

town, became the wonder and admiration of all Europe. Every May Day poet-competitors flocked to the Hotel de Ville, and in turn recited their compositions in the hearing of a select number of connoisseurs in "The Gray Science." The most successful one received a golden violet as a prize, was regarded as the hero of the day, and took part in all the enjoyments of the occasion. So great a concourse of visits inundated the good city yearly, that the magistrates took the games under their own protection and added a silver marigold and a silver eglantine to the prizes. Clemence, of Isaure, a noble lady, bequeathed almost the whole of her fortune to keep up the games. She died in 1540, and her statue, placed in an alcove of the Hotel de Ville, was crowned with flowers every year whilst the games lasted, that is, with modifications, beyond the opening of the present century. France has enjoyed its halcyon days, so has England: the pastimes of the old-fashioned French partake of the refined, the graceful, the gentle; those of our own forefathers of the vigorous, the healthfully merry, the "jolly."

It is pleasant to end with mention of our own daystar of poetry, our Chaucer, who revelled in the poësie of La Belle France, and was all the better for it. How much he loved May and Mayflowers, and sympathised with the Troubadours who loved them, too, we can gather if we take time and trouble to dip into his "Court of Love," "Cuckoo and Nightingale," "Flower and the Leaf," "House of Fame," and last, but not least, his "Dream."

THE FAIRY OF THE FAMILY.

By DORA DE BLAQUIERE.

II. FAMILY CLOTHING; WHAT IT IS, AND HOW TO BUY IT.

It is a very singular fact—if we consider it—that the heat of the human body is the same all over the world; it is no greater in the torrid zone, and it is not decreased in those frozen regions where man can hardly breathe. In both places, respectively, the natural heat of the body is about 98 deg. Fahr., and whatever the outside temperature may be, this natural heat must be retained at the same degree of warmth—for increased heat means fever, and with decreased heat the breathing and circulation of the blood suffer, and at last would cease altogether. In a measure, the body has the power of regulating its own heat, by means of perspiration, when, from some external cause, it exceeds the required amount; but it needs an external shield to keep off the cold of the atmosphere which surrounds it, which is constantly moving, and would carry off the warmth of our bodies faster than the carbon provided by our food and the oxygen of the air can keep up the supply. This external shield is our clothing, which keeps in the natural heat, and in cold weather prevents the outer air from robbing us of it in a more than ordinary degree, and, in hot climates, protects us from the heat, which would burn us, as a parasol or umbrella would do.

If you have read thus far, you will have begun to perceive that suitable clothing is one of the conditions of health, and that its choice and purchase are both very important matters. If you listen to the ordinary conversation that goes on around you, you will be surprised to find that no considerations of this kind appear to be taken into account in the selection of clothing—fashion, personal liking, and what is becoming, are the reasons for our choice—from no one do we ever hear a hygienic reason given. Now, these three considerations which I have mentioned must always be taken into

account, so long as we require clothing, because our duty demands it, and our power of usefulness depends so largely on our appearance; but they also depend in a much larger degree on our continued good health. So, personally, the hygiene of dress should be our chief consideration, and in respect to this last it is that women and girls chiefly fail, from lack of knowledge or thought.

The two great objects that we have to attain in clothing are, first, to secure a uniform temperature of the body from head to feet; secondly, to reduce the weight of it, as far as possible.

If we learn to bear these two principles in mind, we shall have advanced a long way towards wisdom in the choice of dress.

There are not many rules to guide us in our purchase of clothing, but most of us know that "smooth light-coloured textiles have the power of reflecting or repelling heat, that is, they do not allow it to pass below their surface, and that rough fabrics have the power of absorbing heat into themselves, and of readily conveying it to any object that may be nearest to them." Here we have "reflection" and "absorption;" the first makes us wear white garments next our skin, because they will not rob us of our own heat, and thus we find the animals in the polar regions all clothed in white fur, which keeps their own internal heat closely round them inside a comfortable thick coat. Outside our white garments we put on dresses dark and rough, that we may absorb any outward heat that may benefit us.

Thus we see that the office of clothing is to shield us from heat, and protect us from cold. "It does not make us warm," as we are in the habit of saying, but it keeps us warm when we are so, by protecting us from the outer air that would steal our own warmth away.

