

WOMAN and HER WORK.

I am afraid that what I have to say in this particular column today will not be very pleasant reading for the younger girls of my flock, so perhaps all maidens under thirty had better pass it over this week, and go on to the fashion column, or else learn the mysteries of making and baking all kinds of small and toothsome cakes;

A clever writer has recently drawn attention to the fact which I have been quietly observing myself for some time, only I did not like to be the first to speak of it—that young girls are steadily going out of fashion, and mature women are rapidly taking their places; I know that at first sight this seems hard on the girls, but after all it is really a blessing in disguise, since their day is still to come, it is merely deferred a little, that is all, and they will enjoy it all the more because they have to wait for it a little while. There was a time not so long ago when the world had little use for a woman of 30; it she was fortunate enough to be married she simply gave up going out into society except to an occasional decorous card party, she took to wearing a cap, devoted herself to the management of her house, the bringing up of her children, and was gently but decidedly laid upon the shelf, and classed amongst the middle aged. No one ever dreamed that she would care to go to a dance or take part in any of the amusements young people indulged in, and if she had shown the least inclination to dress otherwise than soberly and quietly, as befitted her matron dignity she would have been set down at once as frivolous and not quite what she ought to be. But if a cruel fate had left her single at that age, then indeed her lot was pitiable! Even if she happened to be well provided with this world's goods no one ever expected her to take an active part in what was going on around her. She was an old maid and as such her place was that of a passive spectator, not an active participant in the game of life. The most satisfactory role she could possibly play, was that of rich maiden aunt to her sisters' children and in that capacity she was sure to win respect, but even then she must not expect too much. As a wealthy relative from whom the children had expectations she was entitled to consideration but her proper sphere of action was amongst her cats, parrots and canary birds and beyond them she was not supposed to have many interests in life. The idea of her riding to hounds, or attending a dance, almost the only amusements indulged in by women in those days, would have been received with the indignant scorn it merited.

The maiden on the wrong side of 30 who was unlucky enough to be poor had just two careers open to her! One was the unenviable position of either companion or governess to some one who usually had less breeding but more money than herself. And the other was the unpaid slavery of the poor relation, the maiden aunt who was everybody's servant and nobody's mistress. True, it was often a loving slavery, and her wages were paid in affection, but still she had no place of her own in the world and her part was invariably that of second violin in life's symphony. Imagine a girl of 1850 regarding her aunt of 35 as a possible rival! How she would have laughed at the idea.

But now all this has changed, and the bachelor maid, a glorious being with the world at her feet, has arisen like a new phoenix, from the old maid of a bygone era.

At a very smart wedding a few days ago says the writer I have referred to—"it suddenly occurred to me that the eminently lovely bride walking down the aisle was not a day under 30 years of age, and yet she had never been thought of as anything but a lovely and beautiful woman, and the title 'old maid' would have as likely to be applied to the man at her side, as to herself; and I could not but think now notably in this regard [the old order changed], giving place to the new.

"It is a fact well-known to students that the age when young people are considered marriageable advances with civilization. Amongst primitive and savage peoples girls marry at eleven or twelve years of age, and a bride of ten or even nine, is comparatively common amongst the natives of Australia. Egyptians and Hindoos marry their girls at twelve to fourteen, and in Spain, Italy, and most parts of Southern Europe any age from fifteen to eighteen is regarded as suitable for matrimony. The men or boys of these nations were considered eligible for the responsibilities of married life at a correspondingly early age, and bridegrooms of sixteen were not at all unusual amongst civilized peoples, while the savage tribes married their boys any time after they were fourteen.

"As civilization of the higher type advances, and education of the more advanced order becomes general all this is changed, and as the mind and intellect are developed marriage seems to assume a very unfortunate place in the eyes of the men and women of our highly civilized age. It is no longer the supreme object of life but rather an event to be looked forward to as a possible, though not inevitable result.

"It is in the light of this, fuller, and broader conception of life and its duties and pleasures that women who have reached and passed their thirtieth year claim to represent the most perfect and advanced type of maidenhood look down in pity and slightly tinged with contempt upon the girl who has so far neglected the opportunities offered her, as to marry before she is twenty-five."

Only a few years ago it used to be quite a common thing to see a mother who was only seventeen or eighteen years older than her grown up daughter, and I know one mother myself who is not quite seventeen years older than her eldest son, and who looks some years younger than that jaded youth. But now the pendulum seems to have swung the other way, and the woman of forty is surrounded with tiny toddlers of her own, instead of being a grandmother, and satisfied to be classed with a past generation.

