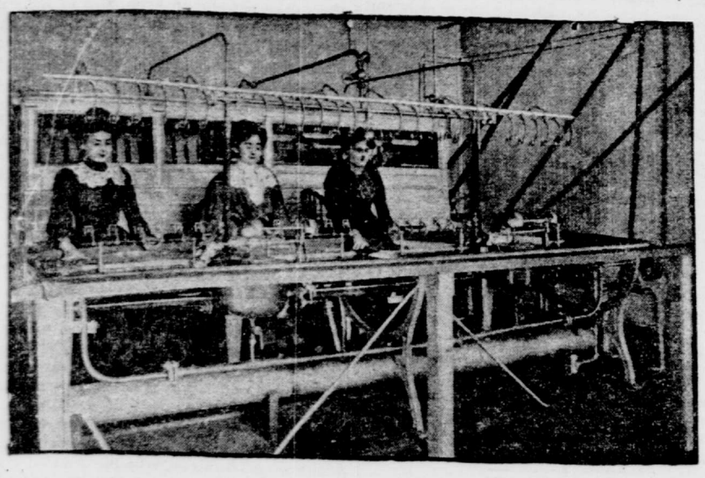
FOR AND ABOUT WOMEN



REEL IN OPERATION AT THE DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE, WITH FRENCH AND ITALIAN OPERATORS.

SILK CULTURE FOR WOMEN.

What the Government Does to Encourage This New Industry.

[FROM THE TRIBUNE BUREAU.]

Washington, Aug. 28.—The government has made it possible for every woman in the country who owns a few mulberry trees to keep herself in pin money, provided she is willing to work for it at the rate of six weeks in the year.

Silkworms the world over feed on the leaves of the mulberry, and after an experience of more than two years the Agricultural Department is justified in the belief that America in time will be able to rival the looms of Italy and France. In order to interest the people of the country in this new field of work, the department will send to any applicant silkworms enough to start business, with full instructions how to make the venture a success. When the crop is gathered the department will pay for the cocoons on a scale of $1 a pound when dry. It is such simple work, and so easily done, that women and even children can engage in it profitably, and if conducted intelligently there is no reason why silk culture cannot yield as good results as the raising of chickens or bees, with far less trouble. For instance, a half-dozen mulberry trees will net the culturist about $60 a year. There will be literally little or no expense, and the care of the worms means a few weeks' work in the springtime, when it is a positive pleasure to be out of doors.

In a sunshiny room in the Agricultural Department three young women are kept busy every day reeling silk from the cocoons that are being sent in from nearly every State in the Union, notably Utah and Alabama. Afterward it is twisted into shining yellow hanks, ready for the mills of Paterson, where it will be woven into native ribbons and silks.

As the department pays out $4 for the raw material, to say nothing of the expense of clerk hire, books of instruction, machinery, and even mulberry cuttings for those who have no trees, it will be seen that the additional dollar a pound given by the mills does not begin to cover the cost of the undertaking. The government does not mind a small thing like that, however, if the outcome proves successful, and the department has pledged itself to buy all cocoons sent in until such time as the output encourages the erection of silk mills throughout the country, when the market will be general, as in the case of other staple products.

Commercial silk culture requires a smaller outlay of capital than almost any other industry, and the net gain the first year may pay for a an outfit which will last for many years. One girl of fifteen made enough money this year with her cocoons to send herself to college for the coming scholastic term. Another, in the same neighborhood, failed to get returns enough to pay for her outfit—which serves as an illustration that silk culture, like everything else, depends upon the way you go about it.

Informal TALKS

"There has always been a lot of talk about the 'man's woman' and the 'woman's woman,'" said a woman of many clubs; "but I don't think there has ever been a chance to know really what the woman's woman was until the day of women's organizations dawned, and we could see what type of woman was promoted to leadership.

"I have been a member of a good many women's organizations, and have sat in a good many women's conventions, and I have found that certain things are true, in a general way, of most of the leaders they permit to come to the front.

"You may set it down as a universal fact that women will not permit any woman to become president of an organization unless she dresses well. They don't care for personal beauty, as men do. They will elect a plain, even a homely woman, but never unless she dresses well and makes a good appearance. They will not permit a freak to hold the gavel. Dowdy looking women may sometimes hold other offices, especially that of chairman of a committee, where there is special work to be done which requires a special woman to do it.

"For instance, a club I once belonged to built an expensive clubhouse. They knew that for chairman of the building committee they had got to have a woman with a business head. They chose an unfashionable old frump who had about as much idea of style as she had of the chord of the diminished seventh. But she owned a great amount of real estate, which she had personally managed for years. She was the woman of the whole club for the place. She built the clubhouse, and built it admirably, in a way to command the respect of every business man in the place. The women showed their good sense by following her judgment implicitly; but do you suppose they would have made her president of that club? Not much!

"Women don't want a woman in the chair that they are ashamed to have a stranger see. The tall, commanding, distinguished looking woman is at a great advantage. The small woman is handicapped in running for office nowadays, but not nearly so much so as the fat woman. I don't mean the dignified old dowager type of figure. That passes, even with much avoirdupois; but the dumpy, squatty fat woman is doomed.

