

WOMAN and HER WORK.

Here is a triding incident which goes a long way towards determining the exact amount of intelligence possessed by the average independent voter who is supposed to represent the bone and sinew of the country.

The hero was a young farmer who does us the honor of looking after our wants in the vegetable, and—to quote himself—"garden truck" line. He was an ardent liberal and so enthusiastic in the cause he had espoused and withal so thoroughly posted on the policy of his party and its general tactics that he could not refrain from talking politics on all occasions, especially after the elections when victory had perched on the liberal banners. With the exuberance of youth he burned to make converts that he was never weary of trying to show me the error of my ways, and the absolute correctness of his own.

"Yes ma'am" he remarked, last week "I voted grit, straight grit, and I'm proud to say it. Jest you wait till next year an' I guess you'll be glad enough the grits got in; they know what's good for the country I tell you, an' I'm going to support 'em every time! Home protection, that's what we farmers want, an' I voted for home protection, an' now we've got it fast an' sure! Did I deceive that guileless youth? Well no, I didn't, partly because I was sure he was so convinced of his own stutiness and sagacity that he would not believe me, and partly because I really had not the heart to spoil such an excellent joke, for I was sure he would give his opinions to others who perhaps would enjoy them as much as I did. But I said to myself "O! such is the mind of many an intelligent elector, who expounds his views to a select audience assembled round the counter of the chief grocery at Wayback corners, and of just so much value are his opinions."

Her Royal Highness the Princess Maud of Wales seems to have had some very nice dresses in her trousseau! Of course every one expected that she should because a princess usually does go to her husband pretty well provided with clothes; but then we all take an especial interest in this fair young bride partly because she looks so sweet in all the photographs we see of her, and partly because we are assured that she has always held pronounced views of her own on the subject of marriage and always declared nothing could induce her to marry any man she did not really love, so her marriage with handsome Prince Charlie of Denmark is really a love match, and her chances of happiness would seem rather better than that of most princesses, who, poor things, are so often compelled to marry from reasons of state and give their hands to one man while their hearts belong to another.

Therefore we have been eagerly snapping up details about the wedding and are loyally discussing the number of stockings, handkerchiefs and gloves possessed by the youthful bride, not to mention her gowns, hats and parasols. Of course we have all read descriptions of the wedding gown itself with its sleeves of puffed chiffon separated by little garlands of orange blossoms, and its train which hung from the shoulders, and was five yards long. Just think of it, fifteen feet of richly lined and heavy satin depending from one's shoulders! Some of the minor costumes are lovely, noticeably one teagown of yellow velvet with a front of mouseline de voile and a collar of velvet embroidered in silver, and another of cream colored satin brocade, the square bodice of which is bordered with passanterie, and the vest and sleeves of acordon plaited chiffon. The girdle to be worn with this charming gown, is of gold studded with jewels. Another beautiful dress is of pale pink satin trimmed with insertion bands of the new black valenciennes lace. The bodice is of pink chiffon, and a narrow belt of black finishes it. A gown of grass lawn is embroidered with blue flowers all over the surface, lined with blue and white shot silk and has a vest of blue chiffon striped with lace. In contrast to these dainty creations is a Redfern gown of pale blue cheviot made with a double breasted coat, and a perfectly plain skirt.

An odd gown is of dark green and black shot silk spotted with black. It is made with a 'pouched' bodice outlined with iridescent sequins, and vest and sleeves of striped black chiffon mounted on plain green silk.

One of the Princess's capes is of drab cloth with a deep collar piped with asphire blue velvet and lined with striped shot silk in pale blue, pink and green. Another is of black cloth lined with violet, made with three plaits hanging from each side of the neck striped with silk guipure. By the way—was it not this fortunate young bride who received amongst her wedding presents no less than 48 bicycles all of the newest and best makes? Rather an embarrassment of riches one would think.