We must now mention those substances which are called "bad conductors of heat." The worst heat-conductors, and consequently those best for our clothing, are wool, fur, hair, down, feathers, silk, cotton, linen, &c. This explains why we wear flannel next the skin in any and every climate.

My scientific chat has been necessarily a short one, and I have said little more than will enable my readers to form sensible ideas on the real value of clothing, and the true uses it ought to serve. I will now proceed to the more practical part of my present work, endeavouring to put my instruction into a tangible form. Perhaps some of my girl-readers may not like to be reminded that nearly all our clothing is secondhand in a certain sense, that is to say it has served as such for some of the lower animals before we employed it, and we are, consequently, the recipients of their "cast-off" apparel. So we are not such very great people after all—are we? But we constantly need to be reminded how silly pride of any kind is, and how much more lovely it is to be "clothed with humility."

From animals we obtain wool, hair, fur, silk, and leather.

From vegetables we obtain cotton and linen, both of which have been dealt with in my last article on "The Linen of the House," p. 278. The fabrics made from these materials are endless, and each time that silk and wool, wool and cotton, &c., are mixed, a different name is given to the articles so produced by the various drapers. But we have one universal rule to go by, *i.e.*, a mixture of cotton with either silk or wool is a loss of value to both, and of usefulness to us. A combination of wool and silk, however, forms an excellent and useful material.

Clothing may be placed in three great divisions—*viz.*, the under-wear, the skirts, and the external dress. The first division is usually laid on in two layers in winter—the flannel and the cotton garments; in the summer only in one layer—the linen or

cotton. The common method is to wear a flannel, woven merino, or knitted woollen vest, cotton drawers and chemise, stays, cotton bodice, flannel petticoat, and underskirt of woollen or silk, &c. If we look at this arrangement with critical eyes, we shall soon discover that the upper part of the body is over-clothed, and the lower under-clad and starved just where it most needs protection. Provision is made for seven, if not eight, thicknesses of material at the waist, and one closely fitting below, besides three which fly about loosely in the wind or in the movement made in walking. Thus it is evident that we are in no wise providing for the "uniform temperature of the body, nor for the proper division of the weight of our clothes."

The anti-hygienic style of the underclothing of women and girls has been strongly felt of late years, and has led to the introduction of a combined garment—the chemise and drawers in one—which passes under various names, "Union" garment, "Combinations," &c. This is really the little nightdress long worn by French children, or that worn by gentlemen in the East Indies. It offers one great advantage, which consists in its making the covering uniform over the body, and dispenses with gathers round the waist, and all needless fullness there. A gored chemise, adapted from those used about eighty years ago, and a petticoat and bodice in one—also gored—have both been adopted to meet the existing difficulty. Paper patterns of all of these can be obtained from any of the numberless pattern-shops which American enterprise has opened in England.

So far as my own observation extends, I find that women and girls are thinking-out the subject for themselves everywhere, and are gradually reforming their undergarments according to their own needs. Lately I was shown a combination garment, made of brown winsey and lined with flannel, which was made by a young lady clerk in the Post Office for her own use. Under it she wears a cotton combination, and on the winsey garment a single petticoat can be buttoned at the waist. She says she has never been so well and so comfortable in her life and so free from cold, and she goes out and in, in all weathers. Others of my acquaintance wear two combination garments—one next the skin, of merino or lambswool, and one over it, of white cotton—then a warm *petticoat, lined with flannel* and with a deep yoke, and over it the stays. By this style, the number of garments is reduced to four and the temperature is rendered fairly uniform over the body, while the weight is lessened as far as possible apparently.

Another new introduction is the basque-bodice, with high neck and long sleeves, and closely fitting to the figure, on which there are two rows of buttons, one above the other, the lower to button on the drawers and the upper for the single petticoat. The shape recommended for the petticoat is of semicircular form, so as to dispense with all possible fullness at the waist.

The last of these "reformed" garments is Lady Harberton's divided skirt, which has been already described in the monthly dress article. It does not appear to have met with any very extensive success.

We have advanced so far with the clothing, and have discussed the novelties in under-wear and skirts, their materials and changes, that we can now proceed to consider the best method of purchasing them, and the various signs by which good quality in the textiles used for the purpose may be recognised.

