

## Woman and Her Work

The following excellent advice to wheel women is so valuable that, if it cannot exactly be pasted in the hat of every woman cyclist, it should at least find a place amongst the mixed collection of samples, postage stamps and newspaper cuttings that usually occupy most of the compartments of her purse, and better still, be given a permanent place in her memory. I really believe wheel women are more reckless than men and the only wonder to me is that there are not more accidents. I suppose it is the old story of a special Providence, and the easy going dependence upon it, so common amongst our sex. Faith in Providence is an excellent thing when not carried to excess, but I am afraid most of us are given to expecting too much of Providence and shirking a lot of our own responsibility thereby.

The danger spoken of below is certainly a very strong argument in favor of bloomers, since their adoption would put an end to all such risks.

"In directions to bicycle riders regarding the rule of the road it has frequently been pointed out that when overtaking and passing a vehicle on the left, which is the correct side, the cyclist must be extremely watchful against the possibility of colliding with a wagon approaching from the opposite direction. The fact has not been emphasized, however, that the danger in such instances is far greater for a woman than for a man. This is not because she is less prudent or skilful in her riding either, but simply because of the way in which she is dressed. Any skirt, no matter how well it is cut and fitted, will blow about somewhat and in passing through a comparatively narrow space between two vehicles there is a chance of its becoming entangled in the spokes of the wheels on the 'leeward' side of the rider—if a nautical term may be forgiven. Such an occurrence would be almost certain to cause a horrible accident, and yet every cyclist who has ridden much in the city has doubtless seen dozens of hairbreadth escapes from just this state of affairs. The only preventive is unremitting vigilance on the part of the woman as she overtakes or passes a wagon. Sometimes I have thought that there is more danger when she is riding with a man, because it is natural, after seeing him pass safely between the vehicles to suppose that she can follow without risk. She does not always remember in time that her fluttering skirt requires more room. It is only one of the many occasions in bicycling where quick thinking and equally prompt action, the characteristics of a good rider become necessary."

I am seriously thinking of giving my readers a whole chapter on cycling next week; it is decidedly the sport of the hour, and it seems as if one could scarcely devote too much time or space to it. I so often regret our old correspondence column, through which I could always get much closer to my readers and understand their wants so much better. If the girls wanted a certain subject discussed they wrote and asked me to write about it, and I felt sure that I was gratifying someone, but now I have to guess at my topics and take my chance of interesting those I write for.

I see that those extraordinary cranks whose no-breakfast theory I mentioned a short time ago, have grown so enamoured of their starvation plan that they have extended operations, and sacrificed another meal! "Less food, more life" is their motto, and finding or imagining that they found benefit from going without their breakfast they have adopted the principle that if a little of a thing is good, a great deal will be much better, and become absolutely intemperate in their abstinence. They have now placed either luncheon or dinner, whichever the victim prefers, upon the forbidden list, and are subsisting upon one meal a day with simply marvellous results. They insist more vehemently than ever that strength does not come from food which serves no other purpose in the human system than to supply waste, and I suppose that when some one of them who is more scientific than the rest, discovers some method of arresting this waste, they will eliminate food altogether from their system of existence. It would be a terrible thing if they suffered the same fate as that which the Irishman's horse, which ungratefully turned round and died, just as its master had succeeded in teaching it to live upon a straw a day.

Some of their arguments in favor of this new "Conduct of Life" are really amusing in the extreme. For instance—Dr. Deney the apostle in chief of the new theory, in explaining away the mistaken idea that we derive strength from what we eat, gives ut-

terance to this unique opinion. "I believe that it is a mistaken idea that food gives strength. I regard it as a pure delusion that we derive our strength from our food. Food is used in building and repairing the body, just as the carpenter uses materials in building and repairing a house. There is no more reason to suppose that the force which builds the body is derived from food than that the skill and force used by the builder is derived from the materials used in building a house."

If anyone can beat that for a logical illustration I should like him to step forward and do so! The theory is certainly quite new, and opens up surprising possibilities. For example, if the less food we eat the more life we possess, what is to prevent us from going without food altogether, and having a perfectly uproarious time with money we have been wont to waste on the purchase of food? Just think how it will simplify our household cares, and the amount of time we shall have upon our hands! no cooking, no marketing, no planning of meals but a perpetual carnival of aesthetic delights in no way connected with the gross pleasures of the table. It will be hard to convert the babies at first, I am afraid, but once we can give them an appearance of satisfying their hunger, with a bottle thoroughly equipped with everything but the useless, and indigestible milk the battle will be won. I suppose we will have to fill them with warm water at first, but the children will soon be able to dispense with that, and when they reach the age of reason they will doubtless thank their kind parents, for preserving their health at the expense of a trifling discomfort in the first months of their existence.

