

ON THE DECAY OF PRETTY MANNERS IN WOMEN

By HELEN MATHERS (Author of "Comin' thro' the Rye," &c.)

IS the decay of pretty manners in women nowadays, to put it plainly, to be found in the absence of prettiness in the women themselves? The streets are filled with fine, athletic girls, but the pretty little girl, with her smile, her blush, her little foot and hand, her gracious "ways," her thanks for some small service rendered, where is she?

She has vanished from the highways of the world, or it would seem that at her first fluttering essay into the open, she has been pounced on, and hidden away by greedy man for his own secret joy and pride, himself a willing slave to those winning arts that so much more appeal to his heart than the mannish habits, the cool insolence of the over-empowered, over-athletic girls of today.

For the dismal fact remains that as the health and growth of the female race advances, beauty recedes, becomes almost a lost quantity, as you may easily ascertain by going on foot for several successive days through the West End of London, passing in review the thousands of women driving, motoring, cycling, and on foot.

If during those days you see in all half a dozen faces that fulfill your idea of beauty in form, coloring and expression, you are fortunate, but the chances, one might almost say, the certainties are, that you will meet miles of tall, aggressive, striding lasses who contemptuously shoulder you out of their way, returning you cold glance for glance, or crowds of carefully made-up middle-aged women, whose attempts to attract your admiration are even more disagreeable than the total indifference to your good or bad opinion displayed by the "grenadiers" of the sex.

If you happen on a dewy-soft, modest, sweet little face, you may be pretty sure that it came straight from the country, and will shortly return there, for it is only in town that I affirm this rarity of beauty—the place where freedom of gait and thought is carried to such lengths that "I care for nobody no, not I. And nobody cares for me," may well appear to be the guiding motto of women. Men complain that when they offer some such slight act of courtesy to women as grandpa and even father offered as a matter of course, they do not receive one word of thanks or acknowledgment, consequently the pretty-mannered women (and they are yet to be found) have to suffer for the rudeness of their sisters—and are tarred with the same brush of man's disgust.

On the one hand you hear bitter complaints of decline in men's manners; on the other, men talk contemptuously of the change for the worse in women's; yet, when all is said and done, it is the mistress or the daughter of the house who gives the tone to the manners of the men who live in or visit it. Where the women are careless, immodest, ill-bred, mocking at all the gracious amenities and restraints of social and family life, there will be found men only too willing to let themselves go on in their company, gladly discarding those restraints that formerly hid their seamy side, as much from themselves as from others. Thus a moral support of incalculable value is withdrawn, for to leave off one's manners is equivalent to leaving changing one's clothes at the proper time, and just as a slovenly negligence of the person inevitably degrades and undermines it, so does a careless bearing tend to similar conduct, and rapid deterioration of character.

Briefly then, what is the reason of this falling off in good breeding in both women and men?

There are three reasons—of which this is the first and most important, that there are not enough men to go

round; thus a vast surplus of women have no chance of marriage and motherhood, which is the state for which they were born, nature having emphatically laid down the law that for every "ill" there should be a Jack, and so a chance of happiness afforded her.

Nothing tames and sweetens a woman like love; to be wooed, to be courted, to know herself first with one human being is the supreme joy, and though the woman without a lover may not be actually conscious of this want, will even fiercely deny its existence, still it is there, embittering and hardening her, till at last her speech, and gait correspond with the defiant, starved heart within her. Let the right man take the aggressive toward the most self-willed, the most self-contained woman of them all, and teach her love, and she will soften hour by hour before his eyes; love gives humility, endows with charm, her manner, informed by her heart, becomes gentle—this is the type of woman who treats man as an enemy because she secretly wants him as a lover, whereas the born old maid remains neutral and tepid all her life long, neither to be sweetened nor soured by man, since he does not enter into her scheme of existence.

There is, of course, a certain minority of women who honestly do not wish to marry, and mistrust all men, but again the question arises, have men sufficiently tried to overcome their prejudices, and do they not unduly flatter themselves on their brain and will power to live happily in a celibate state?

The woman who, looking back on a successful career that has had no love in it, counts herself happy, is not a woman at all, but a freak of nature, in which something warm and human has by accident been left out, rendering her frustrate and incomplete.

The second reason (and it is a very grave one) for the general discourtesy between the sexes, is the springing up in our midst of a class of women, always married, usually middle-aged, who refuse to grow old gracefully and decently, and whose manners may be described as carrying or fascinating, according to taste, but who will submit to any sort of treatment, brutality even, rather than let go of men who

take them about, amuse them, pay for their menus plasers, and give them generally what they call "a good time"—and at what a price!

