

FACT AND FANCY FOR WOMEN

BY ELLA HIGGINSON.

THE SEA OF OPAL.

(PIECET SOUND).

O, many a time on the Sea of Opal,
The day and the night have narrowly missed;
And many a time on her tremulous bosom
The sun and the moon have passionately kissed.

O, many a star in the Sea of Opal
Has sparkled, and shivered, and sank from view;
And eyes have grown dim with waiting and watching
For ships that were lost in the shimmering blue.

O, many a heart on the Sea of Opal
Has sailed away in the cold gray mist;
And hearts that were left have faintled of doubting,
With souls unsatisfied, lips un-kissed.

O, sweetheart! Life is a Sea of Opal—
The sun is happiness, sorrow the mist;
And the stars that are lost in its tremulous bosom
Are tears unshed and kisses un-kissed.

I like a beautiful child, but I love a well-behaved one. O, you mothers who spoil your children! you are doing them an irreparable wrong. "I hate that child," I heard a gentleman say the other day; "I am ashamed to hold such a feeling toward a little child, but, at least, I am only confessing the truth. It is his parents' fault, but still I detest the very sight of him." There is much to be said on both sides of this question; and the woman who has children, and the woman who has none, should each make allowance, one for the other. I believe it to be next to impossible to make a really good child out of one whose disposition is naturally vicious; but you can, at least, make him well behaved. You can not put the nature of a lamb into the breast of the lion, but you can so train the lion that he will obey your slightest command. It may require time, patience, and an unbreakable will to bring up a child in the way he should go; but better it were to cast him into the sea at his birth than to so humor his whims, and yield to his "tempers," and spoil him generally, that your warmest friends will be unable to tolerate your child. Let him talk at his own sweet will at home, but teach him to sit quietly and silently in your friends' homes, unless he is addressed; and until he is old enough to understand and obey this rule, do not take him out with you unless he has a special invitation. Let him ask questions galore at home, and patiently give him the desired information, but teach him that it is an onslaught on nerves, on patience, on good breeding, and on poor, suffering humanity in general to ask questions when away from home. I know one ex-United States senator who has twelve children, and each is a model for good behavior, good breeding, simple, natural elegance of manner, and cheerful, kind consideration for old and young, high and low. The mother of those children had the sole care of each of them, and was so devoted to them that, although she entertained graciously and hospitably the friends for whom she really cared, she found neither time nor desire to be "in the swim" of the empty, useless vanities and frivolities of what is wrongly called "society." I know another United States senator who has several children, each one of whom is a model for bad behavior, bad manners, disgusting lack of consideration for others, and unbearable insolence. Their mother is a leader of society; she is celebrated for her beauty, her style, her wealth, her diamonds; and, to keep up her reputation for these things, she neglected her children, leaving them to the care of incompetent nurse girls. I met her at a hotel one summer, where her promising, three-year-old daughter made life one black nightmare to all other guests. More than all others should those "of high degree" teach their children to be simple, natural, well behaved, and considerate of others. Yet many a wood-chopper's child could teach real refinement of manner to many a governor's son.

An eastern magazine not long ago contained a graphic account of seal fishing, the writer of which had, himself, accompanied a sealing expedition into Alaskan waters. He is evidently a man of just soul and tender feeling, and his very pen seems to writhe with the torture of recollection, as he writes of the sickening scenes of butchery he was forced to witness. He tells how the seals are surprised and surrounded where they are congregated in thousands on the ice or the rocks, and pitilessly beaten to death with clubs in the hands of the fishermen. He went out with them one day, ambitious to share the work, but a few hours of the terrible slaughter were enough to fill his soul with phantoms for a life time. He went back to the ship, sick at heart, and crept into his bunk feeling that he must hide his

