

WOMAN and HER WORK.

The ugly girl has never had much of a show in this world, notwithstanding all the sensible proverbs about beauty being only skin deep, and the time worn assertion that "handsome is, as handsome does!"

We may admire the ugly girl for her many estimable qualities, and thoroughly respect her, doing full justice to her wit, her wisdom, and her cleverness, if she is a bright girl; and her goodness and unselfishness if those are her strong points. Should she be lucky enough to be brilliant, stylish and well dressed, she will never lack admirers, and social consideration; but somehow when we speak of an ugly girl that is scarcely the vision the words call up. By "an ugly girl" one usually means a girl who is hopelessly unattractive, who has no charm of face, figure, or even manner, and who is therefore obliged to rely exclusively on the more solid qualities she is supposed to possess in compensation for her lack of beauty, as her passport to public favor. We are given to picturing her as intensely sensible, deeply interested in many of the popular "movements" of the day; an excellent housekeeper, and on the whole rather above considerations of dress, style, and society. She was often a superior girl, and still oftener a popular one, but in society she was scarcely a marked success, and she was inclined, with her usual admirable good sense, to leave the social arena almost entirely to her more favored sister who was intended by nature for ornamental purposes, and for whom the ball-room seemed only the natural setting. I speak of these characteristics in the past tense advisedly, because things have changed so completely of late, and because the ugly girl is having what sporting men call her "innings" so triumphantly now.

I don't know whether it was the ugly but sprightly Yvette Guilbert whose very unattractiveness seems to have taken the world by storm, who first brought the lanky, flat chested, straight haired, and hopelessly plain girl, into fashion, but somehow or other she is in, and the beauty has the novel experience of sitting in the back-ground, and watching her plain sister carry all before her. Perhaps England's queer young artist in black and white, Aubrey Beardsley may have had something to do with this strange break of fashion, as well as Miss Guilbert, but certainly his "poster" craze seems to be spreading, and all that a girl has to do, in order to be a social success, is to be interesting, and possess a certain amount of individuality. Given these, the plainer she is the better. The pretty girl is nowhere, so to speak, because she finds it impossible to indulge in the grotesque audacity of costume which seems only to set off the peculiar attractions of the ugly duckling who has suddenly blossomed out into a swan. The pretty girl ruins her effect if she tries anything of the kind, while the ugly girl only renders herself distinctive by her audacious fancies, and to be distinctively audacious now-a-days is to be a belle.

It does sound strange, but we really have it on excellent authority that the woman whose shoulders are positively bony, but who has the requisite courage to bare them, wear a gown the color of an underdone biscuit, arrange her hair to hang down over her ears, and then fasten a long spray of scarlet flowers in it, lounge in her chair and look as if she considered herself and her entire get-up, beyond criticism, is the girl who is going to carry all before her, and the one whom all the men are looking at, just now. Just picture to yourself, if you have the requisite amount of imagination, how a pretty little pink and white debutante would look in such a costume! Why her dearest friends would be inclined to question her sanity. But the distinctly plain girl it seems, can do things she never ventured upon before in the history of her existence. In short to quote from a fashion writer of the day—"To be triumphantly ugly, and to look as if you liked it, that is the secret, and to tell the truth the belle of last season and the type of girl who for years and years has been the belle, and who expected of course, to be the belle now, this is the girl who is tearing out her hair—with mingled disappointment vexation and amazement.

I am sure we should all be infinitely obliged to Yvette Guilbert, Aubrey Beardsley and company for their kind efforts in our behalf, and it is certainly comforting to reflect that if we cannot be beautiful we can at least be the rage, and look as if we enjoyed the distinction of being notably plain, but all the same show me the girl who, if she were given her choice between having a reasonable share of good looks, and being the most stunningly ugly, and frankly sought after girl of the season, would hesitate a moment over the decision! I am sure the ugly girl would be in the minority after that—"by a large majority!" if I know anything of girl nature. "Dearly beloved sisters, is that not true?"

Millinery openings seem to be all the rage in spite of the fact that the thermometer obstinately refuses to climb much above

zero in the night season, and only yields a few grudging degrees during the day as an unwilling tribute to the power of the lordly sun. Of course if we go by the almanac it is spring now, but if we prefer to judge by our feelings and the general aspect of the landscape, we shall be quite satisfied that it is still midwinter. We seem to hurry these spring openings along a little faster each year, and I daresay that before the end of the century they will take place soon after the opening of the New Year.

