

## AMBITION.

Float upward on ambition's fire,  
To find the skies aflame  
With gilded creatures that aspire  
To pluck the gems of Fame;  
But, wearied with thy struggling flight,  
Thou drink'st from sorrow's cup—  
To find, upon that towering height,  
Are thousands further up.  
Cleveland Plaindealer.

## A WELL GROOMED WOMAN.

"H'm!"  
Mr. Fenton put down his evening paper and regarded his wife with a sigh. She sat on the other side of the table, mending her way through a pile of stockings mounted high; a plump, little woman of 40, none too trig in figure, decidedly ruffled as to hair, but with a merry twinkle in her blue eyes and motherliness expressed in every line of her comfortable person.

"Well?" said she, looking up, feeling with sinking at the heart that some new complication had come up in the financial situation, and that she was about to be treated to views of bimetalism, adding to the feminine mind. But no. Her lord and master had been led into a very different train of thought.

"It's nearly fifteen years that we have been married, Mary," he mused, remembering as he spoke that in all that time he had hardly ever before scrutinized her with such a critical gaze.

"Tell it not in Gath!" she laughed. "I'm growing old, but let us keep it a secret in the family as long as we can."

"Yes, you have changed—we have both changed. What a vain little chatterbox you used to be?"

"Vox et praeterea nihil" expressed me in those days. Now 'Socks et praeterea nihil' would be more like it," cried Mrs. Fenton, gayly, with a flourish of her darning needle at the work basket. "And as for vanity! Bless my heart! I should like to know when I have had time to be vain!"

"I am afraid you are getting a little careless, my dear," her husband observed, congratulating himself on having so easily led up to the discussion he wanted. "Sometimes it has struck me that you were almost untidy, and that's a sad mistake for a woman. If she has the air of being well groomed she possesses a very great charm."

Mr. Fenton wore prodigious whiskers, Dundreary like, and they hid a blush which rose to his face at the consciousness that he was quoting the newspaper article verbatim et literatim. But his wife had no such protection, and the rich color died her very brow. To be called untidy is a cruel stab from one's better half, but she restrained the indignation on her lips and tried to ask quite calmly:

"Whom should you call a particularly well groomed woman, now? Of course, I suppose there are three hundred and ninety-nine of them in the four hundred, but among our neighbors? It would help me to find a model, you know."

There had been moments in their wedded career when Mr. Fenton had felt that the workings of a feminine intellect were quite beyond him, and this was another of them. At what was Mary driving? It was impossible to suspect her of jealousy, for from that taint her sweet nature was absolutely free. So, rather in the dark, he replied, helplessly:

"Um—ah. Well, Mrs. Van Dusen, now. She always seems to me what you would term well groomed—a fine figure of a woman and dresses mighty well."

"Mrs. Van Dusen spends \$1,000 a year for dress where I spend, perhaps, \$150. She buys her figure from an expensive corset maker, but it is useless to mention that to a man. She has no children, three servants, and nothing to think of but fixing herself up. I am not complaining, James, dear. You remember you brought up the subject yourself, but when you compare me with Robert Van Dusen's wife you should consider the difference in our circumstances. I have many, many cares and my days are full to the brim."

The rough head bent over the hole which was being filled with a careful lattice work of black yarn, and the needle went in and out steadily. If the mender's eyes were dim nobody noticed it.

"But it takes very little time to keep one's self in neatness and order. Just hear this, now, my dear. A very good article, very sensible, too." The eloquence of Cicero, the rounded periods of a Junius would not have moved Mary Fenton at that moment. It took all her wits to keep down the bitterness in her heart. Without waiting for encouragement, her husband read on:

"The woman who has an air of being well groomed has a very great charm for all men." [He skipped this sentence. Why expose the writer to a charge of plagiarism? Really, ladies, you should at least try the experiment, and may well devote a little time each day to the cultivation of exquisite personal detail at the expense of some your more frivolous amusements. First, do not rise too early. Breakfast in bed on a cup of coffee, a roll, perhaps a little fruit, and plan your toilets for the day."

Up went Mary's eyebrows and a sarcastic smile played about her mouth. Three children to send to school at 9 o'clock and breakfast to get before that! Glancing up Mr. Fenton caught the smile.

"Naturally," he interrupted himself, "every woman cannot follow

this plan exactly, but the general outline is good. You'll see."

