

EDNA AND JOHN:

A Romance of Idaho Flat.

By Mrs. A. J. DUNIWAY.

AUTHOR OF "JUDITH REID," "KELLEN DOWD," "AMIE AND HENRY LEE," "THE HAPPY HOME," "ONE WOMAN'S SPHERE," "MADGE MORRISON," ETC., ETC., ETC.

[Entered, according to Act of Congress, in the year 1876, by Mrs. A. J. DUNIWAY, in the office of the Librarian of Congress at Washington City.]

Woman's degraded, helpless position is the weak point of our institutions to-day—a disturbing force everywhere, severing family ties, filling our asylums with the dead, the dumb, the blind, our prisons with criminals, our cities with drunkards and prostitution, our homes with disease and death.—[National Centennial Equal Rights Protest.

CHAPTER XX.

Edna passed a sleepless night. Both babies were unusually unwell and fretful, and what with her own troubled thoughts and their continued restlessness, the morning dawned ere she had closed her eyes in slumber. To rise with the peep of dawn was one of the necessary contingencies of her business, and it was with heavy heart and heavy eyelids that she appeared at breakfast to wait upon a long line of hungry boarders, all of whom had learned of her determination to try to live without further interference from a drunken gambler, no matter what the law might demand.

And, in truth, the better class of men in Idaho Flat were in open sympathy with the struggling bond-woman. More than once had numbers of them held private indignation meetings wherein they had resolved to lynch the vagabond who ruled over her, but the feeling of respect for the lawful rights of a husband, let that husband be never so worthless, was as deep rooted as the prejudice against a separation for other than nameless causes was firm.

Edna moved nervously about the breakfast tables, serving each in turn with her accustomed alacrity, pausing now and then to give a word of advice to Sue, who was minding the children in a room adjoining, when John Smith, the legal head of the family, and consequently lawful owner of the premises, came sauntering in beside a young limb of the law who had recently displayed his shingle in the Flat, and was solicitous of securing legal business to counteract his board bill.

"A half-dozen eggs, well done! I say, wife!" exclaimed John Smith, in a loud, commanding key, "I propose to see whether or not I can rule my own household!"

"Eggs are a dollar and a half per dozen," suggested Edna, falteringly.

"I didn't ask the price of eggs!" was the loud rejoinder; "I want 'em well done!"

"Then buy them!" replied Edna, turning to the lawyer for his order, and further ignoring John.

"A nice breakfast, please. I am not over particular," said Mr. Brief, complacently.

"My rule is money in advance, as you are aware, Mr. Smith," quietly remarked the trembling wife, while her soul seemed to flash through her great, rabbit-like eyes.

"See here!" cried John, in a sort of sibilant whisper, "You just hurry up that provender, and do as I bid you, or I'll break every dish on this cussed table!"

"And get fined for your pains," said Edna, quietly.

"Is that it?" he exclaimed, giving the table a kick that made the dishes clatter.

"I say, Brief!" he added, after Edna had left them to enjoy their breakfast minus the eggs, "isn't it a jolly joke for a man's wife to talk about fining him, no matter what he does?"

"I should say it was," said Mr. Brief. "The fact is, women are getting a great deal too saucy, and they need a check upon their growing spirit of independence. If I were you I'd go over to the saloon and run the biggest kind of a bill. Debts of honor, you know. That is, I wouldn't call them that, exactly, for they've got a new Territorial Judge over at Boise, and he's playing sad havoc with many of our pet projects. He's one of your white-cravet kind of sticklers for morals and all that sort of thing, and he's working to keep divorces out of the Legislature and before the courts. That part of it is well enough for the lawyers, and I'm not complaining at all, but he rules out all debts for monte or fero, or anything else of the kind, so we must call it something else. Now, I have it, by jingo! She refuses to give you board and lodging. Of course that's moonshine, for she can't help herself, seeing she's your lawful wife, but you can make it a pretext, and you can board and lodge in the Eur-ka and get your drinks and amusements in the bargain. Of course I'll have a good round fee against you, though I'll be reasonable, 'pon my word. But this legal business always costs like sin, you know."

"Yes, I know; but what next?"

John was so deeply interested in this profound "legal advice" that he almost forgot his food.

"Well, I was going to say that I'll board along with you at the Eur-ka, and that'll make the bill bigger."

"What then?"

The New Northwest.

OUR PRIDES.