It is undoubtedly a great scheme from an economic point of view and though it may excite a momentary feeling of envy for those who can put it to practical use and thus effect such a saving of both trouble and cash, still the question will obtrude itself as to whether the game is really worth the powder. Do those intellectual beings with clear heads and empty stomachs really enjoy life? Do they ever relax the rein of stern discipline and indulge in a social oyster stew, or a little ice cream party on a summer evening? And when they engage in social intercourse if they ever permit themselves such frivolity do they have any supper served or merely drink a glass of refreshing ice water, and separate, in a condition of inhospitable but health, and life giving emptiness! These are side issues on which the public want more light before they will consent to embrace the new faith, and strive to make the stomach subservient to the mind. Mental and spiritual pleasures are all very well in their way, but an empty stomach has an unpleasant manner of asserting its supremacy, and making the higher joys seem as dust and ashes until its wants are supplied, and the stomach is a part of the human structure which does not lend itself readily to the higher education.

Fashionable women in London have gone back to the pretty, if sometimes rather extravagant fashion which originated in America, of wearing great bunches of natural flowers on the left shoulder. When flowers are plentiful, or one lives in the country, this is all very well, but in cities, and at times when a single rosebud costs twenty-five cents, it is apt to be expensive, especially as the flowers are apt to ruin the dress, no matter how carefully they are arranged. Even when the stems are wrapped in silver foil, the flowers themselves are sure to stain the bodice, and the stems go broken and "leak" all over the delicate silk or lace with which the bodice is trimmed, so that when the flowers are removed they leave wreck and ruin behind them. But they look lovely all the same, and many women will wear them in spite of this drawback. Bouquets are no longer carried amongst the smart set in the English capital, they are found to be cumbersome, and terribly in the way at evening functions. A few choice roses may be carried carelessly in the hand or better still, tucked into the bodice, or tied to the fan, are all that is considered necessary; and this simple fashion is a decided improvement on the immense bouquets of last year which were really burdens, to be carried around.

Lace jackets to be worn with very thin

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dressers are amongst the novelties of the season, and very pretty they are. The newest model has a postilion back and Honiton, Cluny, and imitation venetian and valenciennes are the popular laces used, with Cluny rather in the lead, as it is the latest revival in lace and it is used on all kinds of gowns both of silk and wool, as well as lawn and muslin. Entire sleeves, full vests, yokes, jabots and epaulettes in fact every decoration to which lace can be applied is made of Cluny. Any broad effect across the shoulders which can be produced by the use of epaulettes or frills, seems to be greatly in favor as a substitute for the large sleeves to which the soul of womanhood still clings affectionately, and lace is the material usually employed for these over-arm flourishes. The sleeves of thin dresses are either shirred lengthwise, or trimmed around with rows of tucks and lace insertion, and three lace edged frills are the favorite finish for the top. The skirts have much less fulness than those of last year, and they are either cut with seven gores and fitted carefully around the hips, or made with plain ungored breadths, and shirred with tiny cords below the waist, to the requisite size. These last are trimmed with lace insertion set on in various forms above the hem, diamond points being a favorite design. The gored skirts are trimmed with lace edged flounces. Sometimes two or three at the foot of the skirt are deemed sufficient, and sometimes they reach all the way from waist to hem. Again, narrow ruffles set in clusters, or at wide intervals the entire length of the skirt are used, but trimming of some kind is an absolute necessity on thin gored skirts. With the daintiest of organdie dresses there is an underskirt of sheer lawn also trimmed with ruffles to make the skirt stand out, and the best dressmakers now assert that this has a much better effect than the silk lining which has been considered an essential to all very smart organdie dresses; it preserves the lightness of effect much better than silk.

Gray is one of the most fashionable colors this season, and in cashmere, or the fine ribbed canvas, it makes the daintiest of summer costumes trimmed with plenty of cream lace, and touches of pink, yellow, or pale green silk, on the bodice, milliner's folds are in again and such costumes as the above, are sometimes trimmed with milliner's folds of gray satin, or velvet, but the great majority have plain skirts simply hemmed, and quite loose from the lining at the foot. Nun's veilings of very thin quality, are steadily gaining in favor as the season advances, and a very novel effect is produced by lining them with plaid silks, or large broken plaids with a decided line of some bright colour. White nun's veiling over white silk, trimmed with inch-wide green gauze ribbon set in a pattern like braiding on the skirt, sleeves, and bodice is one of the novelties in light summer gowns.

