

SLAVES OF THE WHEEL.

What the Sewing-Machine Has Done—The Bondage of Women to Ruffles and Tucks.

[From the Philadelphia Weekly Times.]

When more than a quarter of a century ago Elias Howe gave the sewing-machine to the world, civilization hailed him as the benefactor of woman. Hood had just stirred the heart of humanity with his wonderful "Song of the Shirt," and the wrongs of the sewing-women were one of the social questions of the day. Men were ready to forswear linen and adopt paper collars and shirt-bosoms, rather than to "wear out human creatures' lives." And so a great shout of thankfulness went up over this iron seamstress, which had neither bone nor muscle; which could neither ache nor grow weary—this benevolent genie which was to make sewing a pastime and stitching but play. Alas for short-sighted humanity! Who could foresee that the little finger of the new dispensation should be thicker than the loins of the old? That its bands should be of iron, where the others had been but green withes? The burden is shifted from shoulders to back—that is all—and legs grow stiff and numb in place of fingers. For this marvelous piece of mechanism, which does in an hour more than a skillful seamstress can accomplish by hand in a day, has so cheapened labor—so multiplied ruffles and tucks—that the bondage of woman to the wheel is heavier than it was to the needle alone. Years ago our mothers and our grandmothers wore garments simply made; dresses with single skirts and bodies plainly trimmed; or when cunning fingers wrought marvels of needle-work, the garments thus ornamented were worn as long as they lasted—not cast aside or ripped up and made over with every season. Now yards upon yards of plaitings, shirrings or ruffles trim the plainest dresses, the mode of trimming changing every few months, and stamping the work on which so much time has been spent as out of fashion. Underclothing is a mass of tucks, puffs and ruffles, and the day has gone by in which a simple hem or tiny scallop was sufficient finish for an ordinary garment. Many of us remember when children's every-day frocks were guiltless of trimming; when ruffles and tucks were kept for state occasions. To-day every tiny garment calls for rows upon rows of stitching, and devoted mothers sit for hours at the sewing-machine that their darlings may appear as well as the children across the street where the family keep a seamstress.

VICTIMS OF THE SEWING-MACHINE.

Ready-made clothing does not solve the difficulty. It is comparatively cheap, it is true; so much so that it is economy to buy it rather than to purchase materials and hire the sewing done out. But when large quantities are needed, and when the work can be done at home, even the small profits with which steam enables large manufacturers to be content aggregate an amount at which prudent housewives hesitate, and which those who must practice close economy absolutely can not expend. Here, also, with the question of ready-made clothing comes in another phase of the oppression of the sewing-machine: How is the sewing-woman, even if she owns a machine, to compete with these large manufactories? Must she not starve in the contest with steam? Fashionable dressmakers, demanding fancy prices for their work, do well enough; for them the intricacies of trimming all tend to profit; each change brings grist to their mills. It is the poorer dressmaker, who is neither known nor sought after, and the needle-woman who does plain sewing for a living, who groan under its tyranny. Continued labor at the lightest of treadles for hours at a time, especially when no other exercise is taken, is necessarily injurious to health, and our hospitals are filled with victims of such labor. Yet, above all, it is persons of moderate means, striving to keep up appearances among richer neighbors, who suffer most. Across the way from our own, a year or two ago, was a window of a fair young girl. When we first noticed her she was at the sewing-machine, and day after day in the pleasant spring weather she was there for most of the time. Naturally we supposed her a seamstress, and felt sorrow for the young life tied down to the wheel. Usually the work was white; but one day it was blue, and for days afterward the machine was piled with narrow strips of some dark blue fabric. Saturday closed upon her busy at her task; Sunday morning she sallied forth in suit of dark blue silk and grenadine, garnished with row upon row of narrow knife-plaitings. Personal vanity had

been the motive of the patient toil we had witnessed with so much sympathy; and the same incentive held her to similar tasks for many days during the season. She could not afford to pay a dressmaker; she would not dispense with one inch of trimming on her suits. Very many other women are in the same predicament, not only for themselves but still oftener for others. "If it were not for my sewing!" groans many a weary mother, half crazed by the thought of the mountain of needlework that must be done for her little ones. Fewer ruffles and tucks would make the task easier; but no! the little A's and the little B's, and all the rest of the small alphabet wear them in abundance; so with stern heroism she bends to the task, determined that her children shall dress like other people's! Health, time and recreation are all sacred to this modern Moloch, which does no little to make strengthening plasters a fortune to their patentee. The children come with questions and requests to their mother turning the wheel. "Run away, dear, mother is busy," and the ruffler is adjusted or the tuck mark reset, while the little ones are left to their own devices or to Bridget's tender mercies.

