

The Girl of the Present and the Past.

When you press an assailant of the girls of the period for the definite grounds on which he attacks them, and repudiates his vague generalities against mysterious, unknown woman, he has two points on which he relies. He alleges that the present outrageous fashions and changes in woman's dress, and the greater freedom in girls' manners and language in their intercourse with men, are certain indications of an inner deterioration of character. But what amazing ignorance of past fashions and customs do these assertions display! Can any five consecutive years be named during the present century in which the revolutions in women's dress were not as rapid, as foolish, as slavishly dictated by milliners and dressmakers, and as productive of ugliness, expense and inconvenience as they had been during the short time while the girl of the period has been attaining her present growth? When one hears people reprobate the delicate décolleté style of modern evening dress, one is tempted to ask what such censors remember of the ball dress in vogue when they themselves were young? We have caricatures enough of the extravagance of the costumes of to-day; has no one any collection of the caricatures of Crinkshank and other satirists of the costumes fashionable under George IV and William IV? If we want to learn what was the amount of personal charms displayed by the girls and the mothers of those good old days, we may easily satisfy ourselves by the study of the satirists who exhibited the "dress" and the "undress" of that rigorous period. Remembering what we were accustomed to in the golden age of George IV, we shrug our shoulders, just as when we hear of a Lord Chamberlain's complaints of the shortness of ballet girls' petticoats, and remember what the goddesses of opera wore, rather than they did not wear—in that happy era of delicacy and dignity, when all the cardinal virtues seemed a spontaneous growth among the gentry and aristocracy of England.

As to the change which has come over the familiar talk of young ladies, it is simply a consequence of that enlarged freedom in the use of words which we have all of us deliberately adopted. The old bigotry which forbade the introduction of new phrases is now treated as an extinct superstition, and our new liberty of speech is a consequence of a general shaking off of the shackles of unmeaning tradition. If our young lady talk is now furnished with terms which their mothers would have been severely punished for uttering, this fact indicates no fondness for slang, or any want of delicacy of ideas. Such terms have ceased to be low or vulgar, or to imply a coarse freedom of ideas. The line between the licensed and unlicensed vocabulary is still as distinct as ever; and the only reason why the fast and free-and-easy girls of the past indulged in a less copious phraseology of the masculine sort lay in the fact that they had a more limited choice ready to their hands. So, again, in the diminished formality of intercourse between girls and their elders, and persons of the other sex. Formality of manner is nothing more than a fashion, and no more indicates true respect and affection than a stiff and padded coat implies a well-formed bodily figure. We have ceased to go about in buckram, either in our clothes, our manners or our thoughts; just as we have ceased to use the word sir, or madam, or my lord, as our grandfathers used them. Yet the disuse of these ancient modes of address is nothing more than a recurrence to a still other set of customs. Such formalities were unknown to Jewish and classical and Christian antiquity; and yet you may find old ladies and gentlemen by the score who deplore the growing disregard of these "respectful" phrases as piteously as the obscurantists of a past generation groaned over the abolition of the Episcopal wig.—The Graphic.

CHURCH MANNERS.

Timely Suggestions Concerning Some Unpleasant Evils. The Christian Union takes up the subject of "Church Manners," and treats it in a most sensible manner. We give a summary:—We have heard said about a "becoming behavior" in the house of God; and it is laid down that one should be devoted and reverential in church. But will this justify a man in keeping his paw-door shut when strangers or widowed seniors? or in permitting those who are within his reach to go without a book while he is devoutly using the best one in the pew? If in some cases there were less sobriety and politeness, would not the devotions be more profitable to the soul, and more acceptable to God? The fact is, one may have his mind so entirely raised above the world on Sunday, as to forget a great many little duties quite allied to that benevolence which the gospel inculcates. No Christian man has a right to make another person unhappy, or even to annoy him, through self-indulgence, carelessness, or selfish devotion. Violent perfumes, especially those containing musk, are disagreeable to most persons, and to some positively distressing, and ought therefore to be avoided when going into a crowded assembly. Whistling in church, during service, is an affront to politeness. Coughing can be avoided, in a great degree, by taking a few precautionary measures; and in all cases when it is a man's duty to sleep in church, it is his duty also to snore with the soft pedal down. Since every one likes to see the minister, each one should take some thought that he may obstruct the sight of those behind him as little as possible. Many churches have the Ten Commandments set upon the wall, in sight of the whole congregation, although not one of the sins reported therein is likely to be committed in church time. Would it not be well to have another tablet enumerating the sins which men are prone to commit in church time?

SHOCKING DISASTER.

On the Mississippi—Two Persons Drowned. Yesterday afternoon a collision took place on the river, opposite the foot of Madison street, between the steamer Great Republic and the well-known tug Nettle Jones, resulting in the loss of two lives and the total wreck of the tug. At the time of the collision the steamer was making for the landing with a large number of passengers on board, while the tug was proceeding down the river to the steamer Continental, with a large crew in tow. The larboard engine of the Great Republic broke down early in the morning, so that she arrived here with only one wheel in working order, and at the rate of about four miles an hour against the stream. A stiff breeze was blowing from the west at the time, and the tug drifted across the bows of the steamer after the engineer, Mr. George Shields, had sounded his whistle twice. The tug was struck on the starboard quarter, careened over, and almost immediately afterwards sunk in about twenty fathoms of water. The Captain, W. H. Jackson; the engineer, George Shields; and a deck hand, Edw. Dancy, all managed to save their lives by jumping into the river and clinging to the coal barge, which parted from the tug when the collision took place. Barney Donohue, the fireman, who usually lives in Cleveland, Ohio, and the cook, a colored man, named Lewis, were both in the steamer when the catastrophe occurred, were

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