TO BE FASHIONABLE THESE DAYS ONE MUST HAVE THE GRIP

It's the Popular Occupation of the Moment and Not to Sneeze Is to Be Out of the Picture

In the hands of the grip devil.

By JANE DIXON.

IT is to k-e-r-c-h-I-g-e-t-chew! To be more explicit, it is to sneeze. Or if you wish to be technical, it is the grip.

The grip, you understand, is the popular occupation of the moment. To come right out in the open and confess you have not had, have not or are not about to have the grip is an admission of weakness. Right away you are a bromide. You are out of the picture, apart from the party, and that is all there is to it.

But why the grip?

Ah, there you are—why? If you can answer that question you are worth a million in money to any city between the oceans and the lakes and the Gulf. A while ago it was appendicitis. To be really smart you must romp around this mortal sphere minus that part of your geography called the appendix.

Appendicitis came to be horribly common. It was fully as common as were white fox furs last summer. The masses took it up, and then, quite naturally, it was out. No fashionable fifty dollar a fling doctor could mention it without a blush, or at least a flush. When it reached the point where he felt himself moved to place a written apology under the appendicitis item on his yearly holdup the disease was dropped.

Something simply had to come along and fill the gap. What should it be? What?

Then from out the unknown loped a queer, prickly, perverse sort of infinitesimal bug—the grip germ. No sooner had this bug sighted a nice juicy human being than it knew it had found its place. It alighted and propagated, and it has been alighting and propagating ever since, as the Amalgamated Order of Sneezers will heartily attest.

Before going further into the absorbing subject one question looms large on the horizon.

Why does the aforesaid bug pick on the big, strong, full of health folks first? It looks as if the bug were a poor kind of matchmaker, because by picking on the weak, anemic mortals it could get a decision in a hurry. But no, the bug is game. It wafts along until some unsuspecting athlete with bulging muscles and broad chest happens by, and then it proceeds to prove to the satisfaction of everybody and the utter rout of the health fans that they are all wrong.

Take Mr. Christy Mathewson, justly famous adjunct of baseball, twirling star of the Giants and delight of the firms dealing in get healthy quick goods. Inasmuch as Mr. Mathewson can be lured within four walls only long enough to sleep, and when he is not working on the well known "fadeaway" he is scampering over the golf links or chasing a poor, inoffensive little quail to its lair, the reasonable conclusion would be that no germ would have nerve enough to challenge him.

Not a bit of it. Just to prove it was no respecter of persons the grip lighted on "Matty" and gave him ten or so of the most terrible days he remembers, not excepting the losing days of those world series in which he was a featured performer. The fresh air fan fell along with those addicted to shaded lights, smoke clouds and the fumes of pink cocktails.

Apropos of which, there is a certain man who draws funny pictures for the papers, and there is his chauffeur—(yes, he is that good). In the process of garnering notions this comic artist cruises among the cafes and cabarets freely, a course which keeps him up early mornings. He is not a convert to the creed of out of doors. Most of his fresh air is taken between the stoop of his domicile and the step of his limousine. When the temperature of the room is under 80 he begins to complain about the stoking and mentions to the landlord that it might not be a bad idea to change firemen.

Did the grip get him? It did not. It flew right past him and settled down on the broad left shoulder of the chauffeur who loafs outside and gets full of fresh air and health while his employer is within courting the demons of disease across the iced glass.

It seems to have a penchant for the healthy ones, does the grip.

"Beware of the sneezer," warns the daily press.

The other day in the lobby of a fashionable hotel a man of ample proportions was strolling nonchalantly among the groups, like the harmless person he was. Suddenly he stopped and wrinkled his nose a bit. Then he stared vacantly into space, much as do too many movie actors when the director calls, "Hold the picture." Tiny wrinkles began to spread their nets about his eyes. He weaved gently forward, gently backward. Then, with one herculanean effort which seemed to pull his body into a knot and his feet from the floor, he negotiated a mighty explosion.

"Gr—r—woo—o—who is she!"