I see that the first milliners have already had their spring openings in Montreal, in Toronto, in Halifax, and there have been some in St. John, and those who are contemplating an Easter hat, or bonnet will have to make their selections soon if they desire the newest fashions and the first choice. It is hard to think about wearing lace hats, and gauze ribbons in such Arctic weather, and the flowers, lovely as they are have a shivery out-of-season look; so it is to be hoped that the clerk of the weather will take pity upon us before Easter, and send a more springlike temperature.

The preliminary display of spring millinery as is usual; shows all sorts of fantastic shapes, which will of course be greatly modified as the season advances, but I suppose the designers feel that they must show some startling novelties just at first, or run the risk of complaints of lack of originality. But the fact is that though there will be a great variety of styles to choose from, no particular shape will have a monopoly and the difference between this year's style and last, will not be so great as to prevent last autumn's expensive hat from doing duty this spring, provided its owner or her milliner has good taste, and some skill.

There are bonnets with strings of wide ribbon tied under the chin, and old-fashioned poke bonnets appear in a new guise, and in very large sizes tied with wide ribbons, but it is not likely they will be very popular as they require an exceptionally young and pretty face peeping out from their shades, in order to look well, and there will scarcely be enough of those faces to go round.

As usual Paris leads the fashion, but London and New York have a good deal to say also, and this year Germany is well to the fore with some excellent displays of millinery. In hats it is to be observed that there is an avoidance of extremes; the large hats are not cartwheels, and the small ones are quite visible to the naked eye.

The crowns are medium low, and square but there are varieties shown in which the soft tam-o'-shanter, and the bell crown are conspicuous. Shapes known as the Louis XV and Louis XVI, are turned very high at the back and trimmed with quantities of flowers, and a high standing bow of ribbon at one side. Flowers are massed together in wide wreaths around the crowns this season and wired to stand up very high at the back, or side; ribbon five or six inches wide is used in the bows which sometimes have seven or eight loops, and black, and colored ribbons are frequently combined on one hat with loops of one in front, and the other at the back. With very few exceptions the hats are worn well on the face, and in addition to ribbon and flowers a great deal of tulle, plaited chiffon, and black lace net will be used in the trimming. Fancy straws in rough braids are popular; again, this year, and there is a great variety in the different weaves. There is also lace straw, Tuscan braid, and the different braids of horsehair, both in white and black.

One shape called the capeline is to be a favorite. It has a flat brim and a low crown, to which the requisite height is given by the trimming. Bright green straws will be worn a great deal once the spring is fairly here, and they will be trimmed with wreaths and bunches of primroses of different colors, combined with tulle, and wings. Ostrich feathers do not seem to be so popular as they were last year. There are some odd combinations of color which look all right when an artistic milliner has put them together, but which would be woful failures if an inexperienced hand attempted them. One of these consists of full rosettes of turquoise blue tulle, and green leaves, and is very stylish when properly handled. Violets are just as fashionable as ever, and one of the prettiest of the new toques is composed entirely of black lace and violets.

The Marie Stuart shape which has always so been becoming to middle-aged, and old ladies, is revived this season, and shows much the same style of trimming as ever, and wide strings tied under the chin.

The rose seems to be the flower of the season, though violets and lilacs form a good second to the queen of flowers. The roses are used in close clusters, sprays, and wreaths. Sequins, medallions, and rhinestone buckles are all features of this season as well as imitation pearl, and cut steel ornaments. The color of the season for millinery seems to be green and it ranges from olive to the old fashioned pea

green. Strange to say black and white will be much worn also, though it is far from new. On most of the imported millinery it will be noticed that the trimming is kept well to the front.

A charming imported toque showed a tam o' shanter crown of variegated grass edged with tulle in narrow folds, one side of the crown was caught up with a spray of lilies of the valley and white osprey, held in place by a buckle of rhinestones.