American women were once supposed to be modest even to prudishness. There was hardly a foreign traveler who, in his eagerness to detect some blot of ill favor, however minute, to mar the fair promise of the country, did not fasten his pen upon the squeamishness supposed to be characteristic of our women, and expose it to a congenial public of his own land as a sign of American vulgarity.

Those in whose memory there may be still left traces of the pungent sarcasm of Mrs. Trollope will recall a scene in her book on the United States in which that censorious dame, with the aid of the scratchy pencil of some now forgotten artist, depicts the overstrained delicacy of a Western lady of her acquaintance, or, as is more probable, her invention.

The point of the description and of the picture is, the mutual aversion with which our fastidious country-women dodge the pertinacious inquisitiveness of a male visitor determined to ferret out the nature of the piece of work her nimble needle is so busy with. The solution of the mysterious problem, in which the mutual ingenuity of every prudishness and impudent curiosity is cleverly displayed, is simply a skirt, which Mrs. Trollope would have her readers suppose was a thing unmentionable by American lips polite to your ears, whether polite or impolite.

Captain Murray, too, with his wardrobe of imagination, had his fling at American prudishness, and, with the practiced coolness of a habitually unscrupulous raconteur, related for the serious belief of his countrymen that American women were so modest that they put the legs of their pinons in pantaloons, or trousers.

There was unquestionably a basis of fact for the construction of these tales of travelers, for, in the early days of the American women were fastidious, but not prudish in the sense of affecting a modesty they did not possess. There was certainly a genuine delicacy, though the barriers with which they sought to guard it were often erected in an awkwardly constructed and applied. The subtleties of youthful shyness are foolish and transparent enough, but they are nevertheless the resorts of undoubted innocence. Let hardened men of the world say what they will about prudery being an indication of the want of the very thing it professes, blushes, averted faces, and disguised meanings are the natural defenses of modesty. The Americans were undoubtedly more scrupulous in the use of many words than the Europeans, but it is true that this has been called prudery any more than the increased fastidiousness which has marked the progress of civilization in all countries? Madam De Seville, who was a very Diana of chastity, and endowed with the purity of an angel, said that she wrote in her letters to her daughter about topics and in words of which even French society, with all its latitude of discussion and expression, would not suppress the slightest whisper.

Pages of Richardson, Fielding, and other writers of a day still nearer our own times, once read aloud in the presence of and freely discussed by mixed companies of innocent girls and boys and modest men and women, would not now be tolerated in England, where most of our classic women of average culture and refinement are not allowed to read, or at least to confess having read, or even to know the titles of the works of these authors of classic fame.

Much of the so-called American prudishness was a consequence of the state of the advanced public refinement, to which civilization, with more or less speed, is everywhere tending. We must, however, put in a protest against the exaggerated delicacy of a fastidiousness which is so much inclined to disguise plain words in equivocal finery of speech, by which purity itself is sometimes made suspect.

There are various expressions in use in this country which are either entirely new and unknown to the English, or applied to quite different uses from that in which they are ordinarily understood by them. The origin of these novel or perverted words may be undoubtedly traced to false delicacy, but they have become so ingrained upon the American mind that those who now ordinarily employ them are neither conscious of nor responsible for the prudishness from which they certainly arose. Our American progenitors, particularly the most were easily startled by the most remote suggestion of impropriety, and, like all half-cultivated but aspiring people, who, only too conscious of vulgarity from their lowly associations, made overstrained efforts to avoid them. It is not now worth while to specify them and endeavor to trace them to their origin, for the process would inevitably lead us back to that polluted source from which our sturdy ancestors derived them, unconscious of any offense, but which cannot, if reached, fail to shock modern delicacy. It may be wise to accept of such words as have already been adopted by general usage, but it is well to understand that overtly in expression is sometimes suggestive of excessive nastiness of idea, and to avoid all attempts at guarding every innocuous word against the possibility of its remotest association with impropriety in the minds of the vulgar. Such attempts will be vain, for as to the evil all things are evil, so to the vulgar all things are vulgar, and we shall only reveal a consciousness of our own partiality which will have a look very like sympathy, and probably be mistaken for it.—Harper's Bazar.

"You can come onto your wife for the pay, my boy."

"But I just don't see what good that would do me, or Edna, or the cubs. You'd have had your board, and I mine, but old Sol of the saloon would get Edna's business. You can't quite come that over me, if I am a wronged and outraged man."