A bomb could do no better. The groups were falling over each other in an effort to leave the sneezer the centre of as broad an empty circle as possible. By the time he had wrinkled up the edge of his nose preparatory to the second sneeze the lobby was practically empty of all save clerks and hirelings, and even they were discreetly concealed behind whatever was handiest.

Yes, indeed. Once you get it you are doomed to be a solitary soul wandering down the burning paths of chugged heads, leaden limbs, aching bones, scratching throats and flourishing fever blisters, alone and weary in a land of pills and phials.

Yet some of the stung find the grip bug a more pleasant companion than others. There is a man to my own personal knowledge who absolutely refused to stop having it. He begged to go on and on. He even went so far as to throw down the covers when the watch was off duty so he could catch a fresh supply. He vowed that life to him could hold no greater joy than a continuous case of grip. Oh, that he might have it forever! and all that sort of gush.

But you should have seen that man's nurse. Julia Sanderson? Plain. Elsie Ferguson? Dowdy. Mary Pickford? Insipid!

The patient was gripped, there is no doubt about it. He was gripped and he liked it. From the last report, which was not written on a regulation nurse's report blank at all, but on a telegram to the family immediately after the ceremony, it looked as if they might live happily ever after.

If men might select their own nurses the prevalence of grip would increase 50 per cent. This applies also to the women, who may have ideas of their own regarding the qualifications of a physician—you know, tall and young and handsome with a cheery voice and a smile to match it—and not too much devoted to his art.

"How are you going to know the grip germ when you meet it?" is the question being chorused through the country.

You do not know it—that is, you try not to know it. If the creature rushes right up and insists upon claiming an acquaintance, of course you must accept it, but never under any circumstances introduce it to your friends.

Your enemies? Yes. There is no more subtle way to wreak vengeance on their unworthy heads than to slip them the grip. If you have one of the germs in captivity, sneak up behind the enemy and throw it in his sleeve. Then run as fast as a Mexican soldier, busy retreating.

However, I can imagine what the grip germ must be like. Having known it but briefly, and beaten it off by a fusillade of pills and potions, the mental photograph is of a woolly creature with one fire-red eye glowing in the middle of its head, the eye emitting white-hot sparks whenever it blinks. Hundreds of tiny feet are charged with pain-producing electricity, as you know when grippie old dear goes around your system on a scamper.

Just between the forepaws is a set of magic saws which the creature uses when navigating in the throat. Atop of the head is the equivalent of a 12 inch gun, which can be trained to carry pain-producing projectiles to any part of the body. When the germ gets to working in good shape [illegible] never ceases its rapid fire.

A favorite indoor sport of the fellow is setting up his own orchestra, consisting of millions of sheets of copper, tin and iron, and beating on them all at once with a hammer. The head is the camping ground of the merry musician, and the symphonies are emphasized by discharging dynamite bombs directly beneath the top of the victim's cranium.

If you are a member in good standing of the grip club you can probably add your own details to this rather meagre sketch of one of the most dangerous wild animals at large.

Fellow gripites may sneer at the mention of silver linings in connection with the prevailing dark cloud of distress. Nevertheless there is a silver lining, a nice, glittery, shimmery silver, somewhat tarnished from use, perhaps, but as good as new.

This lining is the possibilities of grip in the way of an alibi. It is a world beater among alibis. You can use it as often as you please and it never fails to work.

"I haven't gone to a place I didn't want to go, or done a thing I didn't want to do since it came into vogue," chuckled one of the few who have escaped the pangs. "The very mention of the word grip lets me out. No argument. No careful fiction that sounds so fishy as you weave it over the telephone that you know the person at the other end of the wire is calling you a fighting name.

"And the best bet of all is that once you mention it you need go no further. The 'Not Wanted' sign is hung out without even so much as an expression of sympathy or a hope for your return to health and happiness in the near future. You can be a regular little Robinson Crusoe right here on Manhattan Isle if you feel so inclined.