"I knew a woman who, under the auspices of a State federation, had established and carried on an institution of great educational value to the State. It was so well thought of by the people that the legislature finally made it a State institution, appropriating funds for its support. The Governor made this woman chairman of the State commission to have charge of the institution, and practically gave into her hands the appointing of the other members of the commission. The women helped her, stood by her, and gave her all glory and credit for her work. But they wouldn't let her become even vice-president of the federation. She was excessively fat, and they said the vice-president was sometimes called to the chair, and they couldn't have such a looking woman preside. They couldn't run the risk of having strangers see such a looking woman in the chair.

"So they defeated her, and it almost broke her heart; not because she wanted the office so badly, but because women she thought were her friends got out and worked against her. These reasons don't hold quite as much in purely philanthropic or reform organizations, but they creep in even there. I know a woman who is secretary and practically the controlling power in a big national organization devoted to a particular reform. She knows more about this particular subject than any other person in America, man or woman. Her articles upon it appear in the ablest publications in the country. She is an impressive speaker, a tireless worker, a scholar of high attainments, and a delightful woman to know. But she dresses very badly, and looks very slouchy.

"She was engaged last winter in working up the organization of a certain Western State for her society. She roused great interest, had a large attendance at her public meetings. But somehow the women didn't organize. Then along came another woman from New-York. She was distinctly inferior to the first in every way you could possibly mention, except one. She was an elegant dresser, the wife of a rich man. She swept the women into her fold like sheep, and when she went away left several strong, active new branches behind her. It was the first woman's arguments and appeals that convinced their minds; but it was the second woman's pretty clothes that reaped the harvest.

"Besides dress and presence, it is absolutely necessary for any woman who wants to get to the front nowadays to be able to speak in public. Oratory is beginning to count among women, just as it has counted among men since the days of the Greeks. But it isn't oratory that is demanded so much as plain, ordinary talking, in a voice that can be heard. The 'soft, low voice,' that 'excellent thing in woman,' is at a discount nowadays, in the world of women's organization. The miseries of boredom that women's societies have endured in the past, straining their ears to catch a word or two of the 'paper.' And with the increase of national conventions, held in great auditoriums, good voices are going to be more and more at a premium. The ability to present a subject well, to argue a question extemporaneously, to think upon her feet, makes many a woman a power without anything else to recommend her. She may not win high office unless she has other qualifications, but she can carry a vote her way on questions before the club, and the woman who can do that is a power. The present president of the General Federation of Women's Clubs won her big office, in spite of a bitter opposition, because of the fact that she can stampede a convention whenever she addresses it.

"Besides good dressing and good speaking, the president of a big organization has got to have the qualities that create popularity. She must be tactful, and gracious and pleasing in her manners. The bigger the organization the more democratic it is. The president of a big organization can't draw social distinctions nowadays; she can't be a snob. She may have her faults, but they will not be those of the fool or the snob.

"Now that international movements are on the increase, foreign languages will become a necessary part of the successful woman's equipment. At Berlin, for instance, it was an eye opener to many very able women to see the effect produced by a colored woman, Mrs. Terrell, daughter of a slave mother. Her fine delivery of addresses in both French and German made her one of the prominent figures of the convention, while women accustomed to being treated as very much her superiors were thrown into the background by their ignorance of languages. Hardly any other delegate from America, except Mrs. Sewall, could speak both French and German. American women were very fortunate in having, in Mrs. Sewall, a president who could preside in three languages. Had almost any other American woman concerned in the movement been in her place, American women would have been placed wofully at disadvantage.

"Good dressing, tact, amiability, executive ability, good speaking, parliamentary law, power to make a speech in several foreign languages—it's going to take a pretty able, all around woman to hold the reins of government in the great women's organizations of the future."

SECRET OF GOOD BLANC MANGE.

Economy in Ingredients Produces an Insipid Dish, Unworthy a Good Cook.

The ideal French blanc mange differs much in character from American blanc mange. A more insipid dish than the latter can hardly be imagined. In it milk is used in place of whipped cream, and cheap extracts are substituted for wines or other expensive ingredients. The only thing to be said in favor of the American variety is that it is economical, at least in the sense that it is inexpensive to make. But if the housekeeper is bent on economy, let her make an old fashioned rice pudding or Indian pudding, both of which are delicious as well as economical. A simple blanc mange made of milk should have rich flavoring as a substitute for cream. Of course, it ceases to be a blanc mange when the flavoring used changes the color to any marked degree. It then becomes merely a jelly—chocolate jelly, strawberry jelly or coffee jelly, according to the flavoring.

A perfect blanc mange, or white jelly, cannot be made with corn starch, farina or any similar article, in spite of the assertions of housewives and American cookbooks. Though the puddings made from these materials are often delicious, they cannot be considered as delicate jellies. Isinglass makes the most delicate blanc mange, but good gelatine is excellent for this purpose.

