

Wonderful Lace Makers of Southern Climes

(By Frederic J. Mackin.)

It is said that to understand a people one should study their homes, their habits, their occupations, especially the work of the women of a country. Wherever we find the woman of Spanish lineage, we have an expert in drawn-work lace, a weave nearer to that of the Spaniards than any other mortal texture—one so fine and exquisite that it is said it took the patience of a saint to create it.

While lace as a fabric is not the peculiar prerogative of any race, it is true that Latin America, especially in Mexico, in South America, in the Philippines, the Canary Islands, the Spanish Isles of the Mediterranean, in Cuba and in old Spain. The Philippine woman, not only making it of linen and cotton, uses the pineapple cloth, beside which chiffon and mousseline de soie look coarse—yet with a degree of durability beyond many heavier stuffs. The Filipino bride, robed in the lace made of this good, represents in her attire a greater outlay of labor, and it may be safely added, more artistic conception than the satin and silk robed bride of any other land.

Character Traced in Lace.

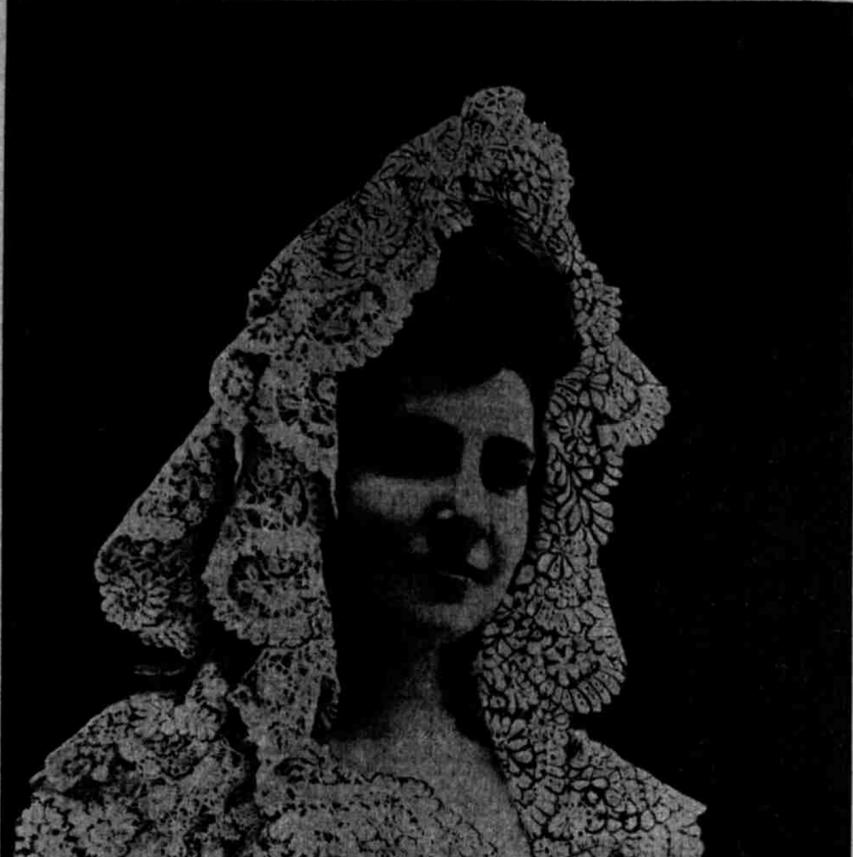
Now what sort of character does this work indicate? In the needle art of various countries of Europe, where color does not play a part, character is traced with an unerring hand. Compare Irish point with Brussels, or Venetian lace with Valenciennes. Again there is nothing more unlike English or French or Flemish character than the several varieties of lace made in Spain. One who knows the Spanish nature will see it in the handwork of the women. While the principle is the same wherever it is made, there is a marked difference in the execution and the details. The woman of old Spain creates more artistic designs, but her productions are more solid, and lack something of the lightness and fancifulness of her half-sisters in Latin America. The Philippine woman lets her oriental environment show in her combinations. The Mexican work is on a firmer foundation than that of the east, and shows a trace of the barbaric, but the Spanish American and Mexican laces are very similar, except that in the former there are not the strong points of finish and conventionalism of the latter. It is Cuban woman, however, who seems to combine the excellencies and beauties of all other nations in her exquisite production, with an additional and peculiar charm of her own. Where the Mexican woman exhibits her taste, cultivated beneath the mountain shadow, or on the wide plains, the Cuban shows her environment of sloping hills, limpid waters, and waving palms. But the same racial traits are traced in all. There is the same love of grace and beauty, the patience, the regard to detail, and, above all, the failure to subordinate intrinsic value to showy effect.