So he traveled down the columns of directions, for the bath with bran bags, almonds, meal and orris root, the pedicuring, the manouring, the elaborate brushing of hair and teeth, the gymnastics for the development of the figure, the careful examination of each article of clothing to see if a single stitch be wanting, the hundreds of little details which it takes so few minutes to write down, so many to carry out. As he went on, Mary's natural sense of fun came to her rescue, and, beginning to appreciate the absurdity of the situation, she held her peace, adding up as they were mentioned in turn the twenty minutes for this, the thirty minutes for that, and her husband drew a long breath at the end of the evolution of a lovely creature immaculate from top to toe.

"It seems to me," observed she, demurely, "as if cleanliness were getting ahead of godliness nowadays. Well, it must be delightful to go through such a thorough process, and yet four hours seems a long time to devote to dressing every morning."

"Four hours!" cried Mr. Fenton, taken by surprise. "My dear, you must be mistaken. Why, the half hour for the bath is the longest item in the lot."

"Many a mickle makes a muckle, papa, dear," rejoined Mary, earnestly. "Do you think there is ever a morning in the whole year's round when I could take four hours for the adorning of my own person? Where would your breakfast be, and the children, and the orders to the butcher and the grocer? James, what are you going to do to-morrow?"

She suddenly asked, and a dimple appeared in her cheek which made her look quite young again.

"To-morrow?" he repeated, mechanically.

"Yes; at the office, you know. Anything special?"

"Why, no. I have a dozen bills to collect for Mr. Snow; that's all. Why?"

"Because I want to try a little experiment. It's not at all original. In fact, it's as old as the hills. Promise me you will do it."

"If it is within reason," stipulated Mr. Fenton. His wife had not changed so much, after all. If she had outgrown her neatness, the old vivacity was still in her.

"Oh, yes. This is what I want you to do. Change places with me for one day. Let me go and collect the bills for Mr. Snow. I warrant that I will get every cent that is due him, and you stay at home as housekeeper, cook, nurse and general factotum."

"What perfect nonsense!" growled the gentleman, taking up the paper again. "I should think you a school girl of 16. You know that's impossible."

But it was not impossible, and Mrs. Fenton proved it, if not to her spouse's satisfaction, at least to his conviction. She had recourse to all her forsaken arts of coaxing and wheedling, and at last, quite worn out with arguing and shuffling, he had to give in, and agreed to make a fool of himself on the morrow. The victor went up to bed triumphant, pausing in the nursery to leave the big mending basket and to lean lovingly for a moment over the bed where her twin boys lay sleeping—sturdy lads of 9. In the next room she drew aside little Mabel's tumbled curls and left a kiss on the rosy cheek, and at length, with a deep sigh, she found herself standing before her dressing table, taking down the coils of her hair. Many a silver thread had stolen into the bright brown tresses, but they still fell to her waist as abundant as ever, and against the girlish background her face seemed to lose some of its lines of care. Was it true that she had been growing careless of her own appearance? Like a flash there ran across her mind those words about Mrs. Van Dusen, and staring earnestly at the glass she felt a thrill of simple pride in its assurance that, with such clothes as adorned that lady, they would be more on a par in good looks than a casual observer would imagine. Then she thought of her husband and the experiment that was to be tried, and, laughing softly to herself, she turned out the gas and got into bed, hearing that unfortunate man in the cellar below, muttering like the ghost of Hamlet's father as he put the coal on the furnace fire.

The memory of the following day is even now a hideous nightmare to James Fenton. Never had the office where he kept books for a peppery and unreasonable coal merchant involved him in so many trying situations. His wife, true to the arrangement, had presented herself at breakfast arrayed in her walking dress, and offered to make suggestions about curling Mabel's hair, tying on her pinafore and mending a mitten brought to her just as the one maid rang the bell for breakfast. Hannah was in the secret, for she had already been to ask his advice about the muffins with a giggle, and Tom and Harry had been told by mamma that her father would lay out their clean clothes and give them any help they needed in the toilet line. By the time he sat down at the table he was a desperate man. His own toilet had been sketchy in the extreme, and he had literally had not a minute to think. Mary, in the gayest of spirits, took his bundle of bills and went off, reminding him not to forget to sort the washing just brought upstairs, and that this was the day for sweeping the parlor.