A French blanc mange can be made as elaborate as one pleases. A quart of whipped cream (measured after whipping) will require a large heaping tablespoonful of gelatine, or about an ounce of isinglass, five ounces of sugar and about half a salt spoonful of salt. This may be flavored in a variety of ways. Two tablespoonfuls of maraschino may be used, and candied cherries cut in quarters added to give a pretty effect. The sauce may also be maraschino. Another way is to flavor the foundation with the grated peel of a Valencia orange, and serve it with orange sauce. The flavoring, of course, adds a delicate, yellowish tinge to the dessert.

A blanc mange flavored with burnt almonds and served with a Kisch sauce, or with cream, is delicious. Or one flavored with lemon is good, served with a sherry sauce. A few shining bits of bright colored jelly scattered over almost any blanc mange add to its festive appearance. Blanc mange is appropriately served in individual moulds.

If one cannot obtain cream rich enough to whip, a blanc mange made of unwhipped cream and rich flavoring is a good substitute for the French dish. Stir two cups, or one pint, of cream with two large tablespoonfuls of sugar, and add two tablespoonfuls of gelatine, which has been soaked in barely enough cold water to cover, and then melted over boiling water. It is perhaps better to heat one cup of the cream, and when boiling hot add the soaked gelatine to it, stirring in the rest and cooling quickly. The gelatine will be more apt to permeate the dessert. When melted, the gelatine is stirred into cold cream or any cold mixture, and beaten in quickly, or it will form strings. After the blanc mange is made, place it on crushed ice. The cold of a refrigerator does not make it firm enough. Some housekeepers seem to think that success with a gelatine dessert is more or less of an accident. If placed in a bed of ice or snow it will always form, providing the proportions in the rule are correct.

Another simple blanc mange calls for a pint of milk, two ounces of sugar, half the very thin rind of a lemon, eight bitter almonds, half a package or four tablespoonfuls of gelatine and a pint of cream. With the exception of the gelatine and cream, mix all together and let them stand an hour, first blanching and pounding the almonds. Then place the mixture on the stove, letting it come merely to the boiling point. When this is done add the gelatine, which should have been well soaked. Stir thoroughly and take it immediately from the fire. Strain it into a bowl, add a pint of cream, and if desired, a very little wine or brandy while it is thickening on the ice.

Francatelli gives the following "blanc-manger," which contains neither milk nor cream:

"Parboil twelve ounces of Jordan and two ounces of bitter almonds in a quart of water for about two minutes. Drain them on a sieve, remove the skins and wash them in cold water; after they have been soaked in cold water for half an hour, pound them in a mortar, with four ounces of sugar, until the whole presents the appearance of soft paste. This must then be placed in a large basin with twelve ounces of loaf sugar, and mixed with rather more than a pint of spring water. Cover the basin with a sheet of paper, twisted round the edges, and allow the preparation to stand in a cool place for about an hour in order to extract the flavor of the almonds more effectually. The milk should then be strained off from the almonds, through a napkin, with pressure, by wringing it at both ends. Add two ounces of clarified isinglass to the milk of almonds. Pour the blanc mange into a mould imbedded in rough ice, and when set quite firm, turn it out on its dish with caution, after having first dipped the mould in warm water."

De Kitchener apparently does not believe in a lack of flavoring in blanc mange, as the following rule by this old fashioned authority calls for no less than six flavorings:

"Boil for a few minutes a pint and a half of new milk with an ounce and a quarter of picked isinglass, the rind of half a lemon peel, very thin, a little cinnamon, a blade of mace and two and a half ounces of lump sugar. Blanch and pound very fine eight or ten bitter and half an ounce of sweet almonds with a spoonful of rose water. Mix them with the milk; strain it through a napkin into a basin with half a pint of good cream. Let it stand half an hour, then pour it into another basin, leaving the sediment at the bottom. When nearly cold turn it into moulds. When wanted turn it out into the centre of a dish and garnish with slices of orange.

INVENTIONS OF WOMEN.

Patents That Give Comfort to Mankind as Well as Womankind.

[FROM THE TRIBUNE BUREAU.]

Washington, Aug. 28.—The woman inventor is broadening her field of labor. Under the custody of Mr. Sullivan, of the Patent Office, are books compiled by the government of the inventions of women dating back to 1790. Their line of thought and sphere of knowledge can easily be traced from that year to the present expensive views of the new woman.

The Colonial dame confined her improvements and discoveries to her wardrobe and kitchen. There were also jumpers and soothing syrups for the baby and dainty perfumes and recipes. She would have shrunk in alarm from the descendants who have constructed electrical apparatus, railway appliances and farming implements.

For so the woman of the last few years has done. Of course, the additions to her domestic comforts have not been abandoned. The lists of culinary utensils and wearing apparel are decidedly the longest in the latest book issued, but a study of the headlines of the many columns shows a diversity of subjects and a not stinted list of inventors under each.

A group of clerks in the Patent Office discussed the woman inventor at the luncheon hour a few days ago.

"A woman is generally a prolific inventor," remarked a jolly, brown eyed little man. "Now, I know a woman from Pennsylvania, whose first invention was an arrangement in which the store clerks could carry their scissors and pencils. From that she proceeded to invent flower stands and improvements on pots and kettles and medicines and a legion of other things."