How Drawn Work is Made.

The Spanish name for this work is "randa," although it is generally known among ladies who speak English, as drawn work. The process of its manufacture is very simple, yet very tedious. The combinations are worked upon the wool by the removal of the filling. It is a mere counting of threads, as in cross stitch, and while this seems a very simple task, the utmost care and patience are necessary to produce good work. The beauty of the design depends much upon the taste and imagination of the worker, because there is no pattern. The start is made by counting and drawing the threads, which may be repeated over and over again, until the combinations are entirely completed. If there is a single mis-calculation all the tedious labor is for naught. Should the worker construct carelessly, considering that one thread more or less makes no difference, the result would be certain failure. On account of the extreme care which is exercised, the result that is obtained is almost perfect, so that if the fingers were some well-regulated machine.

The Mean for Patterns.

The conventional designs which are common among all needle women of Spanish blood represent Biblical ideas. The piety of the gentle Latins always found itself. Hence we find many patterns representing "The Crown of the Lord," "The Tears of Christ," "The Tears of Mary," "The Thorns of the Savior," and "The Things Which Bound the Lord." Nor does the worker confine herself to conventional ideas. With an artistic eye and lively fancy she copies birds upon the wing and butterflies in their flight, as well as blossoms and buds of various kinds, counting every thread and stitch, on a foundation of fine linen, or the gassar-like fibre of the pineapple; she uses a thread like a cobweb, and produces something so filmy, so ethereal, so near akin to the delicate work of the frost, that it seems more fitting for fairy garments than for mortal robes.



THE FAVORITE SPANISH HEAD-DRESS.

Some Very Queer Religious Frauds

STRANGE it is that the minds of men should be overcome, their wills subdued and their consciences hushed by the magic potency of a religious charlatan. Stranger still is it that they should sacrifice their all—money, friends, relatives, and even themselves—at the bidding of the impostor.

Since time began, religion has been a power which has imposed upon those who are strong. There have been hundreds and thousands of varieties of remarkable prophets or Messiahs who have "rushed" to the rescue of a sinful world, and there will be hundreds and thousands more. In most cases the leaders of the various cults have been ignorant, as the world goes. But, though possessed of no learning in many cases, and less culture, they have that which absorbs their followers, demanding and obtaining all.

In originality the country has probably produced more real kingpins of religious fakery than any other part of the world. America has given to the world a Dowie, a Hainish and hosts of others who have attracted millions of self-satisfied fanatical followers, and incidentally enormous wealth.

To read or study the phases of each religious cult that has lived and died or that lives and dies some years ago, more time than the average man who lives an average life could spare. But a compilation of the most astonishing features of each would be a volume of interesting reading.

And none, very likely, would offer more of brazen imposition and disgusting depravity than that brand of religion promulgated by Creffield, the "Holy Ruler."

London is just now in the midst of a nine days' sensation because Rev. T. H. Smyth-Piggott, a clergyman of the Church of England, who some years ago was banished from London by claiming to be the Messiah, has again come to the fore. When Clapton, a suburb of the metropolis, where he first became famous, was made too hot for him, Smyth-Piggott fled himself to a Somersetshire village, where he is now residing in a large house standing in its own grounds.

The self-styled Messiah calls his residence the "Abode of Love," and he has gathered around him more than a hundred disciples, whom he terms Agapemonics. These are mostly young women, many of them said to be of remarkable beauty. He claims that it is his duty to baptize them in a special favorite of Smyth-Piggott, who some days ago announced, "I am the Lamb of God, and this is the wife of the Lamb," as he waved his hand in the direction of his expected honored companion, who goes by the name of Beloved Ruth. Beloved Ruth is described as a handsome young woman, who, when she isn't in attendance on the adored one within the house, loafs on the lawn of the Abode of Love in a hammock of scarlet hue and wears expensive summer dresses.

Smyth-Piggott takes his meals by himself, and the women disciples practically draw lots as to who shall have the honor of waiting upon him. Before breakfast he takes a constitutional round the church grounds, his look being thoughtful, his lips moving as if in prayer. A special kind of bread of an unpleasurated nature is sent direct from London and eaten by some of the strictest of the sect. Everything is of the best, for the motto of the Agapemonics is "Luxury, and enjoyment, and peace, with good works." There was recently a special gathering of disciples from all parts of England, and in the garden of the Abode of Love, Smyth-Piggott asserted his claim to be the Son of God. Many of the Agapemonics openly worshipped him when he said: "None may address Smyth-Piggott by any name except Messiah."