I am going to give a description this week of a street costume which will, it is hoped will fill a long felt want, and make some slight provision for a class of people to whom too little regard has been shown in the past, by fashion writers. That is to those who need outdoor air and exercise quite as much as, if not more than others; but who find themselves unable to wear the prevailing style of dress with comfort and satisfaction. For these neglected beings one would suggest loose comfortable underclothing, an easy, but perfectly fitting corset, and a skirt which though wide and full as the fashion permits, should be free from heavy lining which will make it a burden to carry about, and which is fitted to the figure not by darts, but gathers and the top edge of which is cut to curve upward, instead of downward in front, the back being kept in place by a drawing string. For the upper garment there is a reefer jacket with a fitted back, and loose double breasted front, in the style so often seen in the early spring fashions. The coat is finished with rolling collar revers, eight large buttons, as fastenings, and has very large sleeves. Any underwaist preferred can be worn with this jacket, either a silk, or cambric shirt waist, a linen chemise with a club tie, or a little silk collar, and plastron.

Such a suit is pretty, either in serge, cheviot, or plain mohair; and a very pretty one is of black mohair made up with collar and plastron of bright plaid silk. Another of crown mixed suiting with collar and revers of brown velvet, is both stylish and comfortable, while blue or dark green cloth looks well finished with black satin for collar and revers, and some soft light colored silk for a chemise. Such a suit is comfortable, [pretty,] and at the same time inconspicuous, and it may be developed with equal advantage later in the season, either in pique, or duck, in some dark color, and worn with chemise or plastron of dotted Swiss muslin lace.

As there are special fashions for every-thing, there are special fashions for the lenten season, and they are distinguishable chiefly for their sombre colors and simple designs. Black gowns of silk, satin, cloth, and alpaca will be much worn during lent. Black has a penitential appearance, and when they are to be worn at some strictly lenten dissipation they are brightened up and made dressy with some bright colored silk trimming, (or else cream satin and lace. A light shade of gold satin is especially fashionable just now, in combination with black. Of course the lenten dissensions for which these smart gowns are intended are of the quietest and most decorous nature; luncheons and teas being looked upon as perfectly legitimate entertainment and quite in keeping with a proper sense of one's iniquities and a due amount of penitence therefor.

ASTRA.

WOLVES SCARCE IN MAINE.

Only One Bounty Paid in that State, Where Wolves Once Abounded.

There was only one bounty paid for wolf killing in Maine in 1895. This wolf was killed at Andover, and was the first killed in Maine for many years, and will probably be the last for some years to come. There was a time when Maine wolves went deer hunting in packs, and many a living man has seen the hunted deer plunge into the water of a stream or lake of the State to escape the bloodthirsty brutes trailing after.

Thirty years ago no sound was more common in the deep Adirondack woods at night than the long howl of a wolf, and in the early darkness many campers have listened to the call note of the leader wolf assembling his robber band for a race after deer. The wolves were plenty, but in the early '70s a bounty law was passed, and all of a sudden the wolves were gone. They were not killed, for only a few bounties were paid. They simply dropped out of sight and hearing.

When it was reported last summer that a wolf had been killed on Webb's game preserve the story excited general disbelief, as it had been years since a wolf had been reported by trust-worthy parties. But a wolf was killed all right enough, for Mr. Webb himself said so. Then, of course, "Where in thunder did he come from?" was the emphatic inquiry. Nobody knows. He was first heard howling for several nights, then at dusk one day he was seen drinking from a lake, and a bullet ended him. Previous to this some woodsmen in northern Herkimer county had reported that they had heard wolves in the Moose River again recently, and since there have been like reports. It is not improbable that there are half a dozen or even a score of wolves in the Adirondacks now. If there are, they have learned the proverb that "silence is golden" or at any rate hunt and howl only in the utmost depths where men seldom venture.



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RIPANS

ONE GIVES RELIEF.

The wolf is naturally an exceedingly shy and crafty animal and much harder to trap than a fox. A few wolves would find sustenance in the swamps and on the ridges of the denser New York forests, where great northern hares are thicker than sparrows and deer as plentiful as blooded dogs in a city.

Expensive Umbrella Handles.

A novel umbrella handle is covered with lizard skin. I saw one with a hooked handle of wood over which the skin, showing the finer and smaller natural divisions, had been drawn tightly. It was finished with small silver mountings. All mountings of this metal and of gold are very modest this season. The more ornate decorations of a couple of seasons ago are considered bad form. So are the red, blue and purple silk umbrellas, of which we saw so many only a short time since. Occasionally one sees handles of gold and silver in charming repousse designs, but the price demanded—from \$25 to \$40—is somewhat prohibitory for those of moderate means.