"Is it difficult to deal with that species of woman?" asked an outsider.

"No—that is, not generally," he added, as he looked up and caught the eye of an elderly woman whose desk was stationed near his.

"But there was one woman," he confessed, "one lone, unprotected woman, who had this whole room"—his hand swept the long, hall-like apartment—"in an uproar for three days. Then she was asked not to come in any more. You see, she didn't understand her own patent, and told me she thought I was a fool because I couldn't explain it to her. But she was an exception to rather than an example of the general run of them. Just look in those books and see for yourself the works of the woman inventor."

The indexer of the Patent Office was asked if there were many inventions by women registered in the last year. She ran her eye and forefinger down several pages of lists, and paused under the name of the first woman.

"Here is one," she said, and after following many more columns found another.

When a man invents something, nine times out of ten he wants it understood that he is putting his car fender or his machine before the world to save labor or protect human lives. The inventions of woman add a touch of comfort to the engine, the home or to whatever else she turns her attention, and compare in ingenuity, if not in number, with the seven hundred thousand inventions by the sterner sex.

GLEANINGS

It is something of a shock to learn from the current number of a woman's magazine that the venerable Susan B. Anthony wears a corset. It is a short French corset, and is donned as regularly as her gown every morning. In other respects Miss Anthony also dresses just like other women. The only time in her life that she went in for dress reform was during the bloomer epidemic. She wore the obnoxious garments for a year and then gave them up, writing to Lucy Stone that she could not bear them any longer. Later she said that, while rational dress was a physical comfort, it was a mental crucifixion, an intellectual slavery. She never could get rid of thinking of herself, and she found the attention of her audiences fixed upon her clothes, instead of upon her words. Miss Anthony likes pretty clothes and feminine furbelows, and has a fine collection of beautiful laces.

Old people often make the mistake of coddling themselves too much, says a physician in "What to Eat." Thus they cause a weakening of the vital forces before the advance of age has done so. Nature never intended that a man should be put into a hothouse at sixty and kept there as a delicate plant. Too much solicitude about the health of such a person may be the actual cause of death. The vitality of the person may be somewhat lessened at sixty, but the man or woman whose health has received a fair amount of attention is not by any means ready to be shelved at that age. All that is required is a little lessening of the burden of life and a little more care of the health.

If you want a beautiful hedge, says a lover of nature, in "The Woman's Home Companion," go out now, when the goldenrods and tall purple asters are in bloom, and mark the finest clumps, selecting those that are of about equal height. Then late in the fall, when the season of bloom is over, dig up those roots, and transplant them to your garden. Set them out in a row, alternating the goldenrod with the aster, and so close together that there will be no gaps when they are in bloom next year. A double row is still better, and will make the most beautiful hedge you ever saw.

THE TRIBUNE PATTERN.

A Tissue Paper Pattern of Six Gored Tucked Skirt, No. 4,816, for 10 Cents.

The skirt in walking length that is tucked or pleated to be flat about, and for a short distance below, the hips while it provides ample fulness about the feet, continues a marked favorite of fashion, and is promised indefinite vogue. This one has special advantages, and is laid in tucks at both front and back, which give a box pleated effect, and in inverted pleats at each intervening side seam. The model is made from light weight Scotch cheviot, but all materials for suits and skirts are equally appropriate.

NO. 4,816—SIX GORED TUCKED SKIRT.

The quantity of material required for the medium size is seven yards 27 inches wide, five and one-quarter yards 44 inches wide or five yards 52 inches wide when material has figure or nap; five yards 27, four and one-half yards 44 or four yards 52 inches wide when material has neither figure nor nap.

The pattern, No. 4,816, is cut in sizes for a 22, 24, 26, 28 and 30 inch waist measure.

Each pattern will be sent to any address on receipt of 10 cents. Please give number and waist measure distinctly. Address Pattern Department, New-York Tribune. If in a hurry for pattern, send an extra two-cent stamp, and we will mail by letter postage in sealed envelope.

GOOD CHEER.

Have you had a kindness shown?
Pass it on.
'Twas not given for you alone—
Pass it on.
Let it travel down the years,
Let it wipe another's tears,
Till in heaven the deed appears—
Pass it on.

A SONG OF HARVEST.

O Painter of the fruits and flowers!
We thank thee for thy wise design
Whereby these human hands of ours
In Nature's garden work with thine.

And thanks that from our daily need
The joy of simple faith is born;
That he who smites the summer weed
May trust thee for the autumn corn.

Give fools their gold, and knaves their power;
Let fortune's bubbles rise and fall;
Who sows a field, or trains a flower,
Or plants a tree is more than all.

For he who blesses most is blest;
And God and man shall own his worth
Who toils to leave as his bequest
An added beauty to the earth.

And, soon or late, to all that sow
The time of harvest shall be given:
The flower shall bloom, the fruit shall grow,
If not on earth, at least in heaven.
—(John Greenleaf Whittier.

"THE GRANDEST DAY."