Army, and after 11 years of zealous work with that body he suddenly separated himself from it in 1915. For the next two years he labored hard in connection with the Irish missions. While in Ireland he became converted to the doctrine of Prince, founder of Agapemonics. He acted as pastor of the Ark of Covenant at Clapton, and on the death of Prince in 1899 he succeeded to the leadership. Then came his amazing proclamation of himself as the Messiah.

Jacob Belhart, or "Jacob," as he calls himself, is leader and originator of the "Spirit Fruit." He is remarkable, first, for his power over the hearts and minds of men, and their entire resignation to his will and obedience to his commands. He is remarkable for the number of these followers and their devotion to his teachings, which are more than 2,000, and scattered throughout the world professing faith in him.

He is remarkable for having succeeded in founding a colony at Lisbon, Portugal, which is entirely self-sustaining. He is remarkable for the number of the organization he has formed, not only having a colony in this city, but having founded missions in numerous parts of the world, and conducting a great variety of business enterprises.

He is remarkable in all that he has accomplished and all that he is accomplishing is founded on his own personality. His power is shared mutually by the members of his fold, it is true, but everything is done by his orders and the entire fabric of his organization depends solely upon his personality and magnetism.

He is remarkable in that he is ignorant man's power to draw millions of wealth and women of culture to him and create within them such a blind fascination for his teaching that they are willing to leave their children, home, happiness, wealth, reputation, all, everything, and follow him.

In an inner room of Jacob Belhart's "heaven" on the "Spirit Fruit" farm near London, a conference was held which may have for one of its results the transplanting of the Chicago followers of the "Spirit Fruit society" to the "paradise" established here by "Jacob."

Frank Rockwell of Chicago, a brother of J. E. Rockwell, a millionaire mining man of Chicago, who turned over to "Jacob" a fund estimated at \$20,000 during the last few weeks, and who is looked to by the "Spirit Fruit" believers as an "angel" has arrived here in person.

It is generally understood around the "heaven" that an immense scheme is on foot to transplant all the Chicago followers of "Jacob" to Lisbon and maintain there a recruiting agency in the western metropolis.

Frank Rockwell is the second member of the Rockwell family of Chicago to join the "Spirit Fruit" farm project. He is the owner of the Minnie Moore silver and lead mines of Colorado.

One visitor to "heaven" saw a man and a woman walking on the lawn in front of the "Spirit Fruit" farm. They were talking and chatting confidentially, but when they saw him approaching they separated, the man remaining to talk religion with him while the woman ran into the house as if ashamed.

"We violate no laws," said Belhart. "We merely violate conventionalities and follow the will of nature. My belief is not a religious nor yet a philosophy. It is life."

Non-resistance, universal love and common ownership are the three essential tenets of their religion. The farm has been in operation about four years, according to Belhart. The home stands upon a knoll, beautifully situated, in an old-fashioned structure, and is large and cozy. At present there are only 20 men and women housed on the farm.

This couple is Robert G. Wall, the well known labor leader of Chicago, and his wife. The other inmates of the home are either married residents living apart from their husbands or wives or unmarried people. A number of them are young girls hardly out of their teens. The good people of Lisbon, actuated by high moral principles, have from time to time tried to procure official investigation of things at the home of the organization, but have invariably failed because no laws are being broken as far as anybody knows.

Belhart asserts that he is the prophet Jacob reincarnated, just as Dowie professed to be Elijah. Belhart is a native of this state, having been born and raised on a farm five miles from Lisbon. He was educated in the public schools of Boneville district, near Unionville, and is well known all through this county.

The most picturesque passenger arriving last week on the Kaskaskia, from Bremen, was Herr Georg Druschel of Lichtenfels, Bavaria, the advocate of no underclothing and no shirt.

Herr Druschel, who wears only trousers and sack coat of homespun gray, with a pair of shoes and a big cane and a large black felt hat, is bearded and long-haired. He looks as strong as a giant. The topmost of his five inches of his chest is bare, and the skin, weathered and sun-hardened, is as red as a pumpkin.