Strange to say the most fashionable ornament for the coming season is to be the bracelet, that long despoiled piece of jewelry. It has emerged from its seclusion in more brilliant form than ever, and is to be seen in all the leading jeweller shops in the greatest variety. It really seems as if it

were impossible to make the bracelets of the season sufficiently beautiful or expensive for they are simply encrusted with jewels and made of the costliest gold large diamonds, joined together by scroll work of gold encrusted with diamonds, turquoises surrounded by diamonds alternating on heavy chains of gold, rubies and emeralds set in gold, and small slender chains of gold with clasps of one large pearl. In fact nothing is too rich or too extravagant for the daughters of wealth to lavish on the ornament of the hour.

Another new fancy in jewels is the banquet ring, which consists of a huge band of gold which nearly covers one joint of the finger, frequently reaching from the knuckle up to the second joint and literally loaded with precious stones. Uncomfortable as it looks the banquet ring is really not so bad, as it is so fitted to the finger as to be worn with perfect ease.

Imagine a shirt waist made of white satin! Not a blouse, or a bodice of any kind but a genuine shirt waist with a stiff bosom like a man's shirt and stiff collar and cuffs. It sounds impossible, but it is a fact though one which I fancy would scarcely wash. It was fastened with little gold buttons and the satin on each side of the stiff front is laid in tucks, the sleeves being full bishop shape. A gold belt finished it, and it was worn with a skirt of white serge trimmed almost to the knee with five broad bands of gold braid.

A-T-R-A

HARA-KIRI IN JAPAN.

The Occasion Upon Which Foreigners Have Seen the Act.

The Japanese samurai, from earliest childhood, was trained in the most elaborate code of honor of mind ever devised, and which to him represented the law. Common people might be punished for infractions against property or person; for the samurai there was but one termination for a stain upon his escutcheon or that of his clan; self-immolation by hara-kiri, as the act was termed; seppuku, as the ceremony of disembowelling was styled. "We cannot survive our defeat," said the confidential adviser to Keiki Tokugawa, the last shogun when they had retired to the castle of Osaka, after the disastrous battle of Fushimi, and he advised seppuku. But Keiki did not see it, and survivors to-day in his castle at Shizuoka, although the man who proposed the suicide, true to his principles, carried out his intention. A samurai, to-day, cannot be put to death as a common criminal. If he should fail to despatch himself, he must first be reduced to the class of heimin, common people, after which the law may take its course.

When the first deliberative assembly of united Japan met in 1869 one of its members, Ono Seigoro, proposed to abolish the custom. Out of a total of 209 there were 200 votes recorded against this innovation, and the debate demonstrated the popularity of this institution. It was designated as 'the very shrine of the Japanese national spirit, and the embodiment in practice of devotion to principle'—'a great ornament to the empire'—'a pillar of the constitution'—'a valuable instrument tending to the honor of the nobles, and based on a compassionate feeling toward the official caste,' a pillar of religion and a spur to virtue, &c. It was remarkable, to say the least, that Ono Seigoro, the proposer, was shortly afterward found murdered, and that no clue to the assassin was found. Saigo Takamori, who led the dangerous Satsuma rebellion in 1878, with many of his principal followers, chose this method of vindictive a lost cause. And it was rumored openly, although the Government suppressed the publication, that a number of army and navy officers committed hara-kiri only a year ago, when the retrocession of the Laoi-tung peninsula had been confirmed.

Although no longer a recognized institution, there is little doubt it is occasionally resorted to, even while being discontinued by the enlightened members of the Government. But it is safe to predict that this method of suicide will continue to exist as long as the Yamato Damashii (literary spirit of Old Japan) is guarded by the samurai, although it will be concealed from foreign observers, who have but little sympathy with this mode of evincing contrition or of making reparation.

The act of hara-kiri was witnessed only once, by foreigners. It was in February, 1868. The port of Hiogo (Kobe) had been opened to foreigners, when a party of

Hizen troops passing through on their way to Kyoto. One of the Captains, Taki Zenzaburo, gave orders to fire on the foreigners, and although very little damage was done, the act was so wanton and unprovoked that prompt and proportionate punishment of the offender was demanded, so that these promiscuous attacks upon peaceable foreigners might cease. The Government assented and Taki was ordered to commit seppuku by the Emperor's command, and that there might be no mistake, representatives of the foreign powers were invited to be present at the sickening drama.