The Sunshine trolley party enjoyed by Avenue A branch, on the lower East Side, last Thursday, was declared by the president to be "the grandest day" in the lives of her members. For weeks the children had been anticipating this outing, although there was a fear in the hearts of some that they might not be able to go, for need of necessary apparel. But all these doubts were set at rest by the contents of a box sent from the office to the president. There were hats, dresses, aprons, shoes and stockings, so that every one was comfortably clad.

As this party was to go to Fort George in the morning, that a full day of sunshine might be enjoyed, the president received extra money to provide a substantial luncheon of meat and cheese sandwiches, cakes, tomatoes, fruit, lemonade, etc. The long ride in the trolley seemed a blissful experience of itself, but the music, the gayety of the throng and the entertainments of the side shows transported the children into new regions of delight. They wandered over the fields, ate luncheon under the trees, watched the boats in the river and then had their rides on the merry-go-round, and last of all, ice cream was served.

"The Sunshine," said one, "must be a fairy godmother, to give us such a good time."

"Yes," replied another, regretfully, "but we must wait a whole year for another outing. How I do wish they came oftener!"

The conductors smiled indulgently as the children sang the topical songs they learn so easily, and the few mothers and the aged grandmothers who were invited to join the party had one day's release from hard work, and they, too, were happy.

MANHATTAN, NO. 11.

Miss Olmstead, president of No. 11 branch, reports that Katherine Zessin and Elizabeth Howard have joined her branch, and, like the other members will be earnest and faithful in Sunshine work. Flowers have been sent to Mrs. G. Lander, on East Third-st., who wrote an appreciative reply, saying the flowers brought sunshine into her sad and lonely life. Flowers were also taken to another suffering invalid, who is crippled with rheumatism, and reading was sent to Miss Van Cleft on East Seventeenth-st. Some of the members of this branch are making bags for the "Little Mothers'" Christmas festival; two baby sacks and outing flannel for a gown have been provided for the mother with twins. Miss Olmstead writes:

"I have a case on hand where the mother, a widow, is making a brave struggle. She has two children, and I expect to send them to the country for a week, and that will help her out. She has some work now, but only enough to pay the rent. Awhile ago I gave her 50 cents of the Sunshine money, as she is very deserving. I got some shoes for the children, but a dollar or two would help her greatly. Next month I shall take some of our mothers on a trolley party."

MORE APPLES.

Dr. Patterson, president of the New Thought Society at Oscawana, N. Y., has kindly offered to give barrels and boxes of apples to T. S. S. branches whose addresses are furnished by the office. The T. S. S. has gladly accepted this offer, and has given addresses and will pay all express charges.

A SUNSHINY GIRL.

Little Frances, who lives in Second-ave., may well be called a "sunshiny girl." During the summer, whenever flowers were received at her home, she immediately took part of them to the suffering little children in the surgical ward at Bellevue Hospital. One little fellow, too weak even to hold a flower, said faintly, "Please put them on my pillow so I can smell them." Another kindly act performed by this little girl was much appreciated by several of these sick children. Whenever she had saved enough pennies to buy a pint of ice cream she took it to the ward, and little wan faces brightened at the thought of even having a taste of the luxury.

FULL ADDRESS REQUIRED.

The badge sent to Master Philip Shaw, son of the Rev. J. Balcom Shaw, of Chicago, and a member of the Young Travellers' branch, has been returned to the office. If a correct address is given the badge will be sent again.

REQUEST.

Will "A Well Wisher" in Elizabeth, N. J., please give the name of the Virginia member who "wished to be remembered," for the benefit of the office?

HAPPY EVERY DAY.

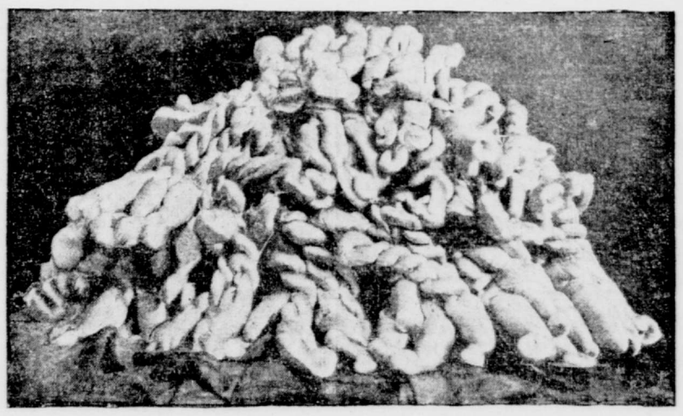
Sidney Smith cut the following from a newspaper and preserved it for himself: "When you rise in the morning form a resolution to make the day a happy one to a fellow creature. It is easily done; a left-off garment to the man who needs it; a kind word to the sorrowful; an encouraging expression to the striving—trifles in themselves as light as air—will do at least for the twenty-four hours. And if you are young, depend upon it, it will tell when you are old; and if you are old, rest assured it will send you gently and happily down the stream of time to eternity. By the most simple arithmetical sum, look at the result. If you send one person, only one, happily through each day, that is three hundred and sixty-five in the course of the year. And suppose you live forty years only after you commence that course of medicine, you have made 14,600 beings happy—at all events for a time."

