

BESSIE BRAMBLE

Moralizes Over the Wrecks of Full Dress and High Social Follies.

CRITIQUE OF TALMAGE'S LATE TALKS.

He Says He Has Struck a Popular Theme That Will Please the Masses.

DRAMATIC CRITICS THE WORST PREVARICATORS

"The exposure, the fatigues and excitement of society" are what killed Miss Bayard, say the doctors. "Her multifarious social duties overtaxed her strength," was the verdict of the family physician.

So far as we know there is no royal edict, no canon law, statute enactment, ecclesiastical bull, or tyrannous ukase compelling the wives and daughters and sisters of the high dignitaries of the Government to make martyrs of themselves, or commit slow suicide. Their so-called social duties are not taxing. They are not hired at fixed salaries, they give receptions, dinners, balls, banquets, teas, breakfasts, or to spend their days in distributing cards and making calls, and their nights in dissipation with late hours, indigestible suppers and small talk with odds until body, brain and nerve give way under the strain of such unnatural living. Why should they do it? Why should a woman, who assumes to have any common sense, risk her life, her health, her comfort and the pursuance of alleged social duties. We know of no law of conscience or duty which impels a woman to sacrifice herself for nothing, save to see her name in the papers and have her dress described by the society correspondents. We know of no law of duty which requires a woman to go to receptions with her shoulders and arms bare to every last that blows. We know of no statute that requires a woman to wear a dress without sleeves and cut low, and to stand four or five hours, and with an assumed glad smile pretend she is delighted to see everybody that comes. There is absolutely no good reason why a woman should make such drafts upon her constitution as to seriously imperil health, and perhaps make her a weary invader for life to please Mrs. Grundy, or to make an administration brilliant, or to eclipse somebody else, or to work political wires.

The dowagers must be tough indeed who and it and survive, but the numerous invalids, and broken-down women in palatial homes are mostly the wrecks and victims of ill dress and folly. But, says some one, the rooms are kept at summer heat and the exposure amounts to nothing. But anybody knows how biting blasts slip in unawares. Not long ago, at a party here at home, the parlors were crowded and stifling, and a large number of guests filled the spacious hall and thronged the stairs, where a nipping eddy of an icy wind played havoc every time the door opened, and distributed shudders, chills and chills regardless of the nakedness of necks and arms. It is needless to say that colds, sore throats, bronchial inflammation and other natural effects followed such aulent cause. Does anyone wonder?

To our mind it is utter nonsense to say "a woman must fulfill the duties of her social position." There is no must about it. It is matter of choice. If she chooses to sacrifice herself at the shrine of fashionable folly, follows that she either likes the rush and whirl of dissipation, or else she does not know any better. But for either a man or woman make themselves a show for the gazing multitude, to dress themselves to death, and end their lives and money in the service of fashion, is something we cannot fathom. A party once in a while, a reception or a wedding now and again, a progressive euchre or list party every week or so are pleasant, but to spend days and nights for an entire season in dressing, and gadding, and in the useless racket of fashionable society would be worse, as to health and comfort, than toiling 12 hours a day in the Braddock Steel works.

Report says that Miss Bayard was fond of literature, and was well versed in English and French classics; that she had made public questions a study; that she could talk intelligently with all her father's friends; that she could have been contented to live quietly, and have had more of the company of her father and her books. Such peaceful pleasures might have saved her life for years, perhaps. Although nothing in society satisfied her, it is said, she yet pursued it in recognition of the social duties of a Cabinet officer's wife. She was doubtless trained in the belief that such alleged social duties were incumbent, and therefore sacrificed her life and pleasure with a heroism and devotion worthy of a better cause. If she was familiar with politics she should have known that nowhere in the constitution is it prescribed that the wives of daughters of the high dignitaries of the Government shall waste the family fortunes and work like day laborers in keeping up the social end of the administration. When Congressmen discourse upon the women citizens of the republic, they are fond of saying that woman's place is at home, rearing her children, welcoming her husband with a smile, and smoothing over with softest sympathy the jags and scratches of his every day's battle with the world, but how are these sweet sentiments to be made consistent with the fact that their own wives and daughters must dress, must dance, and gad, and be early and down late to keep up with the dash and whirl of fashionable society? that in accordance with its requirements they must neglect their homes, and give up rest, comfort, pleasure, health and perhaps life to keep up with the gadding world's ignoble life?