It is not only an undeniable fact that woman marry later in life than they used to, but it is also true that mature women are to be found in the front rank wherever she goes, and the young and inexperienced bud is no longer the idol of the hour, but is obliged to give place to her more attractive if older sister, the gracious woman with wider experience cultivated mind and manners and broader knowledge, the woman who possesses a power to hold and charm men which the dainty bud cannot hope to learn the secret of by any short cut, since it comes only with maturity. It is supposed to be the natural result of evolution, and the progress of the race, but it is an undoubted fact that the tastes of men seem to have undergone a complete revolution in this respect, and instead of dancing attendance upon the ingenious debutante as of yore, talking society small talk they are to be found matching their wits against those of some really brilliant queen of society, exchanging ideas instead of banter, and conversing, instead of chattering aimlessly. In short the woman of 30, or even—whisper it low—40, who has wit, brilliancy and ordinary personal attractions is steadily throwing the very young girl into the shade, and unless the inexperienced bud looks to her laurels and sees to it that she can bring some charms to her aid besei youth and good looks, I fear the outlook is a dark one for her until she grows older.

At least so says the distinguished writer I have quoted, and the picture she draws is such an attractive one for the older girls that of course we, who own to being thirty, and are not at all ashamed of it, would like to believe her.

The latest imported costumes show gowns, coats, muffs, and hats to match, or rather harmonize, because all the fashionable dresses seem to be made of a combination of materials with some contrast in color. Thus the coat will be of cloth matching the plain skirt, and fitting closely to the figure; it is cut quite short and finished with wide revers of fur, and a velvet collar edged with fur. The round waist of such a dress is of fancy velvet in some light color, and the hat and muff of plain dark velvet the same shade, are both trimmed with fur.

Muffs of velvet to match the hat are very fashionable with any costume, and they may be made round or flat, as the wearer chooses, but the most stylish are quite large. The flat ones with wide drooping ruffles of velvet at each end are much the prettiest, and any girl with clever fingers can easily make them at home. Another shape is like a butterfly, with body of fur and large wings of velvet bows. Some of these are decorated with large velvet poppies or orchids harmonizing in color with the rest of the costume, but the fashion is too extreme and conspicuous for good taste.

Now that the rush of Christmas and New Year are past people are beginning to think of parties, and the subject of wherewithal shall we be clothed, is a very important one to the girl who is just as fond of parties as her wealthier neighbor, but who finds it a difficult task to appear reasonably well dressed and make some little change for each entertainment on a very narrow income. To such pilgrims in the flowery paths of social intercourse the fashions of this season will be a boon. The Marie Antoinette style which admits of the skirt of three seasons ago being widened and modernized by the addition of a front breadth in a contrasting color, and the slightly soiled bodice being draped with a Marie Antoinette fichu, is a great blessing to the girl who has to economize rigidly in order to "go out" at all, and the trimmed skirt is another convenient caprice of the fickle goddess.

An excellent way to freshen up a light colored silk evening dress is to drape it with the new black net which comes patterned all over with squares, dots or small sprays. The skirt is entirely covered with the net, which is gathered very full over it, and sometimes caught up in festoons with bows of ribbon around the foot. The waist and sleeves are also covered, except perhaps at the neck where there may be a yoke of cream lace over a

bright color, or some other pretty finish. Flowers are very much used in the decoration of dancing dresses this season, of course I mean artificial flowers as the natural ones are too fragile and too expensive to be used very lavishly at this time of year. La France roses with foliage of green velvet are very effective with a pink gown, and white lilies of the valley are the prettiest to wear with pale green.

It is fortunate that tulle gowns are so much in style this winter, because they offer great opportunities to the clever girl mentioned before, in the direction of making over old dresses. Take the old china silk dress which was almost too shabby to wear, at the end of last season, if you have the time, and it is very soiled indeed, take it apart and wash it thoroughly, then make it up again with tulle trimmings and it will look like new. If it is only shabby and creased without being much soiled, press it out carefully, using the iron only on the wrong side, and make an overdress of tulle entirely covering the skirt and waist. Make the sleeves of the tulle; if you tuck it the effect will be lovely, but of course it takes double the quantity. When the skirt is in good preservation expect for being crushed, and the bodice alone shows signs of wear press the skirt carefully on the wrong side going over it until it looks as crisp and fresh as when first made, damp it slightly around the bottom so as to renew the stiffening if it is lined with canvas; press the bodice, also, and then drape it with either plain, or spangled tulle, make the sleeves of the tulle, and with the addition of a few flowers the dress will look like new, and at a comparatively slight expense.

These tulle trimmings and overdresses are equally effective over white, maize, pink, blue, or pale green, and the skirts are made straight and full, with a plain hem at the foot headed by a few rows of narrow white ribbon, a milliner's fold of white satin or a row of silver sequins, but the latter decoration is rather too heavy for such a light fabric, and apt to make it tear. These skirts are shirred in around the waist, to fall over the foundation skirt in plain straight folds.