WHERE IS THE MEDIUM?

She ought to go to market; yes, but there is Mamie's dress to be finished, and so at the last moment a hastily scribbled order is sent round the corner to the provision store. The kitchen would be the better for her superintendence; but the sewing-machine demands her energies, even though there be no pudding for dinner and the joint be raw or overdone. Verily, this bondage to wheel is becoming a serious evil in our own land. Yet how shall we escape it? It requires no slight degree of heroism to run counter to public opinion, and public opinion demands ruffles and tucks or their equivalent. Instances have been known where girls have been forced to leave school merely because they could not afford to dress like the rest of the scholars. They were ostracised, so to speak, and preferred to go elsewhere rather than endure the contempt and rudeness to which they were subjected. Girls who are scarcely old enough to speak plain beg for silk dresses with plaitings and bows—"All the other little girls have them, mamma!" Boys, who may wear one suit as long as it holds together at the knees, and still have plenty of playmates—men whose swallow-tails never go out of fashion until they are rusty, can not understand this; it is all nonsense to them. Even so! We once read a treatise, essaying to prove toothache a purely imaginative disease. In some respects we are far wiser on the subject of dress than were our ancestors. We wear thicker clothing and more of it, and do not risk our lives by wearing thin shoes. But our grandmothers kept their silks and velvets for state occasions, and did not cut them ruthlessly into strips. They had pages to bear their trains, never trailing them through the mud and dust. "Beauty unadorned" is rarely fully effective; but beauty may none the less be too much adorned. Why need all white garments be a terror to the laundress, and why should the hum of the sewing-machine be unceasing in our homes? Not that ruffles and tucks are not pretty, and well enough to a certain extent. Still, "there is a medium," if one could only find it, and finding, would adopt it.

A Singular Attachment.

Last spring Mr. William Sinclair, of Cambay, caught a young crow before it could fly and brought it home, and it soon became quite tame. It struck up a warm friendship with a hound belonging to Mr. Sinclair. The crow always was around with the hound, shared his meals, and slept in his box at night, on the bottom, not seeking to perch, unless they were disturbed during the night, when he would come out and fly up into one of the trees near by and remain there until morning. When given food it would invariably take a portion to the hound. It would not give it to him at once, but would fly around just above his head with a piece of meat or crust of bread in his bill, and keep teasing him for quite a while with it, and then would finally let him have it. But last week instinct began to be too powerful, and he concluded that he must go to other quarters for the winter, and it was amusing to see how he tried to coax the hound away with him. He would fly away a little piece and then light and then caw to the dog; then he would fly back and seemed in great distress because he could not induce his four-footed friend to go to warmer quarters for the winter; but, finding he would not leave, he at length flew off and has not been seen since.—Lindsay (Ont.) Post.

—Arnold Lair, a 10-year-old Indianapolis boy, fell from a locomotive and broke his neck.

THE SILVER DISCUSSION.

Extract from Senator Cockrell's Argument.

The following is a portion of Senator Cockrell's speech on the resolution of Senator Matthews to pay the interest and principal of the bonds in silver:

Mr. Cockrell argued that silver was still legal-tender coin of the United States. The custom regulations of '71 provided that silver dollars, though no longer coined or issued, were receivable for duties on imports to an unlimited extent. The silver coin was receivable to the extent of five dollars. Mr. Conant, late Assistant Secretary of the Treasury, in a letter dated in 1873 to the Surveyor of Customs, St. Louis, stated that silver dollars were receivable for duties on imports to an unlimited extent as money, since they were legal-tender silver dollars as legal-tender. He argued that the bondholder knew that the dollar in his bond meant the silver coin of 412½ grains or the gold coin of 23.8-10 grains. Silver dollars had been practically as much in circulation as money, since 1861, as gold. Neither metal had been actually used and circulated as money in the business of the country since that time.