Herr Druschel has come over seas to introduce his cult of hardening the body, curing rheumatism, bad circulation, shortness of breath and headache by bathing, nourishment, and "Nothing but Nature," as the shirtless advocate terms his religion.

Herr Druschel has brought over a choice assortment of his aphorisms, among which are the following, translated into his own quaint English: "A large and well-ventilated hall is necessary to drink beer in. Do not remain here long, but for several times leave it and go out of doors to breathe in fresh air."

"Eat whenever you are hungry; drink when you are thirsty; time does not matter. Pure air is for the stomach like a newly sharpened grindstone to grind corn with."

"While drinking beer you ought to eat some cheese and rye bread (no butter upon it)."

Those who have escaped Zaradust, Hanish and his religion of torture and starvation, have yet to escape Augustus Schneider and the "Flying Rollers." With their beards flowing in the wind, the "Flying Rollers" have invaded Chicago and are preaching the doctrine that it is a sin to cut your beard or to wash your hands "often" when going about the streets. They have already set out to convert the people of the city, under the direction of their leader and prophet, Charles Dissen.

Hardly had the "Flying Rollers" settled down when Schrader arrived to undo the work which the other prophets and preachers have done. He is a striking figure in the streets as he parades around in his long black gown, hooded with red, and his flowing beard and hair.

"I am not a polygamist, but we believe that what belongs to one brother is also the property of the other. We believe in virtue," said Mrs. White.

She further explained that the order is a stepping stone to heaven, and if one belongs to it on earth he is admitted into the heaven branch of the order when he dies. In some respects the belief resembles spiritualism, in that it contains several theories regarding the communication with spirits. Although the spirits of the departed are often consulted, it is never with regard to things earthly, as that would offend the spirits.

The police of Denver, Colo., are investigating a society called the Denver Brotherhood of Emethachavah.

The head of the order is Franklin P. White, an architect, and his wife is the high priestess. The headquarters of the brotherhood is 131 Canosa court, across the Platte river from Burnham. Here the Whites have bought a 2-room house and have fitted it with luxurious furniture. When a new member is admitted to the brotherhood he is given a room there, and is never again allowed to leave except on missions designated by White. There are now about a dozen members.

Whatever her thoughts had been, little Foon Luk changed when she awoke the next day and rehearsed, as well as the space of the room would allow, the most difficult part of her work.

"What has come over you?" asked Chin Fook once, when he found her looking at him with a calm and steady eye.

"Nothing," she answered, evasively, "but today I would like to go to the temple."

"And spill good wine upon the floor for a lover, I suppose?" he was in a good humor.

"No, I want no lovers." He dressed her up like a boy and took her to the temple of the Chung Wah Gung San. She prayed before the gods of justice, and she cast the prayer sticks, and they came out good. She departed with a light heart.

That day she went home, and after Chin Fook had gone out she took his yen hoe off the opium tray and tried to throw it so the point would stick in the door. It was a long while before she succeeded, but when at last the slender point sunk deep in the wood, she was satisfied. Every day when he went out she practiced with it, until at last she became so expert that out of every ten times she threw it seven times would it stick in the door.

"At last, one unlucky day, the long needle broke, and she did not take Chin Fook to discover it."

"Have you done this?" he asked, holding up the pieces.

"Yes, she answered. "The more tricks, the more money. I was trying a new one."

"What was it?" he demanded, forgetting in his curiosity to be angry. When she told him, he was so pleased that he promised to get a set of throwing knives and teach her all he knew. They had been doing well at the theaters, and he did not beat her so much as he had before he began to get rich. A new trick meant more money. He bought the knives, and together they practiced until at last he said:

"You throw better than the hi-tze who appeared before the emperor." Her aim was marvellously straight, and her arm was wonderfully strong. If its strength was judged by the depth the steel blades sank into the wood.

He signed a contract with a circus manager. It was settled they were to start through the country in a week. He came home and told the child. She looked startled.

"You do not want to go?" he asked. "Yes, yes, I want to go. But—need I have no more good clothes. I must make some clothes."

He was in a liberal mood. "I will buy you some," he said.

She wanted money before she went. She had tried for it and failed. She looked about the room in despair. Upon her wrist was a bracelet. Ah, that would do. She dressed herself in the manager's quarters, and taking one of the throwing knives locked the door behind her and stepped down the stairs into the street. She hurried around the corner to the shop of Su Quong, the locksmith, who had always been kind to her.

"Su Quong," she said, "make me a knife like this," and she pulled the broad-bladed weapon out from under her blouse. He took it, and examined it critically.