ENGAGEMENT.

Mr. and Mrs. Charles Edward Smith, of Sound Beach, Conn., have announced the engagement of their eldest daughter, Miss Amanda Elizabeth, to Francis Kneeland Grain. Miss Smith comes from a long line of Colonial ancestry, being a Daughter of the American Revolution on both her father's and her mother's side. Mr. Grain is the son of the late Francis Halahan Grain, of Gibraltar, Spain, a banker and Japanese ware importer, and stepson of Judge Julius B. Curtis, of Stamford, Conn. Mr. Grain was educated in Germany, being a graduate of Heidelberg. It is said this will be a fall wedding.

SUSPICIOUS.

Estelle—I shuddered when he proposed.
Bertha—Was he so awkward?
Estelle—Oh, no. He did it so well.—(Detroit Free Press.



SILK REELED AT THE DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE FROM AMERICAN-GROWN COCOONS.

Punkah and Punkahwalas.

BY SHELLAND BRADLEY.

It was the beginning of May, and I had just come down from a month in the hills. After the glorious freshness of the higher latitude among the snows, the heat in Sumhanaggar seemed unbearable.

Nothing but a charming little note of welcome from Berengaria, with an invitation to tea at 4:30 o'clock, which I had found awaiting me on my arrival the night before, would have induced me to start out at such an absurdly early hour in the afternoon.

To my surprise Berengaria herself, apparently unconscious of the heat and the dust, was standing at the top of the veranda steps as I drove up. She was talking to the faithful David, still her right hand man and confidential manager. Behind him stood two scantily clad, low caste natives, who might have been grass cutters, punkahwalas, malis, or some other of the usual retinue of outdoor menials.

"So glad to see you back again," said Berengaria, as she gave me her hand and a charming smile. "Wonderfully cool, isn't it, for the time of the year?"

I looked at her doubtfully, but she was perfectly cool and serious, and regarding me with that calm, half pitying gaze with which a cool person always does regard a hot one.

"All right, David, these two men will do. Tell them they can begin work from to-night. I'm just engaging my night punkahwalas," she continued, turning to me.

I remarked that they both looked capable, though I privately thought they looked old and sleepy, but I would have said anything just then to get inside under a punkah.

"Perhaps they are a bit old," said Berengaria, regarding them critically, as if divining my thoughts. "But I make a point of never engaging young punkahwalas; there's no keeping them awake. You are quite sure these men will pull well, David?"

"These men giving missus no trouble," David assured her in his best manner, with his confident, protective smile.

"And you're quite sure they don't work somewhere else all day and won't drop off to sleep at night when they ought to be pulling my punkah?"

"These men giving missus no trouble," David reassured her, his tolerant smile expanding. "David seeing these men sleeping all day and pulling punkah all night."

"Well, I only hope they will," said Berengaria less confidently than usual and doubtless mindful of former experiences, whereupon David and the newest addition to Berengaria's household salaamed and disappeared round the corner of the veranda. Just then a kitmutgar, to my infinite joy, announced that tea was ready, and we passed into the drawing room discoursing of the ways and doings of punkahwalas.

For a moment I didn't notice it, and then the awful truth overwhelmed me. There was no punkah in the room! The very thought of sitting down to drink tea in that heat without a punkah was appalling. My head felt fit to burst already. It was only with an effort that I realized that Berengaria was still talking as gayly as ever.

"Don't you think so?" I was dimly conscious of her asking me suddenly, as she came to a pause.

"Boys require too much sleep," I remember her saying as she sat down to pour out tea. "Last year I engaged boy punkahwalas, but never again. They ruined sleep and temper alike, and I had to learn abusive words in the vernacular to make them pull at all."

"Who added to your vocabulary?" I asked, remembering Berengaria's scanty acquaintance with the language.

"Well," said Berengia slowly, as she passed me a cup of tea, "I knew it was no use asking the commissioner, because he never says anything stronger than 'oolu,' and that has no effect at all upon a sleepy punkahwala. So I had to resort to David. I asked him what one native called another when he was very angry, and he gave me quite a long list of words. I learned them off by heart, and used them as a kind of volley whenever the punkah stopped."

I trembled to think what Berengaria had called those punkahwalas.

"Did you know what the words meant?" I asked tentatively, sipping my tea.

"Not in the least," said Berengaria with cheerful irresponsibility, helping herself liberally to sugar and cream.

"Didn't you ask David what the words meant?" I ventured.

"No: why should I?" Berengaria laughed softly. "The punkah always went on again violently before I'd finished. What more could any one want?"

Having once heard David abusing the ayah, I feared that Berengaria must have wounded those unfortunate punkahwalas in their tenderest feelings, besides abusing all their relations to the third and fourth generations. I hinted something of the kind to Berengaria.

"Will you drive me to tea with Mrs. Lovejoy to-morrow afternoon?" she asked suddenly, changing the subject. "She has asked a few people to tea to see her new house, and told me to be sure and bring you if you were back."