Mr. Cockrell then quoted extensively from statistics, showing the coinage of gold and silver, and called particular attention to the following figures: Coinage of the silver dollar in '68 was \$4,800; in '69, \$231,350; in '70, \$88,308; in '71, \$67,929; in '72, \$1,112,961, and up to the time silver was demonetized, the coinage amounted to \$977,155. Had the coinage been continued that year, it would have amounted to \$1,371,022. These facts were not given until they showed the rapid and wonderful increase in silver coinage. The gold coinage in '68 was \$10,550; in '69, \$5,925; in '70, \$19,300; in '71, \$30,940; in '72, \$1,630; in '73, \$25,200; '74, \$283,920, and in '75 it fell to the enormous sum of \$20.

He inquired if the Senator, in preparing his table, had not counted each piece of silver coined as a dollar? Did not the table show that the value of gold coined was five times as much as that of silver?

Mr. Cockrell replied that his tables were correct. He knew that such assertions had been published in the newspapers, and made in speeches, and went forth as facts, though they were not true. The Government officials had acknowledged the facts. He then argued that all subsidiary silver coined prior to the act of April 1, 1853, was full legal tender. He argued that the Government had no right to question the power of Congress in regard to coining money and regulating its value. They had no right to complain, because no matter what they did they would still be paid in gold of the standard value of July 14, 1870. He then referred to the assurances of the Government officers that bonds would be paid in gold, and he argued that these officials had no right to modify the plain words of the law that they could not be paid in anything but gold. Officers of the Government were administrators of the law and not law makers, and no one knew this better than the present Secretary of the Treasury.

He then quoted from the recent report of that officer, urgently commending Congress to give sanction to his assurance that bonds would be paid in gold. The Secretary had dared to give unauthorized assurances to the bondholders, but he had not dared to issue a single bond contrary to law. To claim now that the United States must pay its bonds in gold on account of the assurance of the Secretary of the Treasury, was scarcely less than a crime. The cry of "reputation," "violating national honor," "impugning the faith of the Government," and so on, had been heard far and wide, from the Eastern press, and from the bondholders, their allies and their agents. The men in favor of the demonetization of silver had been stigmatized as lunatics. He (Cockrell) was as firmly devoted to the maintenance of the national honor as any of these Pharisees, and he hurled back with scorn and contempt their imputations. He stood upon the floor of this State of Missouri, and demanded for the people the enforcement of the contract. He boldly asserted that to pay the bonds in gold and silver, or in silver alone, was in perfect compliance with the letter of the law and with the recognized principles of honesty and national honor. He charged these crimes of repudiation upon those who upheld the bondholders. The people whom he represented, with the bayonets of truth in their hands, would drive them into a decent observance of the principles of the law. The bondholders, by their false cries, were attempting to fasten their high crimes and misdemeanors upon those who desired to comply in good faith with the letter and spirit of the law.

The taxpayers of the country had their rights; one of which was to pay their bonds in silver. People could not, and would not, pay gold alone. He heartily approved the resolution of the Senator from Ohio, and it was the imperative duty of Congress to-day to restore from circulation the silver dollar by passing the silver bill.

Views of the Hon. William D. Kelly.

[From the New York Graphic.]

William D. Kelly, of Pennsylvania, who for many years past has made himself somewhat notorious as respects his advanced views on financial questions, Secretary of the Treasury during McCullough's reign, Secretary of the Treasury, has paid a flying visit to this city on his way to Washington, and was questioned by a Graphic representative in reference to the passage of the Bland Silver bill. He spoke as follows:

Why, there no doubt about its passage? I knew this would come to pass years ago, but then I was laughed at. To-day the best and soundest men of the country have come to my way of thinking on this great financial problem. It's all a matter of time, and we would flood the world with silver if this bill would become a law. Why, we can take all the silver that England likes to send over. Neither Russia nor Austria has any silver to send us. We shall never get it in large quantities from England, as she needs it for subsidiary coinage, and Germany will not send much. If we and Germany will waive such silver, it would come from France; and, if she should determine to demonetize her silver, she might in time throw her surplus stock upon us, but, then, that would not be very lucky. The work of contraction must be stopped, and that quickly, or we shall be far worse off than now. The first thing to be done, however, is to repeal the Resumption act. Silver must be demonetized, and the volume of our paper money—legal-tender—maintained. As soon as this is accomplished, the people in the country can have plenty of work at good, honest wages, they can then earn gold and silver, and in due time specie payments can be resumed. Our people ought to learn a lesson from France. Look at that country, and see how easily it has got out of these gigantic difficulties, far more than we had to bear, simply to see that her industries were not to be impaired. Her policy was, in times of war or other exigency, if necessary, to make an issue of irredeemable currency, and to have such issues issued with able currency, and to have such issues available for all purposes to which money could be applied in that country. She prevented the withdrawal of the paper until a continuous balance of trade had been the means of bringing into the country specie sufficient to supply the channels that had been temporarily filled with paper by which the exigency had been met. If we stop employment, then we arrest and impoverish the public treasury, and this is exactly what we have been doing. Therefore, we can not expect the people to be contented. If our greenbacks had been accepted in payment of all public dues, and had there been no attempt to retire any part purchased by the export of our surplus commodities, we should always have had a good supply of silver and gold at a moderate premium. Then the question of resumption would be of as little importance to us as it is now to the people of France.

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Give the Doctor a Chance.

The number of wonderful "simple specifics" for diseases of various sorts, now floating through the columns of the newspaper press, is astonishing. If one were credulous enough to believe in them, we do not see why he should not expect that physicians are to be abolished, and Death himself arrested, by means of slips cut out of newspapers. Some of the remedies seem so harmless in themselves, and so well vouched for, that we have been tempted to giving them currency in these columns; and this gives us an additional reason for urging people to respect the rule, founded on common sense and experience: "Every man to his trade."

We employ a cobbler to mend the children's shoes, and a barber to cut their hair. We send our watch to the jeweler's, and entrust our business arbitrations to a lawyer. Why should we assume the infinitely more complicated and responsible task of mending or repairing bodies that are out of order, or of managing our own case in the court of Nature?

We have frequently entered a protest against the habit of "dosing." Some people are never contented unless they are pouring nostrums of some sort down their throats, or experimenting with a new kind of patent medicine. Others have a nervous and over-anxious care of their children. If they talk in their sleep, or sneeze, or have a touch of colic, they must be shut up and "doctored." All this sort of blind, thoughtless, ignorant practice is contrary to Nature, and is worse than no medicine. Warmth, quiet, sleep, and a corrected diet, will enable people to get well under proper conditions, from all the ordinary ailments of life. The most that intelligent physicians do now-a-days, in such cases, is to see that Nature has a fair chance. They do not give a grain of medicine where the old-time doctors used to give a pound.

But in cases of actual and severe illness—dangerous epidemic diseases, and the like—there is no time to lose in experimenting. Take that dreadful scourge, diphtheria, for example. It has so baffled the profession that every intelligent physician eagerly seeks out and examines all the latest discoveries in relation to its treatment. The medical journals and conventions keep the profession advised of whatever progress is made in any country, and in all schools, in the treatment of diphtheria; and if any physician anywhere is saving 90 per cent. of his patients they will not be the last to know of it. It is a disease that demands instant treatment. If curable at all, one day's start will often save the patient, when a day's delay would lose him. Therefore we say, give the doctor a chance. If the child suddenly loses strength—complains of pain at the side of the throat, and water "tastes bad,"—if the breath smells fetid, or whitish spots appear in the throat or on the back part of the roof of the mouth—any or all of these symptoms indicate diphtheria, and a physician should be called at once. If some time must elapse before a doctor can be had, the child may be given a solution of Chlorate of Potash—half an ounce in a four-ounce vial of water, in teaspoonful doses every hour, and used as a gargle in addition when the child is old enough. This has been recommended by eminent authority, but simply as preparatory to the proper medical treatment.

As a rule it may be said that any unusual and severe symptoms, whether in children or in adults—such as high fever; sudden loss of strength, or vitality; delirium, sharp pains in the lungs, during the progress of a cold; all demand a prompt and intelligent diagnosis. It is worth a doctor's fee in such cases to know that nothing serious is the matter, while many a fever is prevented by a timely sweat, and many an attack of pneumonia—just now so swiftly fatal in many places—is warded off by prompt treatment. It is the doctor's business to treat disease, and he deserves all the advantages of a fair start.—Golden Rule.

