

Woman and Her Work

There is a man out in Missouri who is not exactly known to fame in the usual sense of the word, and yet who is doing a work in his own quiet way which is in no degree behind the efforts of the most famous philanthropists in real practical value to the human race, especially to the younger generation. His name is W. H. H. Musick, and like many other good and clever men he is an editor. The paper which he owns, publishes and edits, is called the "Wright County Progress" and it comes out once a week: it is a very excellent journal in many respects and in no wise behind other weekly papers of its day and generation, but its chief claim to distinction lies in the object which its editor seems to have set before himself as a sort of mission and of which he never loses sight. This mission is to draw the attention of its readers to the daily sacrifice of life by the careless and ignorant use of "inflammables, explosives, and combustibles." No calamity of the kind which he makes his specialty, is allowed to pass without comment, and Mr. Musick draws many valuable lessons from the frequency of their occurrence.

As the subject is one that should be of vital interest to us all, a few specimens of the extracts which the Missouri editor places before his patrons each week, and his trenchant remarks on them, cannot fail to interest the readers of PROGRESS. Mr. Musick is so thoroughly in earnest and so convinced of the importance of the matter that he is now endeavouring to give practical effect to his views by persuading the school authorities of his native state to make instruction in the care of combustibles and explosives, and the uses of fires, part of the regular school course. The extracts I publish are from the latest edition of the "Wright County Progress," and tell a sad tale of their own.

JUNCTION CITY, Kan., July 16.—At 7 o'clock this morning, twenty miles east, E. J. Allen's farmhouse was destroyed by fire. Three small children, the oldest 6 years old, were burned to death. Two older ones escaped, but were too badly burned to recover. The husband had gone to his work, and the mother had gone out for a short time, leaving the children asleep. She is prostrated with grief.

We want to teach the children, who will be the parents of the future, that there is no duty, religious or otherwise, which can excuse parents who leave small children alone; that the act itself is criminal and disgraceful.

LAWRENCE, Kan., July 16.—A gasoline explosion caused the death of Emma Madden here yesterday afternoon. She was cleaning a carpet when the gasoline which she was using became ignited. The girl made a desperate effort to extinguish the flames, but only succeeded after being terribly burned. She died in a few hours.

A little special training might have saved this girl. Within the next twelve months a hundred more of our children will go out of this joyous life in a tempest of unutterable agony—by fire. Instruction would save some of them—who can say how many?

CHARLESTON, Ill., July 12.—This morning, while a group of girls were sitting around a table, the 5 year-old son of Nelson Reynolds came in, and, pointing a target rifle at them, pulled the trigger. The bullet hit Clara, the 14 year-old daughter of Michael Murphy, in the forehead, killing her instantly.

The unprecedented accidental death list this month is directly traceable to the war excitement. Men talk war and forget the explosives with which they are working. Women talk war and forget the children, who are naturally explosive and play at war continually with anything they can lay their hands on. Watch the little fellows, if you want them to live a minute! How much suffering and heartbreak would be saved if every paper in the Union would repeat this caution!

A little girl, 4 years old, was burned to death, in the temporary absence of her mother, at Chapin, Mo., the other day.

Four years is a baby girl's sweetest age, and it is the age at which children are most frequently destroyed by fire. Many of them, perhaps most of them, could be saved in future if influential people who mould public sentiment, shape legislation, and control education would but try. Will they try? When will they try? How many more precious little lives must be quenched in the unspeakable horrors of death by fire before they make up their minds to try?

"Long life to Mr. Musick!" May he prosper exceedingly and may the truly good work he has undertaken flourish while he does, and live after him.

After various dieto-maniacs—if one may coin a word, and writers on hygiene have been making the lives of coffee drinkers a burden to them for years by describing the awful effects that the coffee bean has upon the human constitution and worse still on the female complexion; some benefactor of coffee lovers has discovered that it is all a mistake and none of us need fear the influence of our favorite beverage on either our nerves, or our complexions.

This latest authority takes such a different view of the subject that he relates the case of a woman—a brain worker—whose

friends were so convinced that the coffee habit as they called it, was injuring her that she gave it up, just for the sake of peace, only to find that instead of improving, her health had rather declined, and worse still she found herself unable to continue her work with any success, as without her coffee, her mind was inactive and sluggish. When she consulted her physician he told her that the amount of coffee she consumed daily was far from being stimulating enough to do her any harm and when taken with plenty of sugar and rich cream it was most nutritious. So that woman goes on with her work, and drinks her coffee with a quiet mind.