"I can't possibly, go, I have the grip," lisps the sweet young thing when Daddy Wealthyman rings her up regarding a certain engagement. Whereupon he banks her room with orchids and sends many burnt offerings to while away her weary hours of exile. S. Y. T. did have the grip but not the kind Daddy thought.

New York is not the exclusive playground of the epidemic. It is getting along quite as well out in Ypsilant, Mich., and they do say the physicians in Yazoo City, Miss., are weary from snapping rubber bands around yellow bills.

Our national cheer is "ker-choo, ker-choo! ker-choo!" The M. Ds. are leading the cheering.

Now they come out and say it isn't grip at all, but something more intricate. They do not know what this is and if they do they intend to keep secret and let you read about it on a itemized bill of particulars. Only it isn't grip, remember that.

It may not be, but one thing it is, it is what Sherman said about war.

That grippy sneeze.

And Why Does That Pugnacious Germ Tackle the Big Ones With All the Bravado of a U Boat?

All the delights of the season.

NEWS OF THE WINTER RESORTS

LAKEWOOD.

LAKEWOOD, N. J., Jan. 22.—Visitors to Lakewood are enjoying the best skating and sleigh riding the resort has known in years. Ice on Lake Carasaljo is five inches thick, and to do away with the rough spots occasioned by the snow the bonifaces of the resort arranged with the water company to flood one end of the lake, and the extreme cold froze the water as fast as it was put on. The snow which fell on Sunday covered the ground evenly and made perfect sleighing. Straw rides have been quite the vogue, as the evenings were made bright by a full moon. The regular schedule of dances was carried out at the hotels and Country Club during the week, but the outdoor sports were more alluring.

Members of society turned out in force to witness the production of "Twelfth Night" in All Saints' parish house early in the week. It was given under the auspices of the Woman's Guild of the church. The committee in charge was composed of Mrs. S. K. de Forest, Mrs. Tunis G. Bergen, Miss Cornelia Schwartz and Mrs. Charles E. Brugler. Among those taking part were Mrs. Bergen, the Misses Louise Downer, Sara Macias, Helene Emerson, Augusta de Forest, Peggy de Forest, Peggy Lynch, Helen Wallace, Paula Pagelow, Sygna Conly and Dorothy Tracy. Masters Everett Le Compte, George de Forest, Cheever Clark, David Schwartz, Paul Newman, Payne Hoffman, Alfred Sykes, John H. Vickers and Amory Parmentier.

A number of friends of Mr. and Mrs. Elbert Francis Baldwin were entertained at her home Saturday evening by listening to an informal talk by Stanley Washburn, Mrs. Baldwin's brother. His topic was "Conditions in Russia," from which country he has just returned. He was special war correspondent for the London *Times* with the Russian army. Among those present were the Rev. and Mrs. Charles E. Brugler, Mr. and Mrs. H. O. Walker, Dr. and Mrs. Charles L. Lindley, Mr. and Mrs. Henry Lloyd Herbert, Mr. and Mrs. Archibald D. Davis, Mr. and Mrs. S. K. de Forest, Mr. and Mrs. Tunis G. Bergen, Dr. W. G. Schauffler, Mr. and Mrs. C. P. Butler, the Misses Downer, Miss Eleanor Ferris, Miss Sara Compton, Miss Dorothy Tracy, Miss Washburn, Miss Hately, Miss Duston and Miss Lillian Baldwin.

The villa colony was shocked on Saturday with the announcement of the death of Mrs. Curtis Coe Bean, mother of Mrs. Gerard Romaine. Mrs. Bean had her winter home in Lakewood for many years and was prominent in social and charitable circles.

Mrs. George J. Gould has tendered the use of the Casino at Georgian Court for a public meeting in the interest of "preparedness." This is the largest building in Lakewood and a large attendance is anticipated. The date of the meeting will be announced in the near future.

The French War Relief of Lakewood will hold a charity ball for the benefit of this worthy work at the Laurel House Saturday evening, February 5. Returning guests at the Laurel House who will include Mrs. Frederick Dent Grant of Washington, who will spend the remainder of the season here, Herbert M. Forrest, who has been spending a few weeks at Palm Beach, also returned to the hotel on Tuesday.