A Congressman is very well paid considering everything. But it is asking too much of his wife and daughters shall toil like black hands for nothing, unless they choose to like it. Why should a Cabinet officer's wife—who receives no salary—not be as independent as a Cabinet officer? Secretary Garland will not go anywhere if he has to wear a dress coat. We should like to see a Cabinet officer's wife with independence enough appear without a train, or full dress, or even at home if she felt like it. We should like to see women with as much sense as a minister's wife we have heard of, who said she was not paid to run the women's prayer meeting, or the missionary society, or the singing circle, and she did not propose to give her whole time to the church, unless they paid her enough to secure a housekeeper to take charge of her home affairs. One thing is certain, no monuments will be raised by admiring world to silliness, and no crown of fame or hero's laurels await the woman who spends her life in alleged social duties, and in endeavoring to run the gauntlet of the gossips and the Grundies at the expense of health and comfort.

It has all along been preached and held fast by many that marriage was the destiny of men. Not long ago one of the orthodox sisters announced that wifehood was the best glory of woman. To this end was created, and should be educated and set apart. To this decree she should bow and render in all meekness. On this altar she should sacrifice herself, her gifts, her sacred soul and her life. That marriage to her was the symbol of success, the crown of victory, the cross of honor, the highest achievement of womanhood, the topmost glory earth could give. That without the halo of a husband's name she would become a bitter old maid, a gadding gossip, a miserable failure, a creature who had missed her highest destiny, and therefore an object of pity only to be utilized as a maiden aunt or an envied spinster.

But now comes Dr. Talmage, who said in his sermon last Sunday that "the idea that marriage is the destination of the race is a mistake that should be corrected. That millions of women can never be married because there is nobody to marry them. Consequently the first and chief lesson to be taught to every girl is to take care of herself." This serious blow to the old orthodox notion that every woman should be trained for matrimony and housekeeping. If there are millions of women who, in the numerical scale of things, never can get married, and marriage is a lottery anyway, is it not better that women should be trained and edu-

ated not so much for matrimony as to earn a living and take care of themselves.

Moreover, Brother Talmage makes it pretty clear that marriage, save under the most favorable conditions, is a vast mistake, an immediate evil, a fearful and tremendous blunder. He calls upon young men with the wife of Ahab, the wife of Job, Xanthippe, Sapphira, Mrs. John Milton, Mrs. John Wesley, Mrs. John Ruskin, and Jazebel, and Lucretia Borgia, and Lady Macbeth, and Lady Bulwer and the lawling, scolding and ceaseless pelting of Solomon's wives in view to beware, be watchful and be wise. We say so, too, but they won't. He calls upon them to consult the Lord and pray over the matter, but they won't. Men are never so pig-headed in anything as in matrimonial matters. If there is anybody under the heavens whom, according to the wishes and opinions of his best friends he should not marry, that is the girl of all others upon whom he has fixed his hopes, and will marry in spite of fate.

But if men, as Dr. Talmage says, should become prayerfully wise, and chary and supremely careful in the matter of matrimony, it behooves women to be so also. However, this follows if they are educated to be independent and self-supporting. In such case men will be measured by their merit, estimated by their virtues and held at their true valuation as they should be.

Dr. Talmage has struck a popular theme. It is to his credit that he deals, not with Sunday texts only, but those that bear on every day life. The individual man or woman is made or marred by marriage. Such a subject therefore is of infinite moment to the millions whose lives are opening to the bloom and blossom of the perfect rose, or to the mildew and blight of untoward fate.

If President Cleveland had the New York dramatic critics in view when he accused the newspapers of mendacious lying, we could most heartily agree with him. For years we had been reading of the beauty, the grace, the splendid ability and absolute genius of Miss Rose Coghlan, and so impressed were we with the idea that she was a star of the first magnitude that we left our cozy fire and brook and braved the winter's cold and the dreary discomfort of the Opera House to see her, only to find a somewhat pleasing person of second rate ability, and no genius to speak of. Nothing to justify her as more than a star by virtue of newspaper prominence, and everything to show that she had been puffed, lauded and magnified by the critics for some other reason than distinguished talent. Our faith in Willie Winter has gone to wreck and ruin. His supposed veracity and good judgment were the cause of our wasting a dollar—and what is worse, a whole evening.