Linen is not often used for underclothing at present, but I know several old-fashioned people who prefer night-dresses made of it, and who consider it the best material for the

purpose, both as regards the washing and the wear. For this purpose (night-dresses) it need not be very fine, but it must be even in texture. Calico should be undressed and quite free from lime, should have an even selvage, and be evenly woven, the threads being without knots or roughness. It should always be 36 inches in width, as the narrower kinds do not cut to any advantage, though they may be cheaper to purchase. A thicker calico is used for nightdresses and drawers than for chemises, many people choosing what is called a "double warp," or a twilled calico for the former, and "India longcloth" for the latter. The cheapest way of getting calico for a large family, or where many are to be clothed, is to purchase it by the piece. In most shops a great reduction is then made. But to those who have limited means to deal with, it is difficult to obtain so large a sum at once; and they will do well to purchase small quantities, and to have a garment always in hand. By this means they will secure a constant supply, which will keep the stock up to the mark. Nothing in the way of trimmings wears or looks better than Swiss embroidery, and at times very great bargains can be secured in it, by watching one's opportunity, and securing the lengths that will cut to good advantage.

Woollen articles should be all wool, or else they look shabby directly. Cotton is generally used the lengthway of the material; the woollen threads will run across from selvage to selvage. Some very pretty stuffs may be purchased at an extremely moderate price on account of this mixture, but they should be avoided, as they cockle with rain, and look poor and cheap. All-wool serge, beige, camel's hair, "nun's veiling," tweed, and cashmeres are all excellent wearing materials for young and old alike, and will all of them bear washing, cleaning, or turning, and re-making for children. Black, brown, and dark green are the best colours to wear, while lavender and grey are generally the worst. Navy blue is an excellent colour in good materials, but a bad one in cheap stuffs.

Stockings, gloves, and boots should never be bought cheaply, and the first two are exactly the articles in which bad managers waste their money. Three good pairs of stockings are sufficient for the winter, and if you pay three shillings a pair for each they will last three winters with care. But they must be washed at home always, and thus run no risks of soda and washing-crystals at the hands of the ordinary washerwoman. The same is true of gloves. One pair of gloves at 3s. 6d. will out-last half a-dozen at 1s. 6d., or any of the so-called "bargains." Black gloves should be carefully rubbed with a little oil or unsalted butter on a flannel before they are worn. This magical process doubles their powers of wear and makes them look a good colour, and wear respectably to their very last day.

Boots with elastic sides should be avoided by all good managers, especially for children's use. The elastic soon wears out, and is quickly spoiled by wet and mud. Boots which lace or button are better for all reasons, and retain their shape far better. Good boots can never, I think, be cheap, and cheap leather means bad boots, of which the creaking soles are usually the audible outward sign. These dreadful worries to yourself and others are caused by the second or middle sole being made of pieces of leather instead of one entire piece. The only way to cure them is to take off the sole and replace the bad leather with good. A pair of light half-soled indiarubber shoes, to be worn with an old pair of boots in rainy and muddy weather, will be found to contribute towards an immense saving, as all leathers, both good and bad, are spoilt by wetting, and few people take sufficient pains to dry their boots carefully. No walking-

boots should be worn in the house, and every girl should provide herself with a pair of house shoes, or slippers, which are to be procured cheaply, and can be made pretty by her own tasteful fingers, at the small cost of a little ribbon and a bright buckle.

There is nothing that women run after so much as "bargains," which are generally very bad ones, unless the shopper be a woman of forethought and much good sense. Before buying any important article of dress, the whole subject should be well considered, and the wardrobe passed in review. The quality of the material is of more importance than the fashion, and good wearing qualities are more needful to the poor than to the rich. My constant advice to all is, "Never buy cheap things, they are always dear in the end," and, as a rule, the good manager will avoid all the shops where "bargains at a ruinous sacrifice" are to be had, unless indeed she has such a firm will and determination that she will not be led away by any inducements to buy what she does not need. If she be wise she has made out a careful list, and knows exactly her wants, and what she has to spend on them. Do not waste your time by looking at things that you do not intend to purchase, and remember that you are not obliged to buy, however much pressed to take, what you do not require. How often you hear the making of some silly purchase excused, on the ground that the dupe of the shop-attendant "really could not come away without buying something," and "yet they had nothing I wanted." Remember your money is one of your "talents," and that you must lay it out to the best advantage, and just as conscientiously as you can. Do not waste the time of the shopkeeper if he have not the article you require. Thank him politely, and go elsewhere. If you be much pressed to look at things that you do not need, say firmly and kindly, "Thank you, I will not delay you by looking at anything that I shall not purchase." If you have thought the matter over and made up your mind as to the things you need and the price you mean to pay for them, do not suffer yourself to be persuaded out of your determination. Remember it is the shopkeeper's business to dispose of his goods, and that he is very wise in using his best efforts to make you take them; but it is your business to see that you want what you buy, and that you obtain exactly what you need.