"It is a good one, but it is no use. That would not butting." And he stuck it against a piece of wood. "See, it only bruises."

"Yes, but I want you to make a good one, with the same shape. Make it so keen that the edges will cut through a pillow filled with down. But it must run the same shape, and with a handle like this."

"And who are you going to kill, little highbinder?" he asked.

"I am not a highbinder," she answered, trembling. "I want money, little one, and if you will, I will give you a good one. I want your friend. The gods are not always good to the most deserving."

The day before they were to leave she went to the locksmith's to get her knives. The old man had made a marvellously sharp weapon, exactly like the other but for its keenness and the fact that it had a finer point. He handed them to her. Then she went out. The sharp knife she hid secretly and carefully.

Chin Fook, successful beyond his dreams, took to the opium, and cut down his body, so that when he awoke nearly all the work. The principal thing he did now was to hold the wooden ball suspended by a rope, and swing it gently, while she threw the knives at it. One day he was so careless that the knife had struck him in the side, but as such knives as they were could not penetrate cloth, it fell to the sawdust, and he had scowled at her and called her "highbinder."

One day the manager said to him: "Chin, that ball trick with the knives don't take as well as it used to. What's the matter with you standing up against a board, and letting her throw them around you?"

Next week the Chinese Child Wonder was throwing knives around Chin Fook's head. Chin Fook was so nervous that he felt that he could feel their whirring. He told her she threw them too hard, and because she did not answer him he struck her. She cried out in pain and a woman, who heard her, told Chin Fook if he did not keep his hands off the child she would get a couple of canvas men to give him a thrashing.

Chin Fook struck a new town on Sunday, and Chin Fook, more than ever a slave to opium, spent the day with his beloved pipe. He kept at it Monday and Tuesday, and on Wednesday, in the knife-throwing act his eyes were half closed, and he was drowsy with the drug. He leaned with his back against the board, and the apples which Chin Fook threw at him seemed to come from a great distance. He shut his eyes, because the bright lights made his head whirring unpleasantly.

That was the first knife he felt it go by his ear. "Thud! thud! thud!" they came and sank deep in the board. The audience applauded wildly. They were four more knives.

He never struck under his arm pit.

"That's a great throw," yelled a man in a seat on the edge of the ring. Before he had finished, another knife was hurled through the air. Those who were looking saw it strike the blouse of the Chinaman on the left side; they saw his arms reach up spasmodically. Then he sank down in the sawdust. Like one dazed, the girl stood with two knives still in her hand, while the circus men rushed over to the wounded man. As they carried him out of the ring on a litter she fainted. When she came to the bareback rider was standing over her, and women were standing around.

"Chin Fook hurt?" she managed to ask.

"Yes," said one of the women, "he's hurt very bad."

"Chin Fook dead?" she asked again.

"Yes," she was answered.

Then she closed her eyes peacefully and fell asleep.

The "randa" has its folk-lore tale, and the legend relating to its origin is as follows: Many centuries ago a deity, who had become impoverished by the desolation of the Moors, was much distressed by the raggedness of the altar cloth and chalice veil, as well as the padre's vestments. Easier was drawing night, and the good sister shed many sorrowful tears while laundering the poor rags for the holy festival. She most beloved of her mother, who sat on the floor, beseeching the Holy Mother and the saints to provide new vestments for the padre and the altar before Easter-tide. As the time drew near she began weeping the torn and threadbare linen. At least she would patch and darn and do her best. And as she mended it, lo, the darns took on forms of grace and beauty. Ever into the night of Holy Thursday the sister worked. The dawn of Good Friday found her still plying her busy needle. And until Easter morning broke, except for a few words and her weavers, she pursued her task, marveling and rejoicing. Then on Easter she knelt in adoration in the church, while all the people wondered to see her poor altar vestments, and the padre robed in shining, costly vestments.

So the saints were very helpful on this occasion. Instead of having the cloth drop down from the sky, they inspired the brave, industrious soul to work, thus performing an equally astonishing miracle—one which could repeat itself for all time. On the occasion of this tradition of the creation of "randa" are many others of girls and women in sore straits, evolving unique designs, and through these agencies, ever and anon, the most delicate in texture that only twenty-four inches could be completed in a year. There are shawls, the fiber of which is so dainty and downy that they can easily be drawn through an ordinary finger ring.

The Origin of Lace.