When Playing Mozart.

While playing Mozart's compositions it is well to remember that he demanded of the pianist a perfect legato, a singing touch, and an unaffected style. He practiced what he preached, and his beautiful fingering was the result of a close study of Sebastian Bach and his son, Emanuel. He required "a quiet and steady hand, with its natural lightness, smoothness and gliding rapidity so well developed that the passages should flow like oil." The delivery of every note, had grace and accent with appropriate expression. He was opposed to over-rapidity of execution, and to violations of time. "Three things," he said, "are necessary for a good performer," and he pointed to his head, his heart and his fingers.

Don't Fret and Complain.

There are two things in a woman that the man of refinement admires equally as much, if not a little more, than beauty, and those are a pleasant voice and a cheerful disposition. There is not a man in the world brave enough to cope with a woman who whines. He will put himself to any amount of trouble to avoid her. Fortunately, though, whining is going out of fashion. It is now considered, and rightly, more womanly to meet trials and troubles, both small and great, cheerfully.

If your trouble is a great one, however, you may risk telling it to your best man friend, be he lover or brother, feeling sure that he will do his best to aid you, but never venture meeting him with a bundle of imaginary woes. With such you may be sure he will never trouble you, and why should a woman feel it her privilege to ask more than she can return simply because she is a woman.

Quite Another Idea.

"It's a bad thing not to write a legible hand," said Green. "Sometimes most unpleasant complications arise from the habit of not writing clearly. I remember a row I once had with my friend Darby because of it. Darby had sent me a photograph of his wife with her four little ones, two on her lap and one peering over each shoulder. The children were great friends of mine, and he knew I'd like to have it. I immediately acknowledged its receipt to Mrs. Darby and ended by saying that she looked like a beautiful rose-tree, the idea being that she was the tree and the children the roses." "Very nice idea!" said I. "Yes," returned Green sadly. "But my handwriting ruined it all. Darby met me in the street a few days later, and coldly inquired what I meant by writing to his wife and telling her she looked like a 'dutilful rooster.'"

By Favor of His Horse.

A Virginia judge once visited a plantation where the darkey who met him at the gate asked him in which barn he would have his horse put. "Have you two barns?" inquired the judge. "Yes, sah," replied the darkey; "dar's de old barn, and dar's has is build a new one." "Where do you usually put the horses of visitors who come to see your master?" "Well, sah, it dey's Metodist's or Baptist's, we gen'rally puts 'em in de old barn; but, if dey's 'Piscopal, we puts 'em in de new one." "Well, Sam, you can put my horse in the new barn; I'm a Baptist, but my horse is an Episcopalian."

The British Maid's Brougham. The clever English girl who wishes to go to a dinner party or a dance, and does not own that luxury, a carriage, mounts her wheel in wheeled costume, her evening dress neatly folded up in a box or bag, being secured to the bicycle in some ingenious way, and off my lady goes, with her father or her brother as an escort, and upon her arrival at the scene of festivities she slips into her gown as easily as you please.

New Use for Spruce.

Some experiments made in France render it probable that a fibre closely resembling cotton will be made out of spruce wood, on a commercial basis. It is practicable to spin, dye and weave this material after it has been put through several chemical baths. The wood fibre is not so solid as genuine cotton, but it is said that this difficulty can be remedied easily.

Characteristics Of Some Woods.

The commercial value and properties of the better known woods are as follows: Elasticity—Ash, hickory, hazel, lancewood, chestnut (small), yew, snakewood. Elasticity and toughness—Oak, beech, elm, lignumvitae, walnut, hornbeam. Even grain (for carving or engraving)—Pear, pine, box, lime tree. Durability (in dry works)—Cedar, oak, poplar, yellow pine, chestnut.

Unexpected, Though Proper.

Teacher (to infant Sunday school class)—The idol had eyes, but it couldn't—Children—See. Teacher—It had ears, but it couldn't—Children—Hear. Teacher—It had lips, but it couldn't—Children—Speak. Teacher—It had a nose, but it couldn't—Children—Wipe it.

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