"But don't you see the beauty of the thing? The woman needs to feel your power, as you know. She needs to be taught her place. When she finds, after cooking hard all summer in the hotel business that a suit will be brought in the District Court and judgment rendered in favor of old Sol against everything she possesses, she'll come to her senses denved quick."

"But I can't see that what you advise would be right."

"The dickens take the right of the matter! We weren't considering right, but expediency and power, my boy. She refuses to live with you, that is certain. Can't say that I blame her so dogged much, for you're a sad scamp, and no mistake; but women must learn to obey the laws and must be compelled to respect them, too."

"That's a fact," said John Smith, decidedly.

"After you've run a bill for, say six months," continued Mr. Brief, "you can give your note, payable on demand, and then you'll be sued on the note, the hotel property will be attached, and your wounded dignity and honor will be avenged."

"But, hang it, Brief, I don't just like to do such a thing as that. There's the cubs, you know. She'll have to keep something to raise them on."

worn, called at the hotel, bringing with him a little child of tender years, as ragged and unkempt as himself. He was pale and care-worn, and a hacking cough betokened the presence of a fell disease.

Edna was busy with the chamber work at the time, and Sue was left in charge of the dining-room.

At first Sue did not recognize the newcomers; but ever since her babe had been wrested from her embrace she had peered eagerly into the face of every stranger she met in the hope that she might see some person she might recognize who could give her tidings of her long-lost child. Children she had not seen at all, except Edna's, and now the unexpected appearance of this forsaken little one awakened all her motherly solicitude. Taking the child in her arms, she retreated to a chamber, where she proceeded at once to bathe the attenuated body, which was literally covered with a cutaneous eruption, the result of a neglect that had well-nigh disfigured it utterly.

"O, my God!" she exclaimed, as, disrobing the child, she began a thorough cleansing process with deft and careful hands, what if my poor baby were to come to this!"

After long and gentle application of much-needed soap and water, and a careful and successful effort to rid the matted hair of tangles and vermin, the little girl revealed so much of her natural semblance to a human being that a sudden wild, ardent and yet shuddering hope seized the bereaved and childless mother, and she hugged the waif in an ecstasy of mingled expectation and dread.

"Where is your mamma, little darling?" she said, passionately.

"I ain't dot any," was the artless answer.

"Is your mamma dead?" and Sue Randolph trembled in every nerve.

"She's stoled!" replied the child. "She's stoled by a lad man, and my papa good away and never come back."

"What was your papa's name, darling?"

Sue could hardly wait for a reply.

"My mamma called him Hal, and he called me Blossom," was the artless answer.

"Would you know your mamma if you should see her, Blossom?"

"I des so. Her had too eyes and her didn't whip me, but Jim does."

"Who's Jim?"

"The man I come with."

"Where your papa?"

"Stoled too, and poor little Blossom's all alone."

ceded to the dining-room, and there, much to her astonishment and consternation, confronted the only man who had ever had remotest cause to look upon her with dishonor.

"Your amend in bringing my poor child to me has covered a multitude of sins," she said, offering a purse, and bowing with dignified politeness. "Take this money, get you some clothes, and equip yourself like a man and go to work. I am a reformed woman, and when you prove yourself as strong to do right as you have been foremost to do wrong, you shall not fail to find a friend in me. But you must do right, and prove yourself able to sustain yourself, ere I shall again attempt to assist you."

[To be continued.]

Lost in the Wild Waves.

One never forgets the scene, if, in crossing from Europe to the United States, one takes his station forward some foggy night on the banks of Newfoundland, feeling the gigantic mass on which he stands quiver as it foams and wrestles with the waves, while all around the walls of mist seem to flow and swirl, and a sudden, faint stroke of a dull bell comes upon his ear, then a small light in a halo of mist dances fitfully under the lee bow, and in an instant he looks down from his lofty height on a little lone schooner, whose lighted lanterns are pitched on the waves, while a couple of faces under soot-covered hats gaze up in the light from the steamer's portholes, as the great black mass shoots above them, shaving off death by a spoke of the wheel.

How many of these fishermen's cockle-shells, that ride the waves in the mist of the Atlantic to a heaped cable, have been struck and swept down under great ships, making scarce a quiver from stem to stern, can never be known, but certainly many have perished fouled each other by the parting of cables in some terrific storm, and crushed each other's sides like egg-shells, is equally unconfutable, but out of almost every fleet that sails from Gloucester and other ports on Cape Cod, some never return by the casualties of the most favorable season.