THE TAILOR'S SECRET.

How the Artist of the Shears Can Beautify the Most Angular Shape.

(New York Mail and Express.)

There is a profession which many people know nothing of. It is that of the man who models the human figure, but not in clay. He models in cloth. An expert in this art can demand a large salary, and is always sure of employment in the large tailoring houses. A reporter visited a fashionable uptown tailor to have a talk with one of these artists.

"Will you tell me the latest idea of a good figure from a dude's standpoint?"

"That depends a great deal upon what the dude wants. If he wants a finely-developed pair of calves, I can supply him. If he lacks breadth of chest, I can furnish him with as fine a chest as you could wish to see. Should the deficiency be in the shoulders, I can produce a pair that Atlas himself would envy. The process of producing these is very simple. But first I must inform you that I have nothing to do with tailoring. I simply make cloth coats or pads, which answer the same purpose to the tailors as lasts do to a shoemaker. To do this it is absolutely necessary to have an accurate idea of the proportions of the customer, otherwise it would lead to a very amusing confusion. Once I had a customer who wanted to possess a shapely pair of legs. The original ones were sufficiently full for all practical purposes, but he wanted them more full. I made some pads for the thighs, calves and hips. They were made of fine chamois leather, and when finished they were sewn into the trousers. The result was the gentleman walked on Fifth avenue next morning with finely-shaped legs, but entirely out of proportion with other parts of his body."

ORIGIN OF THE BANG

The Fashion of Docking the Hair Came from the Interior of Africa.

(Boston Times.)

A careful historical chase of the bang through many countries finally locates the frizzle bang as a native of Africa, the ladies of that continent having advantages for producing this style of hirsute ornament which their sisters further north never possessed. Established as a fashion in Africa, it lost no time in passing over into Asia, the African slaves assisting in its transit. But the capillary attractions of Asiatic ladies were by no means suited to the African style, and, all efforts at frizzing their hair proving failures, the curly bang was evolved as the nearest approach to the African style. Thus did the bang traverse thousands of miles, and so adapt itself to circumstances that some ethnologists have studiously maintained its Asiatic origin.

Exactly when the bang came into Europe is a matter of doubt, some placing its advent in the latter days of the Roman empire, while others insist that it was brought back from the East by the Crusaders; but whenever it came, it found that the front hair of European ladies was as intractable as their temper, and so the hairdressers, being unable either to curl or to frizzle, the saucer-bang, stiff, straight, soaped, and plastered down, as hideous as a nightmare, was finally evolved.

RELIC OF THE REBELLION

The Anchor of an Old Ship Recovered From the River After Many Years.

(Vicksburg (Miss.) Star.)

Captain Robert Bowman has presented to Captain Jackson, of the steamer Henry Mark, the old anchor of the far-famed steamer Star of the West, which he recovered some time since from the wreck as it lay in the Tallahatchie river, several hundred miles above this city. The anchor is very much decayed, on account of its long stay in the water. Its weight is about 600 pounds. It will be remembered that this vessel figured very prominently in the late war, she being the vessel that was fired on by the guns in Fort Moultrie while attempting to reach Fort Sumter, in Charleston harbor, with supplies. She was afterward captured by the Confederate forces off Galveston and brought to New Orleans, and when that place fell, she together with a number of other fine steamers, were brought to this place and thence up the Yazoo and Tallahatchie rivers, where they were all destroyed, either by fire or sunk to obstruct the channels of those rivers.

Two Nebraska Gourmands.

(Omaha Herald.)

An eating contest occurred at Lindsey's restaurant, Lincoln, night before last. It seems that a large party of friends had been eating supper there, when August Arndt, one of the number, bantered the proprietor to "eat" for the price of suppers, amounting to \$16. The bet was taken, and the contest began on empty stomachs. Arndt and Lindsey each got away with four porterhouse steaks of regulation size, and agreed to call it a draw.

Politics and Religion in France.

M. Basly, a Socialist deputy, recently elected to the French chamber, is in serious trouble with his constituents, who charge him with having attended a religious funeral, the dead man in the case being a relative. The offense of the deputy was further aggravated by his having dropped a coin into the cure's plate when it was carried around during the offertory.