The "Medical Times" quotes an authority on the subject of prescribing coffee as a medicine in certain states of great debility, and adds that while tea and coffee seem to be alike in many respects the latter is greatly to be preferred on account of its sustaining power, and that it would be well for the working classes, and a great help towards the development of social sobriety if coffee were to come into greater use, and if the ability to make it really well could be acquired. The writer quotes as an example of the difference in the effects of tea and coffee upon the nerves, the experience of sportsmen who find it far better to drink the latter when shooting as tea, it taken strong, or in any quantity, will produce a sort of nervousness very prejudicial to steady aim. Under its influence the marksman is apt to shoot too quickly, whereas coffee steadies the hand and quiets the nerves. I must confess that fond as I am of the fragrant drink, I have always found that even a small cup of coffee taken at night makes me very wakeful, but the same writer in the "Medical Times" is authority for the statement that coffee is one of the most effective sleeping potions known, a small teaspoonful as strong as it can be made, repeated every fifteen minutes until the patient falls asleep, being the regulation dose. I can only say I should be sorry for the nurse who undertook to feed me with coffee by the spoonful until I fell asleep.

The rapidly shortening days, and that slight but still perceptible chill in the air after the sun has set, which gives us our first warning in these northern climes that summer is dying, turns ones thoughts towards autumn fashions; and though the pages of the fashion journals still show little else than cuts of elaborate summer gowns, yet the authorities announce that the latest importations of these fluffy wonders contain hints of what we may expect in the early Autumn gowns. One thing seems to be decided, and that is the continuance of overskirt effects with the old as well as the more modern variation of form. All the indications tend in that direction, and not only the overskirt effect, but the overskirt proper has already appeared in with rounded peplum and pointed shape, as well as the short round apron all laid in upturned plaits which has a feature of the dresses of our early youth.

They will seem strange to those who remember them years ago, but they will not be the only old fashion which is to be revived during the coming season if rumor speaks truly. Fortunately these old styles which seem so grotesque now are seldom

restored without modification, which make them seem like new, so it is likely the modern overskirt will be a more artistic garment than its predecessor ever was. So far the most attractive overskirt models are in close fitting apron shape, longer in front than at the back where they fasten with hooks concealed by tiny bows of velvet ribbon with a little buckle in the centre. Next comes the long apron reaching almost to the hem of the skirt in front and back, and drawn up slightly at the sides. The peplum overdress which is the least to be admired of all the models falls in two points at each side, and like all the others fits closely over the hips.

There seems to be a possibility that the beloved blouse bodice is to be superseded at last by the tight fitting coat waist. If so the change is one to be regretted, and blouse waists are so popular with all women that it is unlikely they will be abandoned without a struggle, or allowed to go out of fashion altogether. The coat bodice tight fitting and stiff, with us already and there is little doubt that it will really be a feature of the winter gowns. Just now it is made of lace, silk and satin in light colors and without sleeves, and it is worn with thin lace trimmed gowns cut décolleté. It is trimmed around the edge with ruffles of ribbon or chiffon, or pretty applications of lace, and opens in front enough to display a square open neck, thus making an evening dress suitable for summer afternoon wear. It is cut to form little epaulets over the sleeves, and lace sleeves which fit the arm closely are sometimes added with excellent effect, these sleeves however, are a part not of the jacket but of the skirt, and must be made of the same lace as the flounces on the skirt. Narrow jewelled bands belt the coat in at the wrists, or satin ribbon with a jewelled clasp is used. Some of the prettiest of these dainty coats are made of velvet, and in either turquoise blue or deep yellow. With a white gown the effect is most striking and pretty. Already the black satin and taffeta coats have become one of the settled features of fashion, but the newer light silk and velvet ones are as yet seen only at the most fashionable watering places where they are worn by ultra-fashionable women.

There are some slight differences in the skirts which may indicate a setting of the tide which has already turned towards more scant effects. The new model is sufficiently clinging around the hips but the deep circular flounce is wider than ever at the bottom where it is scalloped. The effect which seems to be desired is a fan-like flare, and to accomplish this a knee-deep flounce of accordion plaited silk is sometimes added underneath the foundation skirt so that the bottom has the appearance of three, instead of the usual two skirts. Princess effects are seen in many of the new cloth and cashmere gowns; but in these as in other models, the lower part of the skirt is a very flaring circular flounce, set on with a piping of the same, or of plaid silks, which in the same form stripes around the sleeves at intervals over their entire length. The appearances of a polonaise is given to other gowns by trimming just on the bodice and upper part of the skirt in the required form. The only apparent change in the form of the sleeves in the tendency to make

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them smaller lowering the shoulder seam at the same time to a point of discomfort which is really alarming after so many years of loose comfortable sleeves, and short shoulder seams, but if they once become the fashion, I suppose we shall learn to like, or at least tolerate them in time.

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