The gowns of colored tulle are lovely, and nothing could be prettier than one of pale green tulle over pale green silk, and trimmed with lilies of the valley.

Paniers have appeared again on some of the very latest evening dresses. They were to be expected of course, following hard upon the Louis XVI styles, and I think them charming, but as yet they are in a very experimental stage and are little more than diminutive puffs. They give a quaint old world touch to a dress different from any other style I know of, and if the wearer has any sort of a figure at all, she cannot help looking well in them.

Another material which is a boon to the girl who is not very well off, is white crepon, which is much cheaper and more durable than tulle and is very popular for evening dresses. The newest crepons are very thin and sheer, in fact they remind one forcibly of creped cheese cloth, but in cream and white wool they make a very effective evening gown, when they are thin enough to display a colored lining; this lining need not be of silk, and when the bodice is trimmed with lace insertion set on over satin of the same color as the lining, and the ribbons and other accessories are of the same bright shade, the dress is as pretty as it is inexpensive.

Chimic leather is being used as a trimming for dresses again, and it is applied in various ways, but it is so perishable and soils so soon that I can scarcely imagine its becoming very popular.

Small and Dainty Cakes.

Small cakes always delight the little ones besides pleasing their elders, and are alike in demand for afternoon teas and children's parties. To make cookies or jumbles of any kind requires time and patience, but if the results are satisfactory the time is well spent, and a woman writer of note says: "My brightest thoughts come to me while I am making cake." Of the numberless recipes for small cakes the following have been tried and tested:

Sugar Jumbles.

To make delicious sugar jumbles, weigh a half pound of powdered sugar and the same quantity of butter, and cream them together. Beat two eggs light and stir into the creamed mixture, and then add three-quarters of a pound of sifted flour and flavor with lemon or vanilla extract. Sprinkle a moulding board with granulated sugar. Break off pieces of the dough the size of a walnut, roll them lightly with the palm of the hand on the sugared board, and twist them into rings. Lay them on buttered tins an inch apart. Bake them in a moderate oven.

Cocanut Jumbles.

Stir together two cups of sugar, one cup of butter, and the yolks of two eggs. Add one grated cocoanut and two and one-half cups of flour, measured before sifting. Last, stir in lightly the whites of six eggs, beaten to a stiff froth. Drop spoonfuls of the mixture on buttered tins about an inch apart and bake in a quick oven.

Hermits.

Delicious fruit jumbles, called hermits, are prepared thus: Mix together one and one-half cups of sugar, one cup of butter

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RIPANS

ONE GIVES RELIEF.

and the yolks of three eggs. Add one and one-half teaspoonfuls each of all-pice, cloves and cinnamon. Dissolve in a little warm water one teaspoonful of soda and add to the other ingredients with a generous cup of raisins seeded and chopped fine and the whites of three eggs beaten to a froth. Add flour enough to make a batter as thick as for fruit cake. Place teaspoonfuls of the mixture on buttered tins an inch apart and bake them in a brisk oven.

Cinnamon Jumbles.

Cinnamon jumbles are made thus: To a half pound of granulated sugar add a quarter of a pound of butter and stir to a cream. Beat three eggs light and add them with a scant half cup of milk. Sift with half a pound of flour one and one-half teaspoonfuls of baking powder, and stir into the other ingredients. Take heaping spoonfuls of the butter, drop them into some pulverized cinnamon, roll them around so that a little of the cinnamon shall stick to both sides of the batter, and drop them on greased baking pans, allowing room for them to spread. Bake in a quick oven.

Neapolitan.

Mix a quarter of a pound of butter with the same quantity of powdered sugar and add the yolks of three eggs well beaten, one quarter of an ounce of orange blossom water, and half a pound of flour. If the mixture is too stiff, add a little milk. Leave the dough in a cool place for half an hour. Roll out a quarter of an inch thick and cut it with a small tin cutter of any shape. Put the cakes on a pan slightly greased and brush the top of them with a beaten egg mixed with a little milk, and sprinkle over this blanched and chopped almonds. Bake in a very hot oven.

Vanilla Wafers.

Cream half a pound of butter with the same amount of sugar. Beat two eggs light and add them with one and one-half teaspoonfuls of vanilla extract and half a teaspoonful of soda dissolved in a little water. Add to this mixture flour enough to make it a soft dough that will roll out very thin, and cut it with a round cutter. Place the rounds on greased pans and bake quickly, but not brown.

Cardemon Cookies.