Again, there are storms, as that of December, when waves are borne off bodily by the force of the wind, burying their little barques in an avalanche of water, under which they sink like many an empty can, and all that is known of their fate is that, after months of heart-sick waiting, they do not come home.

There have been disasters greater than that of last year, but twenty-eight vessels and 221 lives will cause many an empty cupboard and desolate hearthstone on the windy coasts of Cape Ann and Cape Cod.

With such a perilous livelihood as this, it is no wonder that the suits of somber black are the common wear in Gloucester, and that the widows and fatherless number more than half the population. In the pathetic language of the old Scotch song, the fisher wives may well think it's not the fish they're selling, but the lives of men. The heroic courage of these men, who take more than the risks of a battle for a bare subsistence, was, generations ago, celebrated in the glowing language of Burke, and that it still continues is a proof of the undegeneracy of the New England blood.

THE HEN AS SHE REALLY IS.—Now, there is another man who thinks he knows how to make hens lay, and he communicates the process to one of the agricultural papers. It is in the food, and he tells us what all these idiots say. When will the true nobility of a hen be understood? Hens are not machines. They are reasoning, thinking beings. If there is one sight more impressive than another, it is a hen thinking. To make a hen lay, get on her best side. Work on her feelings. This can be done by studying her nature and learning her tastes. This accomplished, go to work to show her that you are her friend, and not a grinding, grasping leech, with no higher aim than a worming-out of her eggs. When a hen sees that you respect her; that you are truly her friend; that you are in active sympathy with her reachings out for the indefinable in nature, she will just turn her toes in, tighten her jaws, and fairly cry, "I have equal right of suffrage with man, if she wants it. We have always favored it—believing that it is a right that inheres to the individual—a right that no law has moral power to either give or take away. But having thus re-asserted our belief, let our kind friends permit us to add, that not alone in the ballot for women rests the vital issues of the day. Suffrage is only one of many methods by which the advancement of our sex is to be secured and retained.—Ed. Woman's Words.

A PREDICTION OF 1870.—More than six years ago we published in this journal—of which we were then special correspondent—that within ten years women would vote. Rather more than half the time has elapsed, and this prediction has been largely verified. Women have been elected and elected. In Wyoming the right of suffrage has been freely exercised by women, and in many other States the rights of women have materially advanced. In England, with all the efforts now making, there is not the slightest doubt, but that woman will soon have equal right of suffrage with man, if she wants it. We have always favored it—believing that it is a right that inheres to the individual—a right that no law has moral power to either give or take away. But having thus re-asserted our belief, let our kind friends permit us to add, that not alone in the ballot for women rests the vital issues of the day. Suffrage is only one of many methods by which the advancement of our sex is to be secured and retained.—Ed. Woman's Words.

Joachim Miller's new drama covers a period of 2,100 years. After he had "supposed" a period of 1,500 to have passed, and the drama was pretty nearly completed, Joachim took a tumble to himself and concluded that nearly all the characters were old enough to kill off. Then he went on fearlessly and slaughtered all except a hero, who seemed to be in good condition, and he was allowed a place in the drama throughout, but when adding into manifold at the age of 2,100 Joachim cut him off unprepared.

A witty writer has observed, with much truth, that every man is, in a sense, three different men. In the first place, he is the man he thinks himself to be; in the second place, he is the man other persons think him to be, and finally, he is the man that he really is.

There is a lady bank director at Peoria, Illinois, and one at Canton, Ohio.

OUR WASHINGTON LETTER.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE NEW NORTHWEST:

When I last wrote you matters had assumed such a pacific and temperate aspect that the sanguine American was congratulating himself on his President, his national system of citizenship, and on most of the historical transactions, the past, present, and anticipated. Now the little cloud "no bigger than a man's hand" for it is a man's hand and Senator Blaine's at that, has shown itself and threatens to disturb the unanimity of his party's ranks. It was gathered from the President's inaugural address and his subsequent conciliatory conduct that he intended to disrupt the "Solid South" and insert a wedge into the Democratic ranks strong enough to prevent them re-concentrating at the next canvass. But schism seems arising among his own partisans which, if it spread among the leaders, may defeat his schemes. Mr. Blaine is an ambitious man and full of courage. He is one of the best fighters that has appeared in the Congressional arena for many years, and should he antagonize the administration hereafter, we may expect lively times. In the Senate he will not have that opportunity for exercise of his great powers and astonishing parliamentary ability which the House permitted. But if he be led to oppose the President's policy, we will see a repetition of the grand struggle between Mr. Sumner and General Grant, for he will bring every energy to bear to secure his point. We, however, do not expect more than a mere passive antagonism to any administration for any member of Mr. Blaine's party, for those who incline now to oppose are regarded as the extremists who unite at the rear rather than at the front of their party. It is too soon to cast the political horse-ropes, for experience teaches us that the roaring lion of to-day, under some fancied political oppression, is as mild tomorrow as a sucking dove, hence the many expressions of dissent now heard may be turned to words of praise. The President's "amiable stubbornness" will render him a formidable opponent, and may serve him as good purpose as did the dogged persistence of his predecessor by preventing many an attack that would be made upon an antagonist of greater pliability. The small majority which either party will have in Congress will serve to prevent passage of all radical measures, and should the President succeed in adjusting his Louisiana embroglio satisfactorily, the session will be a short one.

THE NEXT HOUSE.

The composition of the next House can now be calculated with reasonable accuracy. Two hundred and sixty members are now on the pay rolls by authority of the clerk. Mr. Adams, the clerk, will leave several contested districts to be determined by the House after its organization, which will be effected without delay under his enrollment. The Speakership will be given to a Democrat, unless by some most unexpected combination some of the Democrats should deem it politic to cast their votes for a Republican. "Politics make strange bed-fellows" is an old saw which has many verifications here, and we lookers-on should never dare be prophetic in advance of any public measure in Congress. If hostilities are inaugurated, the vote in the House and the Senate is so close that it becomes no laughing matter, and with the Louisiana muddle still on the carpet, or, more properly speaking, the table, our fighting politicians will have their hands full.

THE LOUISIANA COMMISSION.

So far the only suggestions thrown out by the commission have encountered the entire disfavor of either one or the other of the contestants, so that anything like a compromise seems very difficult of execution. Although the President has directed them to enlarge their field of action and try some other method of settlement, the result will probably remain very unsatisfactory, as both sides refuse to concede anything, whilst the conferences with private citizens leave but one alteration, Nichols or a military government. Nevertheless Mr. Hayes pursues the "even tenor of his way," and feels satisfied that the crooked places will be made straight without deviation from his happy peace policy.

Yesterday being the thirteenth anniversary—presentation day—of the National Deaf Mute College, there was a very large attendance of dignitaries and ladies, chief among whom President and Mrs. Hayes and Secretary Schurz were noted. After a few remarks by the President the degrees were conferred by the distinguished Professor Galland, who has done so much for the instruction and alleviation of the condition of the unfortunate deaf mutes. It was quite interesting to notice the petting and attention given two little prattlers belonging to a married couple of deaf mutes teaching in the college. Unlike the parents, the children conversed readily and seemed delighted with the homage of the occasion.

Mrs. Hayes continues to receive the public every Saturday, and every evening devotes herself to receiving calls from friends and acquaintances in her private parlor. On the strength of having travelled with her in the winter of '66 and '67, I regarded myself as acquainted and last night joined among her callers. Assisted by her niece, Miss McFarland, she received her visitors in the freest and most unconstrained manner, and certainly possesses the faculty of making each one feel perfectly at home. Ten years have told in some degree upon her. While she converses with as much animation as ever, yet Father Time has laid his hand upon her and apparently subdued somewhat the exuberance of spirits which made her then the life of our party, and whether from cares of State or the quieting influence of age she seems now much more the staid matron than ten years ago. Doubtless not one of our pleasant New Orleans party dreamed that the quiet and dignified member of Congress, Mr. Hayes, would, with his fascinating wife, occupy in the near future the White House, and be the arbiter of the destinies of the very people whose hospitality we were accepting, and last night it was difficult to realize the fact. In the morning of the 19th of October, 1864, when at Cedar Creek the rebels were driving us like so many sheep, Colonel Hayes passed me in the confusion and I could not repress the wish that he might be spared from death. Not as a soldier, for as a soldier his life was plumed on his sleeve to be plucked off by any rebel bullet, and was therefore of no more worth than that of any other soldier, but because he was a member of Congress and the country needed his services in the future rather than his life in the present. But little did I dream that out of that battle would come the chief magistrate of our nation. We felt then that our defeat would insure McClellan's election, and that the country would need the presence in Congress of her true patriots, hence my wish Colonel Hayes might escape death. The same power that gave us victory that eventful day has carried us safely through all our troubles, and now I am no more apprehensive of the nation's future under Mr. Hayes than then under Mr. Lincoln, whom all knew to be all that any patriot could desire. FELIX.