Men are not good at classification, have not time to differentiate between women and women, thus the pure women are made to suffer for the fast, the flighty, the ridiculous, and can only withdraw into themselves, standing

apart from those who enjoy the pleasures flung to them by man's contemptuous hand, having indeed no taste for a familiarity that strikes at the very root of their self-respect and womanliness.

THE SLUMP OF A SLUMMER

By Nicholas Nemo

MRS. HELPINGHAND was strong on the uplifting of the oppressed and the downtrodden. She was firmly convinced that her mission in life was to go about doing good—generally to people who wanted to be let alone. She was president of the Society for the Suppression of Self-respect in the Tenement and was a director of the Anti-Sunday Growler Association and the Woman's League for the Dissemination of Religious and Scientific Literature Among the Indigent—and generally indignant. She was in great demand at charitable conventions and meetings for the discussion of ways and means to impress the poor with the degradation of their condition and the great benevolence of those who were spending time and money to uplift them.

The fact that Mrs. Helpinghand had a husband and a son at the place which she sometimes called home had very little to do with her actions. A new day had dawned for women, she loudly declared, and the man who thought that it was her lot in life to ply the darned needle or stand at the throttle of the kitchen range was likely to wake up some day and ring down the curtain on his imitation of Rip Van Winkle. The new mission of woman, as she saw it, was to seek out suffering and relieve it. If suffering didn't want to be relieved the angel of mercy in attendance on the case should be empowered to call in a policeman to hold it while the relief was poured down its throat. If there was nothing doing in the suffering line at first there was likely to be plenty very soon after Mrs. Helpinghand had been in sight.

In addition to her other duties this tireless helper found time occasionally to sort out a few combustible thoughts

and throw them together in words that burned—or would have if there had been such a thing as justice in the land. She was the author of that highly interesting and widely popular work, "Some Paupers I Have Helped," and "How the Other Half Gives" was a contribution from her gifted pen on the economic and sociological importance of charitable eulches. But she was never so much in her element as when she was balancing herself carefully on a three-legged chair in a tenement honder and imparting useful information to a Yiddish mother on the impropriety of children exercising violently for at least two hours after eating, or the awful moral and social consequences involved in the practice of the gentle art commonly known as "rushing the growler." The fact that the mother aforesaid had a fluent mastery of between eight and nine English words was no barrier to Mrs. Helpinghand's activity.

The saloon vice was the theme on which she waxed particularly strong. No one could excel her in pointing out to the humble workman how much more desirable it was to spend his evenings, up to and including his Sundays, in his cozy two-room apartments in the bosom of his family of eight children than to waste his substance in riotous living at cents per riot in some gilded palace of sin where the beer dieth not and the limburger is not quenched. If diversion is desired, she would say, what could be better than a little visit to the branch of the E.B. Hotheque de Carnegie just around the corner, where a copy of the North American Review was always on tap for those who wished to brush up a little on the status of the latest Panama canal treaty or were thirsting for information on the sociological significance of William Watson. For those who desired more frivolous literature, there

was always August Comte or the rather late but ever delightful Jonathan Edwards.

If she could manage to lay alongside a young lady in her teens with advanced views on the engrossing subject of shirt waists or a foot that needed exercise with a musical accompaniment, this tireless renovator of the universe would suggest a course in sewing lessons or a round or two with Delsarte. Nor did the small boys escape her eagle eye and fostering care. The long range cigarette and the craps that cheer but do not alleviate were her pet particular abominations, and in her most effective manner she would remove the 'd and reveal to the juvenile sinner the depths of the awful abyss over which he was hovering. Instead of "Deadeye Dick, the Bully of the Bronx," she would recommend a handsomely bound copy of "The Heroism of Harry," a true story of a poor but honest newsboy, who supported his mother and three small brothers and put his big sister through college by writing stories for the magazines after his day's work was done. By these means she confidently expected to snatch the brand from the burning before it had fairly begun to smoke—or drink.

The old theory that people usually dislike the things that are supposed to be good for them never had a better illustration than in the case of Mrs. Helpinghand. If the extent to which a thing is disliked and consistently avoided is any indication of its degree of goodness, she had all the agencies for the betterment of the human race beaten out at the start. Whenever she was in sight at the end of the block there was a general dispersion of the population, comparable only with the effect of an announcement of a required course in bathing in a ten-cent lodging-house. If she had been a man she would probably have been dropped gently but firmly off the fire escape at or about the fourth story, but being a



"WITH THE LAST GENERATION WE BURIED ALL THAT WERE LEFT OF THE OLD-FASHIONED PATTERN."