To make cardemon cookies: With one pound of brown sugar mix three ounces of butter and stir in one at a time, three whole eggs. Add one tablespoonful each of pulverized ginger and cloves, two tablespoonfuls of cinnamon, and one pound of flour. Roll the dough out thin and cut it in diamond shapes and place in buttered tins. Have ready a few blanched almonds, and put half an almond on each point and bake in a hot oven.

ASTRA.

African Elephants Not Untamable.
In a letter from a lady in South Africa a suggestion was thrown out of the use of which the African elephant might be made in place of slaughtering these animals as now. I beg to draw attention to the following passage in a note by the late Sir Edward H. Bunbury, in his work on the "History of Ancient Geography."

"It is well known that at the present day the African elephant is generally reputed to be untamable. Yet it is certain that not only were the Ptolemies able to train the elephants of Ethiopia for purposes both of war and trade, but their example was quickly followed by the Carthaginians who employed elephants in Sicily as early as the first Punic war, before the death of Ptolemy Philadelphia. All the elephants used by them, including those carried by Hannibal into Italy, were undoubtedly of African origin. The elephants also which are represented on Roman coins and monuments belong in all cases to the African, and not to the Indian variety, the very large size of the ears constituting a criterion by which they are easily recognized."—London News.

HAPPIEST OF ALL.

There is no time in the twenty-four hours when one ought to feel so thoroughly satisfied and content as immediately after a good, hearty meal. And all healthy persons do feel so. The body's demands have been met, and we are easy and comfortable as though we had paid off an old dun and had money left. We are accessible, humane, and good natured. Then, it ever will grant a request without grumbling. "True benevolence," says a crusty old friend of mine, "is located in a capable stomach recently filled."

Yes, but what of the incapable stomachs, of which there are so many?—stomachs that disappoint and plague their owners, till the act of feeding, so delightful to others, becomes an act to avoid the necessity of which they are almost willing to die? Ah, that is quite another thing. These poor souls are they who say—as Miss Wallace says in this letter of hers—"I was no longer to be counted among those who have pleasure in eating. Far from it. As for me I was afraid to eat. I felt the need of food, of course—the weakness and sinking that accompanied abstinence—but what was I to do? The moment I ate, my distress and pain commenced. No matter how light the repast was, nor how careful I was not to hurry in taking it, the result was the same. The distress and gnawing pains followed, with discomfort in the chest, and a sense of choking, as if some bits of food had lodged there and were irritating me."

"So objectionable and repugnant to me was the act of eating that for days together I didn't touch a morsel of solid food, subsisting entirely on milk and soda water. Owing to this enforced lack of nourishment I got extremely weak, and about as thin as I could be. I must not forget to say that this happened to me, or rather it began to happen in July, 1886, when I was living at Wellington, in Shropshire. It came on, as you may say, gradually and not with any sudden or acute symptoms. I found myself low, languid, and tired. Then came the failure of my appetite and the other things I have named. "I took the usual medicines for indigestion, but they had no good effect. After six months experience of this kind of misery I read in a book about Mother Seigel's Syrup, as a remedy for this disease, and got a bottle from Mr. Bates, the chemist, in Wellington. Having used it for a few days I felt great relief, and when I had consumed two bottles I was entirely well. Since then I have heartily commended Mother Seigel's Syrup to many friends, who have invariably been cured, as I was. You have my permission to publish my letter, if you desire to do so. (Signed) Minnie Wallace, Nurse, The Union Workhouse, Oldham, February 22nd, 1895."

In a communication dated January 8th, 1895, Mrs. Henrietta McCallam, of 40, Downfield Road, Walthamstow, near London, states that her daughter Emma fell ill in the spring of 1886 with the same symptoms described by Miss Wallace. She craved food, yet when it was placed before her, she turned from it almost with loathing. "As time went on," so runs the mother's letter, "my daughter became so weak she could hardly walk. Neither home medicines nor those of the doctors did any good. Her sufferings continued for over eight years. "In June, 1894, she began taking Mother Seigel's Syrup, of which we had just read in a little book that was left at the house. In a week she was better, and in less than two months she was enjoying better health than ever before. She has since allied nothing, and can eat any kind of food. (Signed) (Mrs.) Henrietta McCallam."

"Happy," sings Homer, "were they who fell under the high walls of Troy. Happier are they who have never fallen under the crushing weight of indigestion or dyspepsia. Happiest, perhaps, of all are they who have been lifted up by Mother Seigel's remedy and placed where once again they can eat, drink, and be merry. And all these could be gathered together they would make a greater host than the Greek poet ever dreamed of."

Had Heard of Bloomers.

"Madame," said Porry Patetic, in his sauvest manner, "have you got an old pair of pants you could gimme? Men's pants," he added hastily, as a second thought struck him.—Cincinnati Enquirer.

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