guilty face from the sunlight of heaven. The innocent, helpless way in which those beautiful, defenseless creatures looked into the merciless eyes of their murderers, and uttered their little, plaintive, murmuring "meow-eow," as the brutal club was lifted above them, cut into his soul and left a scar that time can not efface. In the light of this inhuman picture how must we feel when we reflect that at the present moment some of the ablest statesmen of two of earth's greatest nations are wrangling and "arbitrating" for supremacy of right to conduct this slaughter of innocent creatures in Behring sea? Think of it, lovely reader; you, who in winter days, wear a seal cape about your milk-white throat and shoulders, or thrust dainty hands—hands that would shrink from that butchery—into seal muffs! Here comes in the law of cause and effect—and are not you and I the cause and all the rest of the wretched business the effect? The pivot upon which rests the whole, vast sealing industry is the principle of demand and supply. Let you and me put an end to the demand, and would not the supply cease as if by magic? If there be a God who judges the just and the unjust, how much higher do you think we stand in His sight than the fishermen who do the disgusting work at our behest? For a few hours' gratification of our empty vanity, we yearly issue the death-warrant of thousands of helpless creatures, as fair in their form as we are in ours, and as justly entitled to the life that my God and your God has given them. Our hireling, the bronzed and hardened sailor, can at least plead a semblance of self-justification in that he toils and murders for a livelihood for himself and for his loved ones. Are we less red-handed than he—with these slips of costly seal about our throats?

The roads are dark this September morning, instead of white, for last night it rained—a gentle, steady, warm rain; I lay awake half the night listening to it, and thinking how glad the flowers would be, and how sweet the woods, in the morning, and wondering how many other people were lying with wakeful eyes listening to the soft fall of the summer rain on the roof. And now all the thick white dust is packed down lightly, and my horse's feet sink into it noiselessly, leaving clear-cut tracks. On either side the road, run narrow, white ribbons where some early wagon has gone, probably laden down with luscious fruits and vegetables, with some merry, whistling farmer's boy holding the "lines" in careless fingers. Out in that wood one little bird is fairly mad with the joy of living—one can almost hear the drops of last night's rain trembling through his notes as he flings them out from that ruffled, swelling throat and breast. Ah! a good shot!—a kind, keen shot! My horse shrinks violently from it, but I—I shrink only from the hand that cut down that little glad, innocent life, that a red breast or wing might flame on some frivolous woman's hat. I wonder if the women who wear those little dead things ever think of the tiny little hearts and the tender songs that stopped forever that their cruel pleasure might be gratified! There is something in the air this morning that warns us the autumn of another year is with us; it is an indescribable something—a faint, subtle change, pure, sweet, tremulous, as the change in a young girl's face after love's first kiss. A mellow goldenness lies over everything, even blending with the purple haze that sleeps over the sea; here a maple stands like a scarlet stain against the dark background of the forest; a squirrel scampers, scolding, up a tree; a gray rabbit flashes across the road and plunges through the wet ferns; and all about me fir cones are falling softly—there is something mournful about the sound of a falling cone. The "sweet, sad days" of the year are with us; and something—it may be the drenched perfume of the air, or the softer blue of the sea and sky, or yet the haziness, the languor, the loneliness of the waning year—brings back to many of us the remembrance of the other days and other places; of voices long silent, of lips long dumb, of forms long vanished.

Only think of it! Some of the London duchesses have swelled out and ruffled up their feathers and decided that no more plebeian rich Americans shall have the entree to their high-born "society." It is the height of snobbishness that titled ladies with hazy reputations and titled rouses with no reputations at all should hold themselves better than pure American women and honest American men. I wish with all my soul that America had one leading society woman who would "decide" that no more dissipated princes should be admitted to her home. We might, then, keep more of our rich girls at home, and make noble American wives and mothers of them.

Do not ever forget that the man who is the pink of courtesy to other women is very frequently an unmannerly boor to his wife.

An arrogant and haughty bearing is frequently but the mask of extreme sensitiveness.

The frivolous mother buildeth the foundation for a fool to stand upon.