

THE TRIUMPH of the HOMELY WOMAN

"TO ME THE WOMAN WITH LINES IN HER FACE IS BEAUTIFUL, PROVIDED THOSE LINES BE THOSE OF CHARACTER."
-DAVID BELASCO-

"THE HOMELY YOUNG WOMAN MAKES THE MOST BEAUTIFUL OLD LADY."
-MAY IRWIN



"I INSIST THAT FEMINE BEAUTY INCLUDES THE FIGURE" SAID MAY IRWIN

"DON'T SUPPOSE ANYONE WOULD CALL ME BEAUTIFUL" SAID MADAME SCHUMANN-HEINK.

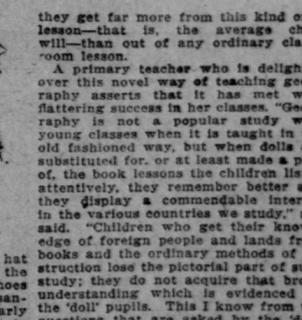
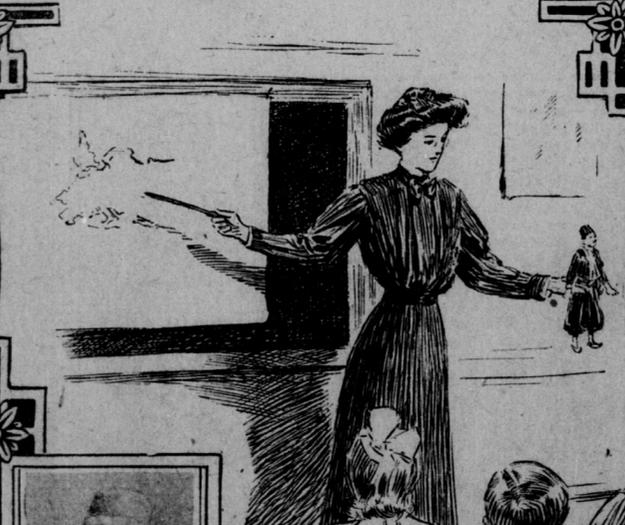
ly homely. But even here feminine pride baffled me. None would consent to having her remarks quoted for publication. All admitted that beauty did not count—not in the very, very least. But, said one of them, a successful woman physician:
"Do you think I want to advertise myself as a homely woman? I'll let others find that out."
Employers generally frowned on beauty among their women employees. This objection was mainly on theoretical grounds, however. I found a surprisingly large percentage of pretty girls in a large office I visited. The manager who engaged all of the workers delivered a long and pompous lecture, seasoned with oratorical gestures, in which he stated that good looks constituted a drawback which the possessor found very hard to overcome.
"But you seem to have an extremely attractive lot of girls here," I faltered.
"Oh, yes," he beamed, "I flatter myself I can detect the proper qualities in a girl even if she happen to be good looking."
One would think that beauty would be desirable in a department store, where an attractively salesgirl might add considerably to the volume of business. But even here Polly Prim, matter of fact and attentive to work, is more to be desired than Fluffy Ruffles