The time was set at 10:30 p. m., the place, the 'bondo' or main hall of the Sufukuji temple of Hiogo. Ito Shunsuke, now his Excellency Marquis Ito Hirobumi, Premier of the cabinet, but then Provisional Governor of Hiogo, had been ordered to witness the punishment on the part of the government. Altogether there were seven kenshi, or witnesses, probably to correspond in number with the foreigners detailed to witness the act.

The general opinion prevails that the man about to commit hara-kiri dies by his own hand. This is not so. He is accompanied by a kaishaku, a second frequently selected by himself for his skill with the sword.

Taki entered, calmly and steadily, but without any bravado, dressed in his robes of ceremony, and after bowing respectfully to the kenshi and foreign witnesses, proceeded to the mats covered with a rug of scarlet felt, upon which he squatted in a respectful attitude, the knees and toes touching the ground, but the body resting upon the knees, and slightly bending forward. He now declared that he alone

was responsible for the firing, speaking in a steady tone. An assistant now brought a tray upon which rested a wakizashi or pointed 9½ inches long, pointed and sharp as a razor. The condemned man took the weapon, after causing his clothes to drop to his waist, and says an eyewitness, "stabbing deeply below the waist on the left-hand side, drew the dirk slowly across to the right side, and turning it in the wound, gave a slight cut upward." He now drew the dirk out, and bent his head forward, whereupon the kaishaku, or second, who had been crouching on his left hand, brandished his sword, and at one blow severed the head from the body. It was then certified to by the kenshi or witnesses, and the horrible drama closed.

This peculiar mode of atonement became part of the Japanese judicial system under the Ashikaga rule, the third dynasty of shoguns (1336-1568 A. D.). It was a privilege reserved strictly for the daimio and armed retainers, the samurai, and generally took place at night, the place of execution being either the yashiki (hereditary residence) or, the adjoining garden, according to the rank, or the sufferer. When Iyeyasu founded the last dynasty of shoguns, the house of Tokugawa, a ponderous code of ceremonial was instituted, and as the young samurai grew up it was an essential part of their education to become familiar with a ceremony in which at any time they might be called upon to take a leading part. This accounts for the courage and contempt of death which characterizes the official class of Japanese today, and which evoked the admiration of the world in the China-Japanese war, especially at the siege and capture of Wei-Hai-Wei.

If a daimio (feudal lord) were guilty of conspiracy or rebellion, seppuku was the only means to avert confiscation and loss of honor. If a samurai were guilty of a crime he was condemned to hara-kiri, and his clan might be punished unless he forestalled his doom by the ultimate ceremony.

If a samurai had been condemned, he was delivered to one of the feudal lords, who had been previously requested to see that the execution should take place with due decorum. Two tatami, thick mats about eight by four feet, bound with white silk, were placed in the garden, one lengthwise and the other at right angles, in the form of a hammer. They were then covered with white silk, six feet long and four feet broad, white bamboo poles were stuck in the ground, also wrapped in white silk, from which curtains would be hung, so as to screen the condemned man from uninvited eyes. In front of the mats was a bamboo portal, framed somewhat after the entrance to a temple. The whole was surrounded by a picket fence, in which two openings had been left. This fence was thirty-six feet square.

The condemned man entered by the opening at the north, called umban mon, or 'door of the warm basin,' and after bowing seated himself upon the mat placed crosswise and facing north. There were usually three kaishaku (seconds) who entered by

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ONE GIVES RELIEF.

the entrance on the south side, called shugyo mon, or 'door of the practice of virtue.' The first of these kaishaku crouched at the culprit's left hand, prepared to decapitate the man who had called upon him for this last act of kindness. And it shows the nerve of the Japanese that in almost every case this man was found by ties of kindred or friendship to him who was about to die. The duty of the second kaishaku was less ominous; he had to bring the tray with the dirk to be used in the dreadful act. The third kaishaku was to pick up the head after it had been severed from the body, and to show it to the officials representing the Government for identification.