I do not say that such women are met everywhere—there are vast tracts of English society into which they have never penetrated, but that they exist as a type is painfully well known to many a fresh young girl, who sees her bit of pleasure filched from her by those who, having eaten their cake, are determined to have it also.

It is a misfortune, I know, to feel

young inside and be old out, but there are other ways of working off this vitality than by aping Ninon de l'Enclos' airs, and is not the antagonistic attitude of daughters to mothers nowadays, often due to the total lack of dignity with which these mothers behave?

There is something revolting in the sight of clean, fresh-faced boys dancing attendance on women whose sons are of the same age as themselves—youth to youth—age to age—dignity to the meridian of life, and the ripe charm that experience gives, thus should it be now, as it has in the past.

It is a hard saying, but it seems to me that with our own dear mothers of the last generation we buried all that are left of the old-fashioned pattern, and that until the present day women initiate a vast forward movement to a change in manner toward men so long will men fall in theirs toward the other sex. The remedy lies in the women's own hands—where shall they make a beginning?

From time immemorial they have been the bulwark of the country, whose importance as rearers of sons and daughters is more vital, more important to the state than the statesmen themselves and without whom (should they become universally corrupt) England must go to pieces, inevitably destroyed like other great nations, from within.

For to keep the home together, to look properly after husband and children, fulfilling daily a thousand acts of duty that no one else can, that is the work for which woman was born, and in the main it is very strenuous work, engaging every faculty of heart and brain, and not all the successes of women who usurp men's places and professions will leave the mark on posterity that this one, by the bringing up of her sons, the molding of her husband, will.

There is a third reason for the decay in courtesy between men and women—and perhaps it is the saddest and most menacing to all our womanhood (being as it is almost a direct result of the two reasons I have given above). It is when a certain type of girl realizes that in addition to the scarcity of men her chances of marriage are still fur-

ther reduced by the depredations of older women, and too often she becomes a free lance, picking up eagerly a bit of pleasure here and there and gradually cheapening herself to the restaurant or the theater, the smoke and the whisky-and-soda girl, who no more expects fine manners from man than he expects them of her. Probably there is no real vice in her, but knowing that there is no fun possible to her without a man to take her about, she drifts into a false position, and sometimes, very rarely, is married by a man whose reputation is as off-color as her own. For men worth having decline to marry the girls who place their good looks, their charm, their agreeable company at the disposal of chance comrades. As a rule a man marries because he wants some particular woman all to himself, but is it to be wondered at that between his disgust at grandmothers, who ape the manners of girls of 16, and contempt for the facile girls who will go anywhere, do anything he pleases, a man's own manners and self-restraint deteriorate, and he decides not to marry at all?

With the whole dessert laid on the table before him, he reckons that he would be a fool to sit down for the rest of his life with an especial fruit or diet, and, often disgusted with the profusion, he turns his back on the banquet and will have none of it.

If a man of breeding (and though some female members of the aristocracy set the worst examples of all, their men who despise them, never show it) he will keep silence, and only by his avoidance of women show his contempt for them, but the harshest misogynist of them all may have all the harm light women have done him undone by a single good one, and if he go sufficiently far afield he can still find her.

For as surely as violets hide under their green leaves, and come back year by year to rejoice our hearts, so surely do good, pretty and charming girls lurk in this island of ours, only awaiting the resolute seeker, breathing that atmosphere of womanliness, of charm, natural to them as the perfume is to the violet, being the emanation of physical, moral and mental health. From them you will get the old-fashioned, pretty manner that answered so much better with our mothers and grandmothers, that answered so much better (in the matter of lovers) than the ruse, the capering and the so-called fascinating one of today.

Roughly, then, we may divide women into two classes nowadays, those who use violent, and meretricious means to attract men for mercenary purposes, and women who deliberately revolt men by their aggressively rude manners, claiming not only an equal status, but an actual superiority over them in physique, brains and position, so that one might suppose their aim to be a race of brainy Amazons, placing pigny man behind them for protection and patronage.

That women must work is one of the sad conditions of their overpowering numbers; it may also be taken as granted that no woman likes long and sustained effort, for which, as fashioned by nature, she is eminently unfitted; still she can do that work quietly if she pleases, and there is no need to antagonize by her attitude the only legitimate worker in the open market that God and nature ever intended—man.

As I said before, work she has enough at home, and to spare. Let her then, with her sisters, turn over a new leaf—the grandmothers discard their wigs and capering foolishnesses, the married women who cannot live without admiration turn to the cultivation of their homes, the girls who are contemptuously allowed to share men's pleasures emigrate, and become honest wives of honest men; then, though there must still remain a vast amount of suffering, incomplete womanhood, we may look for a return of those pretty manners in women that men secretly cherish so deeply, and to meet which their homage, so long forgotten, will inevitably spring again. HELEN MATHERS.