Washington, D. C., April 13, 1877.

An Absurdity Well Set Forth.

The following is from the St. Louis Democrat:

In Missouri, where woman is more highly valued than in Massachusetts, in consequence of the great poverty of the article, woman is, by legislative concession, allowed to own the clothes she wears. But she must not abuse her privilege. If she be a single woman, and have no other comfort than in her wearing apparel, she may not only own her clothes, but she may even sell them, bequeath them or give them away—such tender consideration hath the law for the rights of woman. But it would be monstrous to allow a woman to own a husband and a dress at the same time, and a married woman, though she may indeed call herself the owner of those vanities on which her heart is set, may not bequeath them nor otherwise dispose of them without her husband's consent. We do not know whether the law would interfere with the weakness of the feminine mind which prompts the housewife to exchange worn but serviceable garments for chinaware mantel ornaments, but we know that the solemn Legislature of Missouri is now gravely debating a bill to allow married women the privilege of bequeathing their personal effects, a privilege not yet enjoyed. The position of woman under the law is, since the abolition of slavery, the last relic of barbarism, and it is not likely that the present generation will see her in possession of all those natural rights which are denied her only by the intolerance of stupid proscription. But we might allow her to own her clothes, which she does not own in Massachusetts, and we might even allow her to bequeath them, which she cannot do under the existing statute of Missouri. Our liberties are now so safely secured that they may confidently be relied on to stand the moderate shock of these concessions, and after they are made, the satirists may be able to make their points more acutely and aim their shafts with better show of judgment.

ONE OF TIME'S CHANGES.

Thirteen years ago there were no systems of "study made easy," no object teaching, handsome school-houses, fancy stationery, or two months' vacation. In the best academies we were seated on chairs, had some astronomical instruments, and the month of August for vacation; sufficiently long we thought; but in those days every tailor and shoe-maker did not deem it necessary for the benefit of his family to visit a watering-place every season. We had not the evil of over-crowded school-houses, and the fashion of compelling little children to sit like trussed fowls had not been invented; the teachers were generally men; any boy over eight years of age would have thought it an indignity not to be borne to have been sent to a woman's school, such teachers being deemed fit only for little chaps and girls.

THE CAMERONS.—Mary Clemmer,

one of the most observing of Washington correspondents, writes thus: "The empty seat of Simon Cameron is, indeed, conspicuous, and anything morally more remarkable than the final flight of this man from political power and place could not be imagined. If Don could only have been Secretary of War, the father would still be in the Senate. But an administration, and that a Republican administration, too, that had no special use for a Cameron was more than the venerable Simon could bear, and he retired in wrath and disgust, to slip out from among men at last with his ancient harness off."

Mrs. Elizabeth Boynton Harbert, President of the Illinois Woman Suffrage Association, has control of a "Woman's Department" in the Chicago Inter-Ocean.

Said Mr. Tapley, of Danbury, feeling sorry of his nose, "I don't want to be too hopeful or sanguine, but I believe I'm going to have a bill."

OUR PRIDES.

American women were once supposed to be modest even to prudishness. There was hardly a foreign traveler who, in his eagerness to detect some blot of ill favor, however minute, to mar the fair promise of the country, did not fasten his pen upon the squeamishness supposed to be characteristic of our women, and expose it to a congenial public of his own land as a sign of American vulgarity.

Those in whose memory there may be still left traces of the pungent sarcasm of Mrs. Trollope will recall a scene in her book on the United States in which that censorious dame, with the aid of the scratchy pencil of some now forgotten artist, depicts the overstrained delicacy of a Western lady of her acquaintance, or, as is more probable, her invention.

The point of the description and of the picture is, the mutual aversion with which our fastidious country-women dodge the pertinacious inquisitiveness of a male visitor determined to ferret out the nature of the piece of work her nimble needle is so busy with. The solution of the mysterious problem, in which the mutual ingenuity of every prudishness and impudent curiosity is cleverly displayed, is simply a skirt, which Mrs. Trollope would have her readers suppose was a thing unmentionable by American lips polite to your ears, whether polite or impolite.