REMEDY FOR RHEUMATISM.—Take 1 ounce of camphor, cut it up and place it in a basin; now add 1/2 ounce of rectified spirit, stir together and the camphor will dissolve. Next add 1 ounce rectified turpentine. Now put in 1 raw egg; beat the whole well together and all the ingredients will unite. Finally, gradually pour in 1 pint of white vinegar; put all together in a bottle, and properly label it. It should be applied with a pad of flannel, using a little friction.

That Unloaded Pistol Again.

Recent foreign papers bring us another sad story of the pistol that "was not loaded." The scene is in the studio of a painter. He is a young man of talent and promise. He has lately succeeded in overcoming the difficulties which through the threshold of success in Art; he is favorably known, orders are coming in, opportunity is already achieved, prosperity and fame are in near prospect. He is working at the easel, glancing back and forth at a lady model posed near by to guide his design. But now a thick, gloomy fog settles gradually down. The light grows too dim for painting. Work is suspended a while, in hopes that the sky may brighten. The two fall into chat, to while away the time. He shows her a new revolver, a recent present from a friend, and playfully aims it at her. She shrinks away, with a little scream of affright. "Why, silly girl! it isn't loaded. See here!" He aims the weapon at his own temple, snaps the trigger, it explodes, and he falls dying to the floor. The giver had somehow left a cartridge in one barrel.

So much for trifling with a pistol which one does not think is loaded. There is a constitutional right to have fire-arms, and it can not be altogether forbidden. But if men will carry them, at least treat them seriously.

Cases of one person shooting another, through the blunder of not knowing the weapon was loaded, occur weekly. Many persons seem to think such incidents are only lamentable, as mistakes.

But, suppose there is no mistake made, and no harm done. Suppose the pistol is really not loaded, and there is no possible danger. Why should it be deemed innocent to brandish pistols at bystanders, even if not loaded? Viewed from the holder's standpoint, it may seem a harmless joke; only a joke. But is this the right view? Ought we not to judge the act from the bystander's point? From his position, it is an annoyance, a threat, a peril.

Courts of law have sometimes taken the first view. But other decisions have said, and with strongest reason, that the bystander's feeling ought to supply the rule. He ought not to be startled with the presentation of a gun or pistol, even if it has no charge.

About five years ago, a quarrelsome fellow named White, driving in his wagon along one of our country highways, came to a spot where several men were mending the road. One of these, Sullivan, asked White to drive in the middle of the road. White answered rudely, and Sullivan inquired, pointedly, what he meant. Then White took up a gun, which he had in the wagon, and aimed it at Sullivan, and then at another of the workmen, Harrington, and said: "I have got something here that will pick the eyes of you." White was tried for this. It was proved that Harrington believed for the moment that White would shoot, and was alarmed. The Judge told the Jury that if White, within shooting distance, menacingly pointed a gun at Harrington, which Harrington had reasonable cause to believe was loaded, and if he were in fact alarmed, and with good reason, there was a criminal assault, whether the gun were in fact loaded or not.

Once upon a time in Texas, Flournoy was drinking in Grace's bar-room. He became drunk, excited, and abusive. Grace tried to quiet him. He drew a pistol, which a by-stander pulled away from him. "Why," said he, "it isn't loaded!" And, to be sure, it had no cap upon it. Flournoy was tried for assault with a deadly weapon. His lawyer argued that an unloaded pistol, "without a cap, is not a deadly weapon. But the Judge left that question to the Jury, who found Flournoy guilty, and he was fined \$150. The Supreme Court approved this, and said: "If juries would generally impose more exemplary punishment for offenses of this character, reckless men would feel the necessity of more self-restraint, and offenses committed by violence would be less frequent."

There have been other decisions of the courts to the same general effect. It ought to be understood that aiming guns and pistols at people is a rude and lawless act, even if they are not loaded. If done with intent to alarm, it may be a criminal offense, and proving that the weapon was not loaded makes no difference. If done in jest, it can not fail to excite the contempt and reprehension of every right-minded person at the spirit and temper which can find pleasure in such jests.—Cor. Christian Union.

A LITTLE daughter of Mr. G. A. Lovins, of Louisa County, Va., dressed herself in one of her mother's old dresses a day or two ago in order to play old woman, but while playing around the fire the dress was ignited and burned her so severely that she died.