Mrs. Lovejoy was the wife of a planter and man of many trades, whose money had been made in the good old days, and who had just built a fine two storied house at the end of the station.

"I must start early, though, as I've promised to be at a meeting at the Padre's at 5 o'clock," Berengaria said, as she buttoned up her gloves. "So be sure you are here at 3:30."

Of course, if Berengaria wanted to start at that abnormal hour on a hot day, it was not for me to say "No." I groaned in spirit, but arrived punctually on the following afternoon.

It was evident, as we drove up to the Lovejoys', that we were early. The house had that shut-up, all-asleep look that most Indian houses have in the afternoon during the hot weather. A chaprassie lay full length in a shady corner, and not another sign of life was to be seen, save a punkahwala lazily pulling the punkah of an upstairs room. I helped Berengaria out of the tum-tum, and she passed on up the steps into the veranda, while I turned to give some directions to the syce. Suddenly I heard Berengaria's voice uplifted in unmistakably angry tones.

"Oh! how dare you!" I caught the words spoken in a kind of breathless staggered amazement. "Oh! how dare you!"

I turned in surprise and alarm, and ran quickly up the steps. Berengaria was standing in a threatening manner over the punkahwala a little further off along the veranda.

"Oh! how dare you!" she repeated again, stamping her foot. It seemed as if further speech failed her.

I looked on in surprise, trying to grasp the situation. The punkahwala, with a frightened look, was crouching on the ground, and the punkah rope hung loose in his hand. He had quite forgotten his present duties in alarm at the sudden apparition of this wrathful memsahib.

"Don't you see!" Berengaria cried, turning to me and pointing at him fiercely with the parasol, "Don't you see! That's my night punkahwala!"

Then I understood the cause of Berengaria's wrath. The night punkahwala she had engaged the day before was the Lovejoy's' day punkahwala!

"That's why you went to sleep at least a dozen times last night, you budmash!" hissed Berengaria, fairly beside herself with rage, and swinging her parasol threateningly in the air.

I swung round quickly, and took an interest in the palms and crotons. If the Commissioner memsahib should be had up for marpit, I thought it just as well to be able to swear that I hadn't seen it.

Then, all in a twinkling, as I looked the other way, it happened. An irate voice from above—I recognized it as Mr. Lovejoy's—demanded, in no complimentary language, why the punkah had stopped again. There was the rapid sound of a jhilmil flung back, and the sharp splash of a volume of water through the air. I turned round in horror, just in time to catch a glimpse of an empty jug and a livid, horrified face at the window, and the whole force of the water descending, straight as a die, on Berengaria's head. Simultaneously the parasol descended on the back of the punkahwala, and the contents of the jug on the Commissioner memsahib.

With a faint shriek Berengaria jumped back. For a moment she was dazed. Then, in a flash, as she caught sight of her soaked, bedraggled garments, she realized her awful fate.

"Quick!" she gasped; "take me home. No one must see me like this!"

I sprang down the steps to recall the tum-tum. Fortunately, the horse had not been unharnessed, and in two minutes we were speeding down the drive on our way home.

"Drive quickly," said Berengaria, putting up the pale blue sunshade that, fortunately, had escaped the deluge. "I must get home and change and back again as soon as I can."

I admired Berengaria's courage. It was soon destined to receive a shock. Just at the gates we met the Rudest Woman in Asia driving in. Berengaria cowered under the pale blue sunshade.

"What! Are you just gone away?" cried the Rudest Woman, peering suspiciously under the lowered parasol, as the tum-tums dashed past. Fortunately, there was no time to answer, but the thought of the Rudest Woman's triumph when the story of her humiliation was regaled to her at tea made Berengaria furious.

"Stop!" she cried to me, as we swung round a corner of the road just out of sight of the house. "Quick! Have you got a pencil and a scrap of paper?"

I drew up by the side of the road, and fortunately had both. Berengaria scribbled something on a loose sheet of my pocketbook, folded it up and addressed it to Mr. Lovejoy. The syce took it with many hurried instructions as to the method of its delivery, and to waste no time. What Berengaria said in that note I never knew, but the story of that little scene in the veranda never got abroad. We sat in the tum-tum waiting for the syce's return.

"I suppose my hat's ruined," said Berengaria dolefully, yet with an appealing look at me to say it wasn't.

I looked at it doubtfully. The chiffon confection I had so much admired not an hour ago hung limp and feeble, all askew.

"Oh, no!" I said hastily, catching Berengaria's eye, as I surveyed it. I felt that anything was better than the truth just then. "It will be all right when it's dry," I added hopefully.

Fortunately the syce returned before Berengaria was able to demand further sacrifices of truth on my part. I devoted all my attention to driving back to the house in record time. Berengaria was unwontedly silent. Almost before I had pulled up she had jumped out and run up the veranda steps.

"I won't be five minutes," she said, as she disappeared inside the bungalow.

To my infinite surprise she was back again trim and smart in another bewitching hat and costume, in something very little, if at all, over the five minutes.