There is another pretty story which explains the origin of lace-making. According to this old tale, which is implicitly believed by many European lace workers, there was a young nobleman who had a beautiful but impoverished

sweetheart. The maiden was as good and pure of heart as she was ideal in form and feature, but her extreme poverty was a barrier to the marriage that she desired. For the time being she was as the maiden sat weeping in her room one night, a saint silently approached, and without a word began teaching her the art of drawing the randa. Through the night the novice bent over her bobbin and her thread, and when the morning came she was perfect mistress of this most delicate of arts. At the first touch she realized a sum of money sufficient as she had come, but her pupil, from that time, continued to make the rarest of laces, from the sale of which she realized a sum of money sufficient to make her marriage possible. Her gratitude was so great that she went among the poor people, teaching them this secret she had gotten from her nocturnal visitor. Thus a race of expert lace-makers was founded.

Bread for the Hungry.

The saints are to be praised because "randa" has brought bread to many a hungry Cuban family. Needlework is taught the Cuban girl with her letters, and "randa," from its peculiar origin, is especially impressed upon her. When the war was over, and the Americans arrived in Cuba, some good women, among other charitable works, set about helping the gentlewomen who were reduced to want. These are always the hardest to help, the Cuban especially, as her pride is as many things. However, her lovely needlework caught the eye and fancy of several American ladies, who formed a needlewomen's guild, encouraged the manufacture of the native lace, and sold vast quantities of it in the states. Its production is now a national industry, there being a woman's exchange in Havana, with branches in other cities. While articles are kept in stock, and where articles are sold and orders received. Machine-made lace is now in universal use, and although the present-day samples are not in stock, and where articles are sold and orders received. Machine-made lace is now in universal use, and although the present-day samples are not in stock, and where articles are sold and orders received. Machine-made lace is now in universal use, and although the present-day samples are not in stock, and where articles are sold and orders received.

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Recently at a meeting of one of our medical societies a celebrated physician, an authority on nervous troubles, read a paper containing his deductions as a specialist, which showed the injurious results of the present-day athletic sports, and stating that he found in his practice a nerve collapse was generally the result of such extremes as are indulged in today by both men and women.

Men spend their youth in their college life in the overdevelopment of muscles which must at once be useless when entering on a business career generally spent in an office where brains are more in demand than physical strength. The breakdown follows this sudden change in their mode of life.

With women it is much the same. Basketball, tennis, golf, bicycling, and other sports are not fitting them for their future as wives and mothers, and as a result many of the cases for surgical treatment in our hospitals today are the young women who, in their youth, have spent their time in the gymnasium and on the athletic field.

The man and woman who require great physical development and strength in their occupations acquire it gradually and evenly in their daily life, and in their occupations and trades which consume each day the extra strength gathered. The disastrous effects physically are not the only ones observed on the young men and women who are kept in the "strenuous" condition by their occupations and trades which consume each day the extra strength gathered. The disastrous effects physically are not the only ones observed on the young men and women who are kept in the "strenuous" condition by their occupations and trades which consume each day the extra strength gathered.

The comradeship sports seems to inspire is not to be admired in the women, and today we have a roughness, familiarity and freedom from restraint commonly indulged in by women in the high-class social circles which, gratefully upon persons of refinement. The "good-fellow" girl does not make the loving, refined wife and patient mother most men wish as their companion for life.

We read some and accept of the gold fields, polo teams, football and auto races more frequently in the proceedings of the divorce courts than in any other parts of the press. This constant activity indulged in by the "strenuous" gives them a nervous, restless manner and increases their love of novelty and excitement, destroying their love of home and more peaceful and refined occupations and amusements. The physical excitement affects the mental powers, and while there may often be a mental alertness it is not guided by cool judgment, which more delicate and a less nervous mode of life develops and which is usually pursued by the thinkers of the day—men and women whose mental powers are felt by their associates in the world.

The habits of youth are often found a serious detriment to success in life, and the young man who must live on excitement will find his few avenues open to him, and the "Napoleons" who were to make their millions in wheat, cotton and other "corners" are the result. In society pleasure comes from the companionship of bright, intellectual people—old and women of kindred tastes, all by birth and education persons of refinement, but since the "strenuous" life has become fashionable, society has been supposed into a sort of masked ball where each one assumes the characters of ladies and gentlemen, but find it difficult to live up to the part.

Unusual.

"There's a curious thing about this umbrella. I bought it—"

"Yes that is curious."

Strenuous Life With Modern Refinement

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