## MILLET'S BIRTHPLACE FOR SALE.

Interesting Reminiscences of the Great Painter.

The home and birthplace of J. F. Millet, the famous painter of the 'Angels,' is about to be sold. It is called Gruchy. It is a poor but picturesque little hamlet, surrounded by orchards. Many of the buildings are in ruins. The old people are nearly all dead, and the young for the most part have left for the city. There remain, in fact, only the old and the very young, just as it if the place were in a state of siege. All the able-bodied have gone to the front to fight in the battle of life.

Close by the shores are washed by the sea. In the village the old people, seated at the doors, seem to be in a dream. They look as if they belonged to another age.

Millet's brother is still alive. At Greville he keeps an inn, where pilgrim painters hang up little panels just as they do at Barbizon. 'Gruchy is becoming depopulated,' he said one day. The young people have gone to Paris to seek their fortunes, but many of them have been enlisted at Cherbourg.

This accounts for the lonely appearance of the place. The ruins are already covered with ivy. As I said, the aspect is extremely picturesque, and, in more than one corner of Gruchy, we can recognize subjects of Millet's works. There is the old stone well with its pointed roof, the mouldering door of the stable, and the greenish stairway. A very short road separates into two rows the six or seven little houses of the hamlet, and a pathway leads to the seashore. In the angle stands a little house with a signboard with this inscription painted in white letters: 'Here Francois Millet was born October 4, 1814.'

It is inhabited by his sister, a strong, ruddy-faced peasant woman, who still has an amiable smile under her Norman cap. It is a modest looking habitation, with a long patched roof pierced by a large stone chimney. The entire building, consisted of a ground floor surmounted by a granary, is overran by a vine. Near the stable stands the well, with its little round turret and pointed roof, and an opening about waist high consisting of a bay, through which the dripping buckets are passed.

The old people never suspected while going there for water, as little Millet watched them with his hands in the pockets of his tattered trousers, that the image of that well would be scrambled for a couple of dollars on the other side of the ocean. Millet worked there as a farm hand until he was 20 years old. In the summer days, after the threshing hours, instead of going to sleep, like the others at noon, he observed. He felt in himself the growing genius of the painter. With the point of his knife he cut in the door of the granary a fancy sketch of a lot of devils with forks chasing a she devil. He was then 12 years old. The sketch was of surprising precision and firmness of execution. On the other door he carved a vessel with all sails set. Later on he painted upon the house proper a pot of flowers.

In this way, working in the fields and observing the beauties of nature, Millet passed his boyhood. Later on he studied the effects light in the evening, and noted it in the sketch books with which his pockets were stuffed. He went among the peasants, watched the groups of gleaners, the dogs minding the sheep, and the harvesters. He endeavored especially to seize the effects of the twilight, which he observed with smoked glasses, persuaded as he was that painting could never give the true coloration, and could only give their equivalents in a more sombre gamut.

Millet is still well remembered in all the country of Cherbourg. The natives remember his tall stature, his fine head and careless aspect, and his solid and striking personality. In the opinion of his family, the best likeness of him is the water color by Lalauze. It represents him such as he was when he revisited the country with his friend Theophile Sylvestre in 1870 and when he was arrested, charged with being a Prussian spy taking sketches.

At 21 years, Millet astonished Pop Mouchel of Cherbourg by a drawing that he had made in the granary before he had received

any lessons. Old man Mouchel said to Millet's father: 'You will be damned for having kept him so long. He is made of the stuff of which great artists are formed.' This sketch still exists. It is a marvel. From that time forward Millet worked at Cherbourg. He painted a boat coiled around a palm tree for a druggist, and sketched a horse for the sign of a blacksmith. Its present owner got it in exchange for a tobacco box. One day Millet made a display picture for a Hercules, a showman of the fairs, who gave him for it 11 cents and a free ticket to the show. Everybody knows how he got the money to go to Paris, where he was bound to meet with many vexations. The page that he wrote of his arrival in the great city is one of the most astonishing for its emotion, its melancholy and its foresight.

It was at Barbizon that he was destined to pass the remainder of life, in that house whose present proprietor refuses to allow anybody to enter, ignoring the ordinary courtesy that is always displayed by the possessors of historical treasures. In Barbizon Millet often thought of Gruchy its fields, its granary and its hamlet, where he lived unknown in peace and solitude, instead of being torn by the thorns along the road leading to fortune. Even glory was doled out stingily to that Michael Angelo of the peasants.

'How still they are,' remarked Mrs. Fogg, apropos of the young couple in the next room. 'Yes,' replied Mr. F., 'it reminds me of my army days. It was always wonderfully quiet just previous to an engagement.'—Boston Transcript.

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