"If two applicants of equal qualifications and references were to come to me, one possessing beauty and the other homely, I should choose the homely one," said the manager of the largest department stores in San Francisco. "I don't regard beauty as an absolute bar to employment here, but we have learned to scan it with suspicion. I am willing to take an unusually prepossessing applicant if we need help, provided she can give proper references and provided also she appears to have some qualifications besides good looks. Beauty is always conscious and too often self-conscious. The plain woman expects no consideration on that score and knows that she must place reliance on her work. Then there is the question of length of employment to be considered. The pretty girl is likely to get married. At least the chances are in her favor, and we can count on retaining for a longer period on the average the services of the homely young woman."
When I called to interview Miss May Irwin it was with some misgivings. Would she permit me to quote her or would she refuse on the ground that a really and truly stage beauty should throw no cold water on the aspirations of the sisterhood? I found her in the middle of the door of her dressing room at the theater making a large picture frame.
When I stated the purpose of my visit Miss Irwin threw up her hands.
"How many women have you interviewed on this subject?" she went on. "Did you expect to get back to the office alive? How many women have admitted to you that they were homely? Now as a matter of fact, I regard my face as my fortune. Hold on! I didn't say my beauty. A face can have value for expression, can't it? That is the reason why I have considered it my working capital. If it hadn't been for that I wouldn't have had the face to keep on singing coon songs and reciting poetry."
"I suppose somebody has been knocking beauty. Forget it. Beauty is all right. It's a nice thing to have around the house. Lots of my friends keep it preserved—in jars and bottles on their dressing tables. But you can't keep it in alcohol. Strange, isn't it?"
"I always have been an admirer of beauty. I wish there was more of it. Don't think I am jealous when I say that I never have seen many beautiful women. I may be a bit critical. Something always seems to be lacking. One woman will have a beautiful complexion and spoil it by an ugly nose. Another may have the smile of an angel and a voice like a crosscut saw. One may have a perfect face and spoil it all by her figure. I insist that feminine beauty includes the figure. Yes, indeed. That is the one subject that arouses emotion in me—the figure."
"Of course there is beauty and then there is beauty. Far be it from me to defend all the puffs and furbelows with which the woman of today is bedecked. The heads of some women sprout puffs as a communter's garden sprouts weeds. They are a good deal like the old style when women wore rings in their noses—all right when you get used to them."
"As I said before, I personally am a great admirer of beauty, but I don't find many women of the stage getting much beyond the front row of the chorus if that is their main qualification."
"I know it hasn't anything to do with the subject under discussion, but will you let me say one little word on the general topic of the beautiful woman? There is something pathetic about the way they grow old. They can't do it gracefully. So few of them preserve their dispositions. So many of them are sour and—well—catty. They can't see why they should not preserve their old popularity. They get peevish when they notice it slipping away to other women. And the strange part of it is that their rivals are not always younger women, but women who have been homely out, and improve with age. The homely woman grows old gracefully. She does not mourn the loss of charms, for perhaps she never had any. She is surprised to find that she is not 'only keeping but winning friends.'"
David Belasco was in an iconoclastic mood when the subject was mentioned to him.
"Beauty!" he exclaimed. "What has that to do with the making of an actress? The stage does not need dolls that can walk through a part and please the eye. The purpose of a play is to communicate feeling, whether it is comedy or emotion. All complexions look alike under the friendly coat of grease paint. An inch or so on the nose of an actress won't change the map of the dramatic world."
"For my part I think too much has been made of the influence of beauty on the history of the world. Much of the stories you read along this line are largely mythical. Take Cleopatra, for example. Do you suppose it was the color of her eyes, a peaches and cream complexion and perfect figure that made her such a factor in the history of Rome? Was it her smile that won the love of Caesar? Do you suppose that mere physical charm would have turned the head of Antony? Not a bit of it. I find little in the descriptions of Cleopatra to lead me to believe that in mere physical beauty she surpassed many women of her own retinue. But she had power. She was possessed of great magnetism, a fine mind, great force of character and tenacity of purpose. Caesar and Antony both were necessary to aid her in her ambitions, and she determined to win them. They were men of great power. They had been surfeited with mere beauty in Rome, in Greece, in the conquered cities of Asia Minor. Why should they have fallen at the feet of an Egyptian doll?"
"Helen of Troy must have been more than a mere beauty to have won her little corner of the world to shreds. Beauty loving as were the Greeks, the blind Homer never would have sung the Iliad had the woman in the case been a creature with only a perfect face and form. It was the golden days of Athens the most influential woman was Aspasia, beloved of Pericles. The greatest minds of Greece were drawn to her. It was not her beauty, but the magnetism proceeding from a fine mind and a strong character."
"I do not consider beauty in an actress whom I want for a leading part. She must have temperament. That implies character, power to feel and make others feel. She must be willing to work, and work as she never worked before."
"I don't suppose any one would call me a beauty," said Mme. Schumann-Helink, with a smile, as she looked up from her pastime of darning stockings. The famous soprano is domestic in her tastes, and when off the operatic stage finds her greatest pleasure in performing little domestic tasks for her family with true German thrift. "No, I don't suppose any one would," she went on, "yet I have not found it a handicap. I cannot say that a beautiful woman would not do as well as I have done, under similar circumstances, far I do not know. I must confine myself to my own experience. I might go further and say that I do not believe that beauty would have been of any assistance to me. I do not see how it could have helped me any. Art is a stern taskmaster, the canvas cannot be cajoled into complacency by the enticement of a pretty face. Work, work, work, and perhaps success will come. You cannot acquire 'with art. No smile will win its favor.'"

