thin sheet with two pages scantily written; and after she had read the first, she gave a different kind of cry, the sort an anima gives when it is shot, and dropped white and trembling into the nearest chair. Her lover had discovered that he had mistaken his sentiments towards her, and begged that she would "consent to a dissolution of their engagement" in other words he was a scoundrel, that is all! But she

loved him and the wedding day was only three months away, so it was hard on her. Nature shows every consideration for the race, but none for the individual; a certain number must be crushed in the struggle for existence, but the individual very naturally objects sometimes. But letters quite so often bring joy as sorrow, and are treasured fondly for years in memory of the happiness they gave packed away in some little box or cabinet the key of which is never out of its owner's possession. They are never read now, perhaps but still are too precious to be destroyed. And yet if we could only summon up courage to read our letters—once, twice, a dozen times if necessary—and then turn them, how much better it could be; there is no place so safe for a letter as a good clear fire! It is hard to do it, I know but then life is uncertain, and which of us can call tomorrow his own? Would you, or I, like to think of that sacred box of letters falling into the hands of some stranger who would "feel it her duty to read them, in case they might contain something important?" I think not. And oh the harm that has been done by a letter falling into the wrong hands! The lives that have been wrecked by just such a trifle! Therefore I believe anyone who receives a confidential letter from another, owes it to that person to destroy it as soon as possible after reading. Make an extract if you wish, or as many as you like but do not keep the original to rise up in judgement against its author, some day when he least expects it.

Princess dresses have been promised to us for some time past, but as yet I have not seen them in any vast numbers. The fact is that the princess is too trying a garment to become generally popular. You must possess a nearly perfect figure in order to wear a princess dress with satisfaction to yourself, or credit to your dressmaker. If you are a fat woman with bulky hips, and the surrounding territory in proportion you had better give the seductive princess a wide berth! But if you are a thin beauty with angles instead of curves, and no hips at all, avoid it as you would a pestilence! A stout, but shapely woman looks stately and graceful in a properly made princess, and a woman cast in one of nature's perfect moulds looks simply charming in one, but then not more than half of our sex will answer to either of these descriptions, so perhaps it is best to leave them out of the question when choosing a gown.

Here are two pretty models, however, one for each of the fortunate ladies I have indicated. The first is made of the new Dresden striped silk, and is suitable either for a dinner, or evening dress. It is simply made, and shows the long shoulder seam to such a degree that the sleeve begin well over the round of the shoulder. A fall of handsome black lace, deep enough to hang nearly to the waist begins over each side of the bust, and is carried out over the arms following the line of the shoulder seam and continuing across the back. On the arm it spreads out over the large puffs of the sleeves that extend from the low shoulder seam, to the elbow. The stripes of the silk being unbroken from throat to hem, in front add to the height, and mitigate the somewhat "squatty" look the long shoulder seam is apt to give.

The second princess, is a plain gown, and is made of mastic colored suiting dotted with pale blue, in combination with plain goods of the ground color. The front is of the plain goods, with a square yoke of the same at the back. The rest including collar and sleeves, is of the figured goods. A corslet belt of blue velvet extends across the figured part or the back and sides, leaving the front free, and epaulettes of the same shade of velvet covered with guipure lace, finish the large puff sleeves. The front gore is quite narrow, and the effect is of a costume of the figured material with a vest of the plain extending from throat to hem, narrowing in at the waist and then spreading out gradually to the foot of the skirt.

It is said that the revival of the ulster has met with great favor, and I am sure I am delighted to think that anything is likely to supercede the hideous box coats which would ruin the figure of Venus herself. The ulster which will be most worn this season is made of soft woolen cloth in good sized plaids, and it is provided with a comfortable looking cape reaching below the elbows, and finished with the ever convenient golf straps.

The fancy for close fitting little cuirass jackets of fur which only reach to the waist, and are furnished with big velvet sleeves, is a convenient one, as it takes so little material that your worn out fur jacket can easily be made into one, but I should think the arms would be decidedly cold.

The winter capes are not quite so long, and not quite so full, as formerly, instead of a complete circle, three quarters of a circle is now considered quite full enough when the cloth is heavy. After fur, black velvet is the most popular material for dressy capes, and trimmed with fur or feathers,

and often half covered with an applique of jet or silk, they form most elegant garments. Capes of black satin are lined with fur for winter wear, and serviceable garments of black cloth are made to look really handsome when braided, and finished with a wide fur collar.

I am afraid there is no denying the fact that it is impossible to extract very much warmth out of a cape; the wind, like love—"will find out the way" and manage to make you uncomfortable somehow. If it cannot blow through the garment it will blow under it, and around it, so there is very little difference in the end, and I confess I have never been half as comfortable in my big, warm looking fur cape, as I used to be in my good old reliable coat with a chamouis jacket under it, and a cosy shoulder cape over. Then I could defy the cold in earnest; but what can one do with a pair of sleeves lined with fibre chamois and standing out nearly eighteen inches from each shoulder! It is either a cape, or nothing, so we choose the lesser evil, and are thankful for the cape.

A very odd hat, which was worn by a recent bride sounds almost impossible, but I believe it was really charming. It was of no less wiry and hostile material than brilliantine in a soft tan color, to match the bride's travelling gown, and it was an immense picture hat, with a shirred brim. Verily all materials are wax in the hands of a clever milliner.