I drove back rapidly again, so that we might not be noticeably late. We arrived in excellent time. Only half a dozen people were there before us, prominent among whom was the Rudest Woman in Asia and the new Deputy Commissioner, whom Berengaria had described, after their first meeting, as "an unwashed-looking little man, who wore pince-nez and frayed trousers." Berengaria sailed in gracefully, though I knew she was in a state of terror that her adventure might have leaked out. I saw at once, from the Rudest Woman's face, that we were safe so far. Presently, to my horror, I heard some one across the room mention the word punkahwala. A glance, however, at Berengaria's face reassured me. She herself had led up to the subject, she confessed to me afterward. She said she had felt irresistibly drawn to talk of punkahwalas—partly to see if her terrible adventure were known.

"I once knew of an engagement that was broken off, owing to a punkahwala," Berengaria was saying.

"Oh!" I said, looking round quickly, as I felt Berengaria's imagination was running away with her, "You make a mistake if you refer to my little experience. I hadn't proposed."

"But you almost had," urged Berengaria, as if pleading with me not to deprive the story of half its interest.

"I had made up my mind to do it next day," I admitted.

"I've always thought," said Berengaria, "that you've never told me quite all the story."

The Rudest Woman stopped "making up violently" to the new Deputy Commissioner, as some people put it, and thrust in her word.

"Do tell us all about it," she said.

"Well, it was like this," I began, as I saw they expected to hear the story. "It is all so long ago, and the lady, now happily married at home, used to tell the tale herself, so that I don't feel any compunction in relating the circumstances.

"I was staying with the lady's family, and had been out to a bachelor dinner at the club, returning home about 11 o'clock."

"Extraordinarily early for a bachelor dinner," murmured the Rudest Woman.

"As it happened," I continued, ignoring the interruption, "every one had gone to bed, and not a servant was to be seen in the veranda."

"You don't mean to say," exclaimed the Rudest Woman, "that you couldn't find your room?"

"No," I said, with a touch of hauteur, annoyed at these repeated interruptions, "it was my punkahwala that was not to be found. It was impossible to sleep on a baking hot night, such as that was, without a punkah. I couldn't call out and wake the whole house at that time of night, and a search round the dark veranda was only productive of two punkahwalas, both at work, pulling at different rooms at either end of the house. I could think of nothing else to do, so, in a rash moment, I took the rope from the hands of one of them, and sent him off to find my punkahwala, with strict injunctions to hurry back. The man ran off, and I stood pulling the punkah. It was rather amusing at first, and I pulled so strongly and vigorously that I felt the individual inside, if awake, must be wondering at the sudden energy."

"What a joke one might have had," said the Rudest Woman.

"It came to be something more than a joke," I said, "as I went on pulling, and the wretched man I had sent off didn't return. It grew horribly monotonous, and my arm began to ache badly. I felt tired and sleepy, and in a weak moment I sat down on the punkahwala's box. I suddenly realized that I was absolutely at the man's mercy. What if he didn't come back at all! I should have to sit pulling that punkah all night! It seemed ages that he had been away. I distinctly remember nodding once or twice and pulling myself together, and then nothing more until I awoke to a whack on the head, and an apparition in the doorway."

Everybody laughed.

"Who was it?" asked one of the guests breathlessly.

"It was a lady!" I said hesitatingly.

"The lady," murmured Berengaria.

"What! Not the one you were going to propose to next day?" insinuated the Rudest Woman in Asia.

"Yes."

"Oh, how interesting!"

There was a pause. I'm sure every one wanted to hear more, but was afraid of showing undue curiosity. The Rudest Woman maintained her reputation for intrepidity.

"What did she look like?" she asked.

The question took me by surprise.

"Oh, something white and lacy," I stammered uncertainly.

Berengaria blushed, but the Rudest Woman evidently wanted to hear more.

"And you didn't propose next day?" she said.

"No."

Again there was a pause; again it was broken by the Rudest Woman:

"Won't you tell us why?"

I hesitated. Berengaria stepped into the breach.

"He has been known to say that one taste of that lady's shoe and tongue was enough," she answered for me.

"Was that all?" asked the Rudest Woman, in a tone of evident disappointment.

"Her language was rather strong, even to a punkahwala," I pleaded.

"And the shoe hurt?"

"It was an extremely well-directed blow," I admitted, "and, I fear, showed unmistakable signs of previous practice."

"I don't believe that's all," said the Rudest Woman, unconvinced.

I felt I was being pushed too far, and rose to put down my cup.

"That's all I've ever heard," murmured Berengaria, looking up at me doubtfully.

I smiled.

"I'm sure that's not all," exclaimed the Rudest Woman confidently.

There was an effective pause. I kept my eyes on the ground. The pause grew prolonged. I felt that it was the moment to speak.

"She wore what little hair she had in curl papers," I confessed.

Several ladies moved uneasily.

"That is really all," I added hastily.

But Berengaria blushed again, and rose to go. As we passed out, I caught one last sentence from the Rudest Woman in Asia's lips.

"Only to think," she was exclaiming ambiguously to the new Deputy Commissioner. "Only to think that that might happen to some women I know any night!"—(The Bystander.

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