Several members of the Lambs Club of New York spent the week end at the Laurel-in-the-Pines. They played golf at the Country Club until the storm broke on Sunday. In the party were Florence Ziegfeld, Jr., J. D. Rockwell, R. S. Richardson, Mortimer Shay and J. F. Zimmerman.

A reception dance was given at the Palmer Wednesday evening by Col. George H. Thompson of New York. Among his house guests were members of the social set of New York, Philadelphia, Washington and Baltimore.

Among those entertaining at the Country Club this week were Mrs. Frederick A. Potts, Mrs. Archibald J. McClure, Mr. and Mrs. George Kingsland and Miss Dorothy Tracy.

WHITE SULPHUR SPRINGS.

WHITE SULPHUR SPRINGS, W. Va., Jan. 21.—The Greenbrier Slangkalkers are having a week of unique thrills. The merry-go-round on ice was installed Tuesday and the formal opening took place by moonlight the same night. The sled is rather high and snug and quaint in appearance. The pole is long and securely anchored and the skaters who furnish the propelling power work up speed at a tremendous rate. Until one gets used to whirling around in dizzy circles he generally holds his breath and hopes for the best.

Mr. and Mrs. Larz Anderson, who came down from Boston a fortnight ago to take the cure, left for Washington, D. C., on Thursday to spend the remainder of the winter.

Mr. and Mrs. M. Sergey Friede of Petrograd, who came down at the holiday time, have gone on to Palm Beach. They will stop at White Sulphur Springs on their way north in the spring.

Mr. and Mrs. Pliny Fisk have left for their country place on Jekyl Island, Ga. H. L. Denny came down from New York to spend the week end with him.

Mr. and Mrs. E. C. Douglas have arrived from the Plaza, New York, for an extended stay at the Greenbrier.

Mr. and Mrs. J. Howard Slocum left for New York on Tuesday and sailed Thursday on the steamship Mexico for Nassau. Later they will go to Havana, returning by Palm Beach and Miami. They will be back at the Greenbrier about the middle of February.

Mrs. E. M. McBrier and Mrs. F. J. Hutchinson of Montclair, N. J., are at the Greenbrier, taking the cure.

Mr. and Mrs. J. Seph Cow. came down from New York the first of the week.

Recent arrivals at the Greenbrier include Dr. and Mrs. Benjamin Bergen and George B. Creveling of New York.

AUGUSTA.

AUGUSTA, Ga., Jan. 22.—The winter rush to Augusta is on, and from now until the close of Partridge Inn, May 1, rooms will be at a premium, for as the fame of this hotel spreads greater numbers of winter travellers write early in the season for reservations.

Of the greatest interest to hundreds of people who come here principally to participate in the golf will be the announcement that the course laid out five years ago and worked on constantly since will be in readiness for the players this season. It is one of the most picturesque courses in the South. Tennis is also a great drawing card, and both the courts at Partridge Inn and also the Country Club will be the scene of many spirited contests during the season. Miss Dorothy Whitehouse and Miss Edna Lory of New York, who are enthusiastic golfers and lovers of all outdoor sports, are expected next week and will spend the winter at the Inn, accompanied by Mrs. E. T. Dillsworth, also of New York.

Mrs. C. Olney of New York arrived last week and will remain during the season.

The Baroness de Kuttleston of London, England, arrived Saturday and will remain throughout the winter.

Mrs. Winifred Earnest Eaton and daughters, Miss Dorothy Eaton and Miss Phillis Eaton, of East Orange, N. J., arrived Sunday to spend the season at the Inn.

Mr. and Mrs. A. B. Holden of New York arrived Saturday, and as they are great golf enthusiasts, spend much of their time upon the links of the Augusta Country Club.

Mr. and Mrs. Chauncey Murphy of New York are to be among the well known February arrivals at Partridge Inn.

ASHEVILLE.