THE LOVER WHO SULKED

By Billy Burgundy

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ONCE upon a time there lived in the town of Hazel Green, which is the metropolis of Rowan County, a fledgling of the name of Abner Tutill.

Abner was what women of maturity, with daughters to spare, call a perfectly grand person. That is, he had set ways, worked like a dog for a living, saved his wages, taught a Bible class, sang in the choir, chipped in whenever the foreign mission basket was passed around and did not use cuss words or tobacco or listen to the men tell naughty stories.

To reduce it to a showdown, Abner was an out-and-out virgin. Fact is, he was just the dearest, darlinest, gentlemanliest young gentleman that could possibly be imagined.

While Abner was perfectly good and pure, he was not the least bit narrow-minded or unreasoning. Not at all so. He simply believed in drawing the line at the proper place. That was all.

Although he was bitterly opposed to round dances, he hadn't the slightest objection to a quadrille. And while he felt in his heart that it was exceedingly wicked to play euchre, he was just that liberal-minded that he did not disapprove of a game of smut if it was not allowed to last one minute after 12, if played on Saturday night. Neither did he object to home-made blackberry cordial, but, of course, he knew that it was a great sin to even taste bought liquor, so he never did. He knew that it was wrong to raffle things off in stores or saloons, but he was broad enough to take a chance on a piece of fancy work if the entire proceeds went to the church.

Abner was head clerk in the general store run by Philpott, Hargis & Snodgrass, and was so popular with everybody that the other clerk really had nothing to do but sweep out the store, trim the lamps, wipe mold off the shoes and keep the dust off the coun-

ter, except during the Saturday rush, when, of course, it was simply out of the question for Abner to wait on every one, even though they did want him.

Abner was a very valuable man to his firm. A whole lot of folks said it wouldn't surprise them at all to see Philpott, Hargis & Snodgrass go to the wall if he ever took the notion into his head to quit them. But they argued that he wouldn't do that, for he had been with them ever since Wise Gilman shot Colonel Jett Cockerill, and they always gave him a ten dollar gold piece for Christmas and let him have whatever he wanted out of the stock at actual cost. Furthermore, when he was taken down with slow fever and did not round-up for a whole month, his salary went on just the same as if he had earned it, which was mighty kind of Philpott, Hargis & Snodgrass, inasmuch as they paid him a corking big sum—sixty dollars a month.

As might naturally be supposed, Abner in time fell in love. Beatrice Souder was her name. Beatrice was a most adorable girl, of a religious turn of mind and an excellent family. Her mother will be recalled as Leonie Gambrill, a one-time belle of the county, and granddaughter of Major Lige Gambrill, who ran for Governor on the Prohibition ticket and was defeated by fraud.

On her father's side Beatrice was related to the Souderases, who owned the Cypressview plantation in Henderson County until the bank foreclosed the mortgage. So it can readily be seen that her connections were of the very best.

To Abner's way of thinking there was but one girl in all the world who was perfectly beautiful and really worth having. That girl's name was Beatrice. Of course, he was willing to admit that there were other nice young ladies, but somehow there was a something or

other about Beatrice which made her ever so awfully lovable. He didn't know himself exactly what it was, but it was, and that was all he needed to know.

Well, to get to the point, Abner saved his money until he was strong enough to go into business for himself. And as he calculated that there was more room for a new store in New York City than there was in Hazel Green, he pulled up stakes and made for the big town.

It was agreed between him and Beatrice that as soon as he got everything in tip-top shape he would wire her to come on and they would be married in Grace Church, so that there would be a big piece in the papers about it.

For the first few weeks New York City was just about all Abner could stand. He worked in his store from daylight till dark, and spent the evenings in his room writing wishy-washy, slush-gush-mush to the mainspring of his heart. He was weak from homesickness and could not retain anything more nourishing than a cabinet photo of Beatrice.

When Abner got things the way he wanted them, he decided to rush down to the telegraph office and concentrate the glad tidings into ten words. Not having seen the main street during daylight he chose to foot it.

As he stepped into the thoroughfare and got his first glance at the smartly attired damsels he almost lost his breath. Before he had covered the first block he was almost willing to admit that some of them were as pretty as Beatrice. Before he had gone two blocks he was sure that they were, and when he finally reached the tick-tickery he wrote the following message: "Miss Beatrice Souder, Hazel Green: 'Never mind. Don't come.' 'ABNER.'"

Moral—Never pick a life-companion until you have seen a full line of samples.