Brought up to look with calmness upon a possibility of departing this life under such savage manner, the stoical contempt of Japanese children for pain and death is easily explained, for it has happened that young boys 12 years of age, having committed an act involving dishonor upon their family, quietly and steadily profited by the lessons they had learned, and by seppuku ended their youthful career.

BOSTON'S WOMEN ORCHESTRA.

Plays Well, Makes Money, and Does Justice on the Masculine Plan.

One of the latest ventures into what has been regarded as a purely masculine realm is the formation of the women's orchestra on a business basis. The best known of such feminine combinations is the Fadettes, whose headquarters are in Boston. It numbers twenty young, and well-educated, and attractive girls, thorough musicians and thoroughly in earnest in their chosen pursuit. The leader and manager of this novel band is Mrs. Caroline B. Nichols, a young woman of surprising ability as a business director.

Though youthful, this feminine orchestra has made an entire success of its undertaking, having gained the confidence and approval of the Boston public and that of all the neighboring districts. The players do all the musical entertaining of the representative clubs of Yankeeedom, and enjoy the good will and good opinion of their of their masculine rivals. They bear the reputation of doing work of the highest orders and of always looking upward toward musical success.

A short time since, within two weeks they played for four of the largest and most influential clubs in or about Boston, namely, the Arlington Woman's Club, reception; the Revere Woman's Club, dance; the Boston Press Club, theatre benefit; and the 99th Artillery's ladies' night, besides supplying the musical portion of the programme at the dramatic entertainment of the Woman's Charity Club, the reception of the Daughters of New Hampshire, and numerous weddings and evening parties.

During Lent, when the season grows dull at the Hub, these energetic young women go for a tour through the adjacent States, always meeting with encouragement and success. They declare their profession to be lucrative, and recommend it as delightful in all respects.

The Fadettes have a pretty office on Tremont street, in Boston, and a club room which they use as a resting place, and where they can entertain their friends, feeling entirely at home in their own special sanctum.

When the large hotels open at the fashionable resorts for warm weather the Fadettes hire themselves out as a summer orchestra, quite eclipsing the sterner sex, as they are a novelty, and, besides, they look so pretty in their dainty frocks, for, be it understood, they are a very well dressed and altogether fine de siècle young company of musicians. They are favorites with the guests of the hotel at which they are engaged, and when not occupied with their playing or practising they enjoy the pleasures of hotel life.

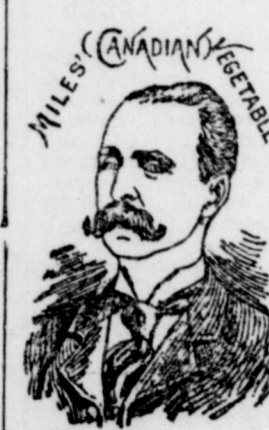
The Convent of Farnham, P. Q., has selected and purchased a Pratte Piano for the use of its advanced pupils.

Mowing Down Whiskers.

"Did you ever stop to think," said a barber the other day to a reporter, "how much surface a man shaves over in his lifetime, if he shaves every day?"

"No," replied the lathered face. "Well, I never did either until a friend of mine with a perfect mania for figures came here a few days ago to get a hair cut. We got to talking about the troubles of shaving every day, and the first thing I knew he had his hands out from under the apron and was figuring away at a great rate. He had me take the time to make a half dozen measurements on his face. When he got through I was astonished to find that the man who shaves himself every morning has mowed down a big field of whiskers at the end of his lifetime. He announced his result about like this:—

"The average man has twenty square inches of beard on his face—a large face, well covered with bristles, will figure twenty-five or thirty inches. If a man with twenty square inches of face shaves every morning, he will escape over 7,500 square inches in a year. Now, if he shaves from the time he is 20 until he is 70 years old, he will have shaved, 365,000 square inches of beard. This, reduced to feet, is 2,534 square feet, or more than one-twentieth of an acre. A pretty good path of whisker."



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