ASHEVILLE, N. C., Jan. 22.—It is a rare thing for Asheville society to enjoy skating, but the visitors and townspeople were delighted to have an opportunity for two days during the week when the ice was thick enough for the fashionable sport. Gay parties with improvised skating togs were made up from the guest colony at Battery Park and made the most of a golden opportunity. The weather after the third day is again warm and the air delightfully crisp. The links at the Country Club are being put in an excellent condition and an early spring tournament is attracting the attention of golfers generally. The cabaret dance last Saturday night at the Battery Park took on the proportions of a ball, the attendance was so large.

Among the prominent New Yorkers arriving at the Battery Park in the last few days are Mr. and Mrs. Edward Y. Hodges, Matthew J. Smith, Mr. and Mrs. W. E. Rudge, Mr. and Mrs. J. E. Huggins, Mrs. George Garretson, G. De Wight Garrison and Col. A. E. Dick.

ORMOND.

ORMOND BEACH, Fla., Jan. 22.—A granite stone with a handsome bronze tablet on it bearing the inscription, "The John Anderson Highway," which was given by the late Clarence W. Seamans, of Brooklyn, N. Y., has been received at Ormond Beach and set up in front of the hotel. Mr. Seamans was a warm friend and admirer of John Anderson, so long the senior partner of the firm of Anderson & Price, who built and managed the Ormond Hotel before Henry M. Flagler made it a part of the Florida East Coast System by taking it over and building several additions to it.

Among the New York arrivals this week are Mr. and Mrs. C. D. Vail, Mr. and Mrs. J. G. Hazard, Mr. and Mrs. James A. Smith, Mr. and Mrs. Charles Brown, Mrs. William Frost, Mrs. John Jones, Wilbur T. French, Mr. and Mrs. John Nesbit and Mr. and Mrs. Carl Greening.

HOT SPRINGS, VA.

HOT SPRINGS, Va., Jan. 22.—The January colony at the Homestead, which is an unusually large one, is occupying itself with the cure, golf and horseback riding. The tub and spout baths in water of 106 degrees, the temperature at which it emerges from the earth in natural springs, and the massage and electricity which make up the bulk of the treatment are a luxury in themselves, aside from their curative value in rheumatic and nervous disorders, and supplemented by outdoor exercise the days pass pleasantly and quickly.

Among those from New York occupying themselves principally with the cure this week are Mr. Edwin A. McAlpin, who is planning a trip to Honolulu next month; Mrs. J. Wright Brown and her mother, Mrs. George Massey; Mr. and Mrs. John Cort and August Luchow.

Mrs. Thomas J. Preston, Jr., of Princeton, who was Mrs. Grover Cleveland, arrived at the Homestead this week with Prof. Preston and the two spent several days here on their way to Key West, where they will be the guests of Commodore Benedict on board his yacht Oneida. The party will also include H. H. Preston and Mr. and Mrs. T. H. Hastings of New York.

QUEBEC.

QUEBEC, Canada, Jan. 22.—The gay social life in Quebec this winter, as the world's sports headquarters, lures many Americans here, and the young officers are finding their last days in Canada filled to the brim between study for their military examinations and the demands of society in the ancient city.

Over 3,000 people were on Dufferin Terrace on Sunday afternoon, when before a moving picture company there was a rally of all the snowshoe clubs of Quebec and Point Levis in their blanket costumes.

Most of the American visitors were in evidence at the great hockey match at the Arena on Wednesday when the Canadians met the Quebec team.

Arrivals from New York at the Chateau Frontenac this week include Mr. and Mrs. P. C. Shoul, Mr. and Mrs. James R. Davidson, H. L. Brown, H. C. Eichold, Mrs. John J. Doyle, Clarence Stewart, Mr. and Mrs. O. Schultz and the Rev. J. H. Southwick.

AIKEN.

AIKEN, S. C., Jan. 22.—The season is now well under way here and in another ten days practically the entire winter colony will have arrived for the winter.

The week has been divided between polo and golf, with a few informal hunts with the Hitchcock pack and several shoots.

The season's tournaments at the Palmetto Golf Club will start early next month and from then on until the annual Southern Cross tournament early in April the programme will be among the most interesting of the winter resorts, with a number of crack society players as star features.