If you make clothes at home be sure to have everything large enough, so that it will not look shabby and fray at the seams. If you have once found a good pattern be sure that you take care of it to cut by in future, and keep your eyes about you always to see the new styles in dress, as a good and economical manager can often, by a few clever touches, make "old clothes look like new."

SERVANTS AND SERVICE.

By RUTH LAMB.

CHAPTER V.

INFLUENCE OVER CHILDREN. BEAR AND FORBEAR.

IN my last chapter I dealt especially with the qualifications and responsibilities of those whose duties lie in the nursery. But it is not only those who have the actual care of children that can exercise a wholesome influence over them. All who have the will may do excellent service in this direction.

There are some servants, and particularly those who are beyond girlhood, who regard the children of the household with anything but a kindly feeling, who bitterly resent the planting of a young foot on the kitchen floor, and

deem the appearance of a curly head in its doorway as an unwarrantable intrusion.

"Now you go out of my kitchen this minute," cries the ruling genius. "You know you've no business here. Be off! Quick; or I'll tell your ma."

The curly head vanishes. The youngster, perhaps, only came to make a private inquiry as to the forthcoming pudding, or something equally innocent. But after his disappearance cook will probably further remark, "I hate to have children poking and prying about. They always tell tales and make mischief."

I can understand the existence of such a feeling if any mistress is so injudicious, any mother so unwise towards her children, as to permit them to act the part of spies over her servants and tattlers towards herself. It is as lowering to her own dignity as it is insulting to those who serve and injurious to her children to encourage such practices.

On the other hand, the upright, conscientious servant has no need to care who looks on whilst she is engaged about her daily duties. If she reverently carries in her mind this one thought, "Thou God seeest me," and acts as in that presence, she has no occasion to trouble herself about other observers.

As a mother, I feel even more strongly than as the mistress of a home. However accomplished a servant might be in the duties of her department, I would not keep her if I thought that the morals and manners of my children would suffer by contact with her.

Speaking to servants in every department of service I say, "Be kind to the children, dear girls. You can, if you are Christians, give many a hint for their good. You may whisper a word in season which may make the angry boy ashamed of his senseless passion. You may show the little one who is inclined to deceive, the beauty and bravery of truth.

Children are often inclined to gossip. They perhaps overhear something which was never intended to reach them, and, big with the thought of a discovered secret, are eager to share the newly acquired knowledge with somebody else. A young servant is the nearest individual to the little personage who is inclined to be confidential, and to her the tale is told, if she will listen.

This gives a right-minded girl an opportunity of showing her own uprightness and honourable disposition by refusing to listen, and of pointing out to the child the impropriety of repeating what has been said by parents or guests who had either not noticed or forgotten the presence of the "little pitcher."

Imagine how sweet it was to a mother's ears when one of my children, after speaking of happy talks she had enjoyed on Sunday evenings with a young servant, said, "I always feel better after a conversation with her, more anxious to love and serve God, and to be good and do what is right to everybody."

After such an instance as this, dear girls, you cannot imagine that a servant's influence is to be lightly thought of, or carelessly used. I have known an instance in another home where the religious training of the parents was rendered useless, their boy's faith undermined, and the man's future career hopelessly changed, by the contrary influence of an old and much trusted domestic.

Again, if servants wish to find a common bond of sympathy between their mistresses and themselves, the little ones will furnish it.

When riding in a tram-car, I one day sat opposite to a young mother, who was accompanied by a girl-nurse with a baby on her lap. It was evidently the first, and all its clothing bore traces of tasteful, industrious fingers rather than of great expenditure. The child was a lovely creature, and its young mother and younger nurse seemed unconscious of everything else. The three made a charming picture; for, the little maid, her face lighted