The fashion of having the hat made of the same material as the dress, is coming into favor again, and very nice economical fashion it is. Tam o' Shanter caps, made in this style, are rapidly coming into favor, and if properly made, and properly placed they are most becoming, and "smart" as the English say. They are set in velvet bands, and have velvet bows at the side, held up by a couple of quills; but it requires a good deal of taste to get a Tam o' Shanter properly on the head. A Tam o' Shanter made of the same cloth as the gown, makes an ideal head gear for travelling.

The chafing dish supper after church on a Sunday evening has become such an institution that chafing dish recipes are greatly in demand, and here are three or four which will be found good, I think. Canned tomatoes may be substituted for the whole one, in the first recipe, with satisfactory results.

Dressed Tomatoes.

A dainty way of serving tomatoes with the chafing dish at a luncheon or Sunday night tea is after the following dressing: Rub to a cream four tablespoonfuls of butter, two tablespoonfuls of powdered sugar, and a generous teaspoonful of ground mustard. Add half a teaspoonful of salt and a pinch of cayenne pepper. Rub into the mixture the pulverized yolks of two hard-boiled eggs. Heat four tablespoonfuls of vinegar. Then add it and finally a beaten raw egg. Set the dish containing the mixture in a pan of boiling water and cook very slowly until the consistency of cream. Stir constantly to make it smooth, and set aside to cool. Peel some ripe, firm tomatoes, cut in thick slices, and place in the ice box. When it is time to serve them put a tablespoonful of butter into the chafing dish and a layer of the sliced tomatoes, and when hot serve from the dish. Place a spoonful of the dressing on the plate with the tomato. The dressing may be used hot or cold.

Welsh Rarebit.

Fill the lamp of a chafing-dish with alcohol, light it, place the lower pan half full of water over the lamp, cover and let it boil. Then remove the pan, take off the cover and place a plate over the hot water; next toast two slices of bread over the lamp, spread them with butter and lay the toast on the hot plate. Put four ounces of fine cut cheese in the remaining pan, add two tablespoonfuls of cream or water, a little English mustard and half a teaspoonful of butter. Place the pan over the lamp, stir and cook till the cheese has formed into a creamy substance, pour it over the toast and serve at once. In place of cream, ale or beer may be used, but cream is the best.

Lamb Chops.

Prepare and heat the plate as in the foregoing recipe. Procure two lamb chops half an inch thick, place the upper pan of a chafing-dish over the lighted lamp with half a teaspoonful of butter; when hot put in the chops and cook four minutes on each side, turning them every two minutes. Put the chops on the warm plate, mix one teaspoonful of butter with a quarter of a teaspoonful of salt and one-eighth of a teaspoonful of pepper; spread this over the chops and serve.

Tomato Toast.

Place half a can of tomatoes in a chafing-dish, add half a tablespoonful of butter, half a teaspoonful of salt, one-fourth of a teaspoonful of pepper, one teaspoonful of sugar, cover and cook fifteen minutes; remove and put a plate over the hot tomatoes. Then toast three slices of bread over the lamp, spread them with butter, lay the toast on the hot plate, pour over the tomatoes and serve.

Proper Way to Boil Rice.

This is the proper way to boil rice: Pick the rice clean and wash it in two waters, not draining of the last water till you are ready to put the rice over the fire. Prepare a saucepan with water and a little

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salt: When it boils sprinkle in the rice gradually so as not to stop the boiling. Boil hard for twenty minutes, keeping the pan covered. Then take it from the fire and pour off the water, after which set the pan on the back of the stove to allow the rice to dry and the grains to separate. Remember to boil rapidly from the time you cover the pan until you take it off. This allows each grain to swell, and the motion prevents the grains from sticking together. Don't stir it, as to do so would cause it to fall to bottom and burn. When properly boiled rice should be snowy white, perfectly dry, soft, and with every grain separate.

Rice cooked in milk, salted, and browned in the oven, makes an excellent substitute for potatoes at dinner with roast meats.

ASTRA.

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The King of the Kaffirs.

Barney Barnato, formerly circus acrobat, now King of the Kaffirs, whom it is the fashion to call the richest man in the world, is probably the most striking figure in the field of speculation which England has seen since the days of Hudson, the great railway king, a little more than half a century ago. That ill-starred person filled the whole stage during the time of his performance, which was not long, and he died in exile in France, supported by a small pension provided by the charity of a few friends. Dickens celebrated him in one of his books as Merdie, the man made of money; and Carlyle wrote an essay on the proposal to erect a statue to him in Hyde Park rather more scolding and vituperative in tone than most of his treatises. It will be curious to trace the future career of the great mining speculator, who is said to have gathered together \$100,000,000 within the last few years as the result of his plunging enterprises. It is a large sum of money, and makes him for the time being a notable personage. After the collapse of the boom which has given him his fortune he may not have so much, and it is possible that he may not have anything and be forced to resume the occupation of jumping through a circus hoop, as of old. Such treasure generally goes as they come, and they are likely to in the case of Mr. Barney Barnato, who seems rather a jocund and amiable personage, making the best of all circumstances and conditions, and who may have been far happier in his old acrobatic flip-flaps than in the financial exercises he has already gone through and the more serious ones that await him.—New York Tribune.

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