

I have been through my last summer's dresses. Had a regular "closing-out day."

I remember the last time I wore it. At that picnic where we caught trout. And I caught on a flour bush and tore it.

There's a hunting, a satin brocade. Here's a nun's cloth, made up rather plain.

It is silly, I know, to remember. But some thoughts are so long to go.

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THE OWOSSO TIMES

VOL. III. OWOSSO, MICH., FRIDAY, MARCH 24, 1882. NO. 44.

WHAT IS HOSPITALITY?

BEFORE THE PARTY.

"There, I believe old Mrs. Peckham's name completes the number! William, my dear, you will please listen to this list of invitations, and see if I have omitted any one to whom we are indebted?"

"The poor father-of-the-family, thus addressed, meekly laid by his spectacles and paper and prepared to submit to the inevitable."

"It was a way Mrs. Barnes had of planning with her daughter Alice some expensive indulgence, and when too late to be recalled, springing the subject upon her husband in an easy matter-of-course way, which left him no alternative but a half unwilling consent."

"Why, you see, my dear," she went on in answer to his question of surprise, "we haven't had a large company in over a year, and we are really under obligations to all these people—fifty-eight I make in all."

"I do detect large companies," began Mr. Barnes. "I'm sure you cannot dread this thing any more than I do, put in Mrs. B., and all the work and care to come upon me, too; but it is not so bad as a number of small gatherings, just as it is better to have several doctored teeth all extracted at once, rather than to keep dragging them out."

"What would these people say if they knew another compared their entertainment to pulling teeth?—this from Alice, in an aside to brother Fred; but that young gentleman, who had been to college, assured her that it was the way with the world; they all felt just so."

"Well, we must at least justify simplicity in our arrangements, and that will ease both your labor and my pocket-book," said Mr. Barnes.

"Sure enough, let's institute a new departure, as Julia Dorr did in Rutland," assented Fred. "She just had a dainty bit of cream and fruit, or something, and lots of fellows went home hungry; not relishing the feast of reason and flow of soul."

"That is very well for literary people whose houses are full of objects of interest," said his mother—"and who have other ways of entertaining people than through their stomachs," whispered naughty Alice—"but we must have an elegant supper, or we will give up the party. Of course we must have oysters and several cold meats, besides loaves, ice-cream, fruits, coffee and chocolate. We will punch something else to make up the list, my dear, William."

"And the lady went on complacently reading her list. 'Dr. and Mrs. Bollins; you recollect we were invited to their daughter's wedding. Mr. and Mrs. Cross' silver wedding."

"Both which 'obligations' cost us a pretty little sum for presents to people we don't care a thing about," said Mr. Barnes, bitterly. "Mary, if you ever hear me say a word about our having a metal wedding, know at once that I am either crazy or in my dotage. When we get so low as to invite people to give us a subscription paper, but I will never get up the modern farce of a silver or golden wedding."

"Then here are the Livingstones," pursued the lady, "who have just come to town, but real 'quality' people, whom it is best to place under obligations to; and Squire Harding—"

"Who invited me to his breakfast, because he wanted my vote; in paternal-familias, unpleasantly. 'But it's all right, my dear, all right, I suppose, only one cannot help wondering what the Saviour meant, when he said: 'When thou makest a dinner or a supper, call not thy friends nor thy brethren, neither thy kinsmen nor thy neighbors, lest they also bid thee again, and a recompense be made thee.'"

"Probably that will all be changed in the new translation," said Alice, who was disposed to be a bit cynical, like her father, and to see through the veneering of society shams.

"Let us pass lightly over the dreadful days of preparation; the turning up-bottom of the house from top to bottom, the polishing of silver, the importation of crockery and extra help (?), and the endless cooking, cooking, for the Barnes family could not afford to order their supper from the local delicatessen. So the young and ambitious mistress and her younger and enjoyably immensely the confusion and general air of something coming; and the family subsisted upon outside slices of roasts, unfortunate biscuits and test pieces of cake. Some things went wrong, of course, and had to be done over, and there was burry and terrible anxiety for Mrs. Barnes, who, I am sorry to say, lost her temper several times, and developed unknown powers of scolding. But everything was whisked into line at the very last moment, and the poor lady with a racking headache was trying to get dressed and composed, when somebody announced the first carriage."