F. Ambrose Clark, Gifford A. Cochran and Devereux Milburn have sent a number of their polo ponies down, while others of the players will depend upon F. H. Post and E. W. Hopping, whose stables have been here in training for a month or more.

Mr. and Mrs. Joseph Sampson Stevens of New York will arrive and open their cottage here in a day or two. Mr. and Mrs. C. Oliver Iselin are in Washington en route here. Hopelands, their home here, one of the snow places, is being put in readiness for their arrival next week.

Mr. and Mrs. Arthur Scott Burden have opened Dogwood cottage, the Taintor place, which they have leased for the season.

Mrs. J. C. Mallery and Garrick Mallery are again occupying the small cottage adjoining the F. O. Beach place, while their big estate here is being put in readiness for the arrival of Mr. and Mrs. Henry Rodgers Winthrop, who will spend their second winter in it.

BELLEAIR.

BELLEAIR, Fla., Jan. 22.—On Monday afternoon the young folks who are spending the winter at Bellair gave the first one of a series of tea dances. Mr. and Mrs. J. M. Halpin, who have recently closed their season at the Waldorf-Astoria, managed the affair and four pieces of the Fenrich Orchestra furnished the music. While the tea dances are an especial feature for the young people, all the dancing set were invited.

Among the dancers were: Miss Anna Thibaut of New York and her brother, Frank Thibault; the Misses Dorothy and Elizabeth Davidge of Short Hills, N. J., and D. B. Fulton of New York.

This week brought to the Belleview an unusual number of distinguished business men who wanted to try out the golf links of the Belleair Country Club. On Sunday morning H. C. Frick and a party of his friends arrived in Mr. Frick's private car. Members of Mr. Frick's party were: Mr. and Mrs. N. S. Meldrum, John P. Grier of New York, C. S. Carstairs of London, England; H. C. Leeds and Bryce Allan of Boston.

Usually when George Ade reaches Belleair the wiles of golf lure him away from his literary work, but this year he is so engrossed in writing a new contribution to humor that he divides up each day between work and golf.

Mrs. S. T. Fulton of New York and her son, D. B. Fulton, will spend the winter at Belleair, while young Mr. Fulton recuperates from a too strenuous year at Yale.

Mrs. H. D. Saxton, the wife of Mr. Saxton, manager of the Belleview, arrived at Belleair this week with Mr. and Mrs. Saxton's little daughter, Miss Thirza Jane Saxton.

Among the arrivals for the week from New York at the Belleview are: J. Townsend Russell, Hamilton K. Kerr, Mrs. W. C. Connor, T. B. Howard, John P. Grier, J. R. Cramer, James Shevvan, the Misses Shevvan, Mr. and Mrs. J. F. Matthew, Mr. and Mrs. R. E. Thibaut, Miss Anna Thibaut, Frank Thibaut, Mrs. Lewis Luckenbeck, Dr. J. Dennis O'Hagan and Mr. and Mrs. C. L. Bausher of New York.

PALM BEACH.

PALM BEACH, Fla., Jan. 22.—Opening activities at the golf club, where the New Year tournament, first of the winter series, was played, divided interest this week with fishing and yachting, for the gay round of social diversions for which the resort is so famous can hardly be said to have started until to-night, when the Beach Club opened. Arrival lists at the hotel, however, increased steadily throughout the week and there will be a big crowd on hand by next Sunday.

Friends of Harry Whitney, the Arctic explorer, say they are expecting him here in a few days on his honeymoon. He was married last Saturday in Madison, N. J., to Mrs. Eunice C. Kenison, a daughter of A. G. Chesebro.

E. Clarence Jones and Russel G. Colt arrived this week at the Breakers on the last of several dates that had been set for their coming and the former got a reception that must have been gratifying. Mr. Jones for several seasons up to two winters ago, when he met with an accident which has kept him away until now, was by all odds the most talked of man of the place because of his lavish entertaining.