Captain Murray, too, with his wardrobe of imagination, had his fling at American prudishness, and, with the practiced coolness of a habitually unscrupulous raconteur, related for the serious belief of his countrymen that American women were so modest that they put the legs of their pinons in pantaloons, or trousers.

There was unquestionably a basis of fact for the construction of these tales of travelers, for, in the early days of the American women were fastidious, but not prudish in the sense of affecting a modesty they did not possess. There was certainly a genuine delicacy, though the barriers with which they sought to guard it were often erected in an awkwardly constructed and applied. The subtleties of youthful shyness are foolish and transparent enough, but they are nevertheless the resorts of undoubted innocence. Let hardened men of the world say what they will about prudery being an indication of the want of the very thing it professes, blushes, averted faces, and disguised meanings are the natural defenses of modesty. The Americans were undoubtedly more scrupulous in the use of many words than the Europeans, but it is true that this has been called prudery any more than the increased fastidiousness which has marked the progress of civilization in all countries? Madam De Seville, who was a very Diana of chastity, and endowed with the purity of an angel, said that she wrote in her letters to her daughter about topics and in words of which even French society, with all its latitude of discussion and expression, would not suppress the slightest whisper.

Pages of Richardson, Fielding, and other writers of a day still nearer our own times, once read aloud in the presence of and freely discussed by mixed companies of innocent girls and boys and modest men and women, would not now be tolerated in England, where most of our classic women of average culture and refinement are not allowed to read, or at least to confess having read, or even to know the titles of the works of these authors of classic fame.

Much of the so-called American prudishness was a consequence of the state of the advanced public refinement, to which civilization, with more or less speed, is everywhere tending. We must, however, put in a protest against the exaggerated delicacy of a fastidiousness which is so much inclined to disguise plain words in equivocal finery of speech, by which purity itself is sometimes made suspect.

There are various expressions in use in this country which are either entirely new and unknown to the English, or applied to quite different uses from that in which they are ordinarily understood by them. The origin of these novel or perverted words may be undoubtedly traced to false delicacy, but they have become so ingrained upon the American mind that those who now ordinarily employ them are neither conscious of nor responsible for the prudishness from which they certainly arose. Our American progenitors, particularly the most were easily startled by the most remote suggestion of impropriety, and, like all half-cultivated but aspiring people, who, only too conscious of vulgarity from their lowly associations, made overstrained efforts to avoid them. It is not now worth while to specify them and endeavor to trace them to their origin, for the process would inevitably lead us back to that polluted source from which our sturdy ancestors derived them, unconscious of any offense, but which cannot, if reached, fail to shock modern delicacy. It may be wise to accept of such words as have already been adopted by general usage, but it is well to understand that overtly in expression is sometimes suggestive of excessive nastiness of idea, and to avoid all attempts at guarding every innocuous word against the possibility of its remotest association with impropriety in the minds of the vulgar. Such attempts will be vain, for as to the evil all things are evil, so to the vulgar all things are vulgar, and we shall only reveal a consciousness of our own partiality which will have a look very like sympathy, and probably be mistaken for it.—Harper's Bazar.

"You can come onto your wife for the pay, my boy."

"But I just don't see what good that would do me, or Edna, or the cubs. You'd have had your board, and I mine, but old Sol of the saloon would get Edna's business. You can't quite come that over me, if I am a wronged and outraged man."

"But don't you see the beauty of the thing? The woman needs to feel your power, as you know. She needs to be taught her place. When she finds, after cooking hard all summer in the hotel business that a suit will be brought in the District Court and judgment rendered in favor of old Sol against everything she possesses, she'll come to her senses denved quick."

"But I can't see that what you advise would be right."

"The dickens take the right of the matter! We weren't considering right, but expediency and power, my boy. She refuses to live with you, that is certain. Can't say that I blame her so dogged much, for you're a sad scamp, and no mistake; but women must learn to obey the laws and must be compelled to respect them, too."

"That's a fact," said John Smith, decidedly.

"After you've run a bill for, say six months," continued Mr. Brief, "you can give your note, payable on demand, and then you'll be sued on the note, the hotel property will be attached, and your wounded dignity and honor will be avenged."

"But, hang it, Brief, I don't just like to do such a thing as that. There's the cubs, you know. She'll have to keep something to raise them on."

"Where is your mamma, little darling?" she said, passionately.