SHADES of Cleopatra and Venus—ides to brains, temperament and industry rather than to her of the liquid eyes, peachy complexion and teeth of pearls.
It was a terrible shock to learn that beauty had been deposed, but still other idols were shattered. As I recalled my ancient history it had seemed to me that Helen of Troy must have been the fairest of women and that Cleopatra must have possessed surpassing physical charms to have won the love of Julius Caesar and to have lured Mark Antony on to ruin. But the rude hammer of the iconoclast fell upon these dazzling images, for no less

MANNERS, CUSTOMS AND COSTUMES OF FOREIGN NATIONS NOW TAUGHT BY DOLLS AN END TO DRY STUDY FOR SCHOOL CHILDREN

MAPS are fascinating to the mature mind which sees landscapes in their queer marks, which can figure distances and conjure up a mental picture of the country from an ordinary flat geographical representation. But to the child's mind maps are dull and uninteresting. Rivers, mountain chains and rugged coasts mean nothing to it as it sees them on paper or on the blackboard. That is why maps and dry descriptions of foreign countries are being abandoned in some schools and dolls substituted for primary geography.
The experiment of using dolls for educational purposes has been made with success in some of the schools of this country, and it has been suggested that for primary work this kind of pictorial geography would be of infinite value both in interesting the children and in teaching them the manners, customs and costumes of foreign lands. The dolls are dressed in the national costume of the country they represent and each one conveys to the child's mind the chief characteristics of that country. For instance, Japan ceases to be an island, with the outlines of an overdone fritter, and becomes a land of rich colors, of quaint dress and customs, unlike our own, when it is studied through the medium of a doll; while Italy is not only a country shaped like a boot, but a land of bright appareled men and women, some with blue eyes and light hair, some dark with brilliant coloring, and all living in the sunshine under the sky.
As the geographic dolls have the complexion and the racial features of the country they represent the young pupil becomes familiar with these characteristics while he learns those of the country itself, and by studying the costumes, their ethical and cartorial meaning he takes in more through the doll medium than his young mind could possibly gather if the same amount of attention were devoted to dry books and maps, so it is asserted by those who have experimented with doll geography, and the mind retains it long after the "chief products" are forgotten and the customs of one country have been indelibly mixed with those of another.
"Anything that is concrete and interests the child is worth considering by educators," said Miss Katherine Blake, principal of one of the largest girls' schools. "Young children have to be experimented with to find out what is both interesting and instructive for them, and teachers are always on the lookout for new ideas for instruction. The more like play study can be made the more it will



suit the child, and some children get so little play that it seems an excellent plan to choose methods that have this interest compelling phase.
"Dolls representing the children of foreign countries would interest little boys as well as girls, and the playtime would be lengthened by having such object lessons. Our children are nearing the point where school will be all work and no play, and when that time comes they will prove the truth of that old saying about 'making Jack a dull boy.' There is so much for each one to learn that there is barely enough time in the allotted school year to accomplish all that is laid out for pupils, so that gradually the playtime as well as the playground is being absorbed by other things, until soon there will be nothing left of either."
"Some one said the other day that we are no longer educating our boys and girls, and the statement seems to have a good deal of truth in it. We are cramming their heads full of lessons and instruction, but we do not have time to educate them, to draw out their minds. If it is impossible to

even in his own kind of play the child enjoys it only so long as he finds the playing interesting. The play may keep him busy, both with his mind and his fingers, but so long as it interests him he will keep at it. Another point about the study of dolls dressed in national costumes lies in the fact that these costumes are disappearing so rapidly that in another generation few will be seen during the tourist's travels.
To the mind which began the study

of geography in dry books Switzerland represents a country of mountain peaks and fine watches. There is nothing picturesque conveyed through this prosy medium, but think of the fancy of the child who learns of Switzerland first by meeting a doll peasant, who studies its costumes, its colors, its cut, its collar, its shoes and its millinery, and then understands the reason for these costume differences between the Swiss peasant and the Russian; why the Swiss peasant

they get far more from this kind of a lesson—that is, the average child will—than out of any ordinary classroom lesson.
A primary teacher who is delighted over this novel way of teaching geography asserts that it has met with flattering success in her classes. "Geography is not a popular study with young classes when it is taught in the old-fashioned way, but when dolls are substituted for, or at least made a part of, the book lessons the children listen attentively, they remember better and they display a commendable interest in the various countries we study," she said. "Children who get their knowledge of foreign people and lands from books and the ordinary methods of instruction lose the pictorial part of such study; they do not acquire that broad understanding which is evidenced by the 'doll' pupils. This I know from the questions that are asked by the 'doll' classes. The object lesson is a painting to them; they study its light and shade, its harmony and its meaning, and then they get along with this a very practical idea of people and their native surroundings."