Whether Mrs. Henry M. Flagler, who has just reopened Whitehall after an absence of two years following her husband's death, will do much entertaining there this winter, is a question that concerns Palm Beach vitally and has been on everybody's lips. The estate is one of the finest show places of America and would give a wonderful setting for receptions, teas, dinners and dances such as used to be given there under the auspices of Frederick Townsend Martin some years ago before Mr. Flagler's illness.

Mr. and Mrs. Henry Carnegie Phipps were the first of the winter colony here to go hunting in the Everglades, which are reached a few miles inland. They started last Sunday by automobile for Stuart, where their yacht, the Seminole, has been stuck in the mud the last ten days, and there took Mr. Phipps's hounds on board. The hunting lasted three days and resulted in a lot of quail being bagged, but no deer were seen.

A slide in the canal near Stuart has resulted in holding up about a dozen yachts that were coming down through the inland waterways. These include S. L. Sturtevant's Gray Duck, Peg o' My Heart, a new 45 foot cruiser in which E. C. Eaton and party of New York are on their way down, and the Mur-Lydia, with D. C. Allen of Jamestown, the owner, on board. The boats will have to remain where they are until considerable dredging is done.

Col. and Mrs. William S. Paine arrived for the season a few days ago and are at the Poinciana. Mr. and Mrs. Stephen H. Brown arrived Tuesday and are at the Breakers. They were accompanied by Edward Brown and joined Mr. and Mrs. John C. King here.

Lord Aberdeen, former Governor-General of Canada, and Lady Aberdeen will spend a fortnight or so here beginning February 6. They have been at the Virginia Hot Springs most of the fall and are now in New York.

John Pullman of Brooklyn has the distinction of having taken the first large shark caught here this winter. The shark put up a two hour fight and had to be despatched with a rifle. It weighed about a thousand pounds and was 8 feet 2 inches long.

BUSINESS MEN WANT HUMANIZED LETTERS

"DEAR SIR: We beg to state that we are taking the liberty of sending our Mr. Jones——"

That was the way the letter written by the new correspondent began and that was as far as the manager read. He laid it down on his desk wearily.

"When a man writes like that," he said presently, "it's hopeless trying to train him. He was trained in the old fashioned business school and his mind runs in rats. I've been told that the Chinese have characters each of which means a whole sentence or a thought. This man should have been a Chinaman. It's like the old tune 'Now I take my pen in hand.' We're trying to get away from that."

These words express the complaint of a growing number of heads of business firms in New York city who are trying to lift their business correspondence out of the old fashioned and familiar stereotyped phrases and are having difficulty in finding correspondents who are able to inject personality into business letters.

"It's all a mistake to suppose that men become mere machines the moment they enter their business offices," said the head of a big mail order house, probably the biggest in the country. "I don't mean that you should write to a man in exclamations, like some of the newfangled advertisements, but I know it makes a difference to me whether I feel that I am being addressed by a mere machine or whether I feel that there is a human personality behind the letter I am reading. In one case it glides off my mind like the proverbial water off the goose's back and in the other I sit up and take notice. I am interested in finding out what the next sentence will be.

"However, with us the problem is even more pressing, for the thousands of letters we send out every day are not addressed to business men, but to people in the country and small provincial towns who don't write a dozen letters a year; but when they do write they put their whole souls into their letters. A stereotyped reply is likely to chill them.

"Formerly we used to answer all correspondence by machinery. One day one of our girls came to me with a letter. It was from some woman out in a little Western town. She ordered something from our catalogue, then wanted to know if the little old church still stood at the corner of a certain street. "Well, there wasn't any one in the office who knew about that church. What did I do? I sent a boy up town to find out all about it, and when we replied to that woman's letter there were two full paragraphs about that church.

"Again, we have women writing asking advice about furnishing their homes, about dress. One wanted to know whether we thought an shoe would match a certain skirt she was ordering from us. I spent twenty minutes answering that question myself after I had consulted with my wife. Now we have a woman who answers such questions specially. It pays, though it takes more time and requires a higher grade of correspondents."

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