"How dreadfully early some people do come. Here, Alice, help me on with this lace girdle, I hoped to have a moment to breathe."

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We have urged from year to year upon all our readers to have early vegetable crops, the great importance of a hot-bed. Market gardeners find it an absolute necessity, as it is indispensable to all who do not wait upon the slow revolution of the seasons. Even a very small garden may be greatly increased in value by making use of it, inasmuch as from one to two months may be gained in time, in producing early vegetables. We have more than once published directions for constructing a hot-bed at small cost and at little trouble. These directions may be in the hands of our readers, and we renew them by publishing the following from the New England Farmer.

The Speed of the Wing.

A writer in Frazier's Magazine says the speed at which some wings are driven is enormous. It is occasionally so great as to emit a drumming sound. To this source the buzz of the fly, the drone of the bee, and the boom of the beetle are to be referred. When a grouse, partridge, or pheasant suddenly springs into the air, the sound produced by the whirring of its wings greatly resembles that produced by the contact of steel with the rapidly revolving stone of the knife grinder. It has been estimated that the commonly moves its wings 380 times per second, i. e., 19,800 times per minute, and that the butterfly moves its wings ten times per second, or 540 times per minute. These movements represent an incredibly high speed even at the roots of the wings, but the speed is enormously increased at the tips of the wings, from the fact that the tips rotate upon the roots as centers. In reality, and as it has been already indicated, the speed at the tips of the wings increases in proportion as the tips are removed from the axis of rotation, and in proportion as the wings are long. This is explained on the principle well understood in mechanics. If a rod or wing hinged at one point be made to vibrate, the free end of the rod or wing always passes through a very much greater space in a given time than the part nearer to the root of the wing. The progressive increase in the spread of the wings, in proportion as the wings become larger, explains why the wings of bats and birds are not driven at the extravagant speed of insect wings, and how the large and long wings of bats and birds are driven more leisurely than the small and short wings of small bats and birds. That the wing is driven more slowly in proportion to its length is proved by experiment, and by observing the flight of large and small birds of the same genus. Thus, large gulls flap their wings much more slowly than small gulls; the configuration and relative size of the wings to the body being the same in both. This is a hopeful feature in the construction of flying machines, as there can be no doubt that comparatively very slow movements will suffice for driving the long, powerful wings required to elevate and propel flying machines. The speed of the wings is partly regulated by its amplitude. Thus, if the wing be broad as well as long, the beats are necessarily reduced in frequency. This is especially true of the heron, which is one of the most picturesque, and at the same time one of the slowest flying birds we have. I have timed the heron on several occasions, and find that in ordinary flights its wings make exactly sixty up strokes and sixty down strokes—that is, 120 beats per minute. In the perodicty, the great extinct Saurian, the wing was enormously elongated, and in this particular instance probably from fifty to sixty beats of the wing per minute sufficed for flight. Fifty or sixty pulsations of the wing per minute do not involve much wear and tear of the working parts, and I am strongly of opinion that artificial flight, if once achieved, will become a comparatively safe means of locomotion, as far as the machinery required is concerned.

THE PARTY.

"Good evening, my dear Mrs. Rollins, how kind of you to come early; we shall have time for a real little visit before these are other arrivals!" mostly. Mrs. Barnes had a headache; perhaps she had forgotten what she said upstairs. But why describe the usual routine of hollow compliment, of pretty nothings, of flatter platitudes which make up the conversation of such a gathering. Of course the guests discussed the flowers, the few pictures, the music, the supper, each others' dresses and the minister. O, much enduring clergy, what would society do without you, and the weather? The supper was really good, and the conversation the "entertainment" mostly. There was some soulless music, for Miss Alice played the piano a little—of course, all young ladies must, whether they have any music in their souls or not.

The gentlemen smoked after supper, but that was done one side somewhere, as questionable things usually are. About midnight the last guest had vanished into the darkness, each one saying in due form with his good night: A delightful evening, Mrs. Barnes, your company are always so charming!"

Remarks like these in the going-home carriages: "Such a stupid affair! Why will people like the Barneses try to ape gentility, and give fashionable parties when they don't know how?"