"And I hope," said she cruelly at parting, "that you will find time to give at least fifty strokes of the brush to your back hair, James, dear."

The pen refuses to record what James replied under his breath to Mabel crept up timidly, fingered the folds of the flaring skirt, and looking up into her mother's vivid face, she said, hesitatingly:

"Are you pretty, mamma?"

"No, dear," answered Mary Fenton, demurely, "but I am well groomed, and I possess a very great charm."

There was a small pile of bills on Mr. Fenton's desk the first of the month. He counted up the total

with a sigh, made out a check and wrote to the fishing club that he could not take the trip with them after all. Then he went round to the office of the Evening Comet and stopped his subscription to that unfortunate newspaper.

## As They Will Reason It Out.

"This," said the professor of ancient history to the class of '87 (forty-third century), "is a portion of a woman's gown preserved in the Metropolitan museum of antiquities since the nineteenth century. It is valuable both historically and for scientific research, showing as you



will see from these extensive sleeves that the women of that period had abnormally developed muscles. This evidence of physical prowess is found only in a few remaining articles of dress that were worn in that day, but it is corroborated circumstantially by records showing that it was not until that age that woman's rights were seriously discussed. Having secured their rights toward the end of the century they evidently allowed their muscles to degenerate, and have never, so to speak, been on their muscle again."

## Delicate Instruments.

Not so many years ago .001 inch marked on a drawing would have been objected to on the ground that it was difficult or impossible to work so closely to measures. At the present time .0005 inch is measured in every fine workshop, and dimensions given in hundredths or even thousandths of an inch frequently appear on drawings without objection on the part of the workmen. The instruments of measurement are now made with such a degree of refined accuracy that even the warmth of hand may expand a rod twelve inches long so that the amount of expansion can be measured.

It has thus become important in fine measurement to be careful that the temperature of the piece to be measured or gauged should have the same temperature as that of the instrument by which its size is determined. By first handling a rod of the length named and measuring it, particularly if the rod be of brass or copper, and then after allowing the rod to cool, handling the gauge until the latter expands, it is found that a discrepancy of from .0007 inch to .01 inch may be sometimes made apparent, due entirely to differences of temperature.

## Pretty Pastime in Italy.

Of all the barbarians who capture, kill and eat birds Ouida thinks the Italian people the most offensive and depraved. They have no respect even for the insectivorous birds, but class them all, she says, with "beetles, rats and vermin generally," a lark representing only a succulent morsel for the spit or pastry. This lack of feeling for the feathered tribe exists not alone among the poor and the ignorant but includes all classes, so that measures for their preservation have always been defeated "for fear of offending the electorate" or cutting off the pleasures of the mob. One custom that she ironically describes as a pretty pastime, practiced by the little children of all ranks, is that of crushing the skulls of the birds after they are snared, a custom in which they find great pleasure.

## A Novel Letter Box.

In Vienna a novel letter box has been introduced, the main point of difference being the absence of a key to unlock it. When the collecting bag is slid into the groove at the bottom of the box the latter opens and drops its contents into the bag. But one motion is required for the operation instead of the usual cumbersome series of movements necessary to unlock an ordinary box and take out the letters by hand in bunches. No other instrument can open the box, as the groove is of a peculiar shape and will not admit of anything else. Combinations of locks may be arranged for certain routes or districts, and the system is said to be looked upon with favor.

## Self Rocking Cradle.

An English invention is a self rocking cradle, warranted to do forty minutes, with a motion easy, slow and pleasant. In appearance the cradle is like the ordinary graceful bassinet of white iron and brass that is swung from a frame, with a hook for the canopy over the head. As the most progressive mothers do not rock their babies to sleep the invention seems to have come too late to fill a general want.

## ISLANDS OF SAFETY.

### FRANCE'S PENAL COLONY WHERE LIFE IS TORTURE.

#### A Scorching Climate, Excessively Hard Labor and a Disease Breeding Atmosphere Render Existence Hideous.

Graphically portrayed as the sufferings of Siberian exiles have been they cannot surpass the horrors of banishment to the Isles de Salut, where France has begun to send her anarchists and hardened felons. It is here that Captain Dreyfus, the Frenchman convicted of treason in having revealed to German officers the plans of French fortifications, will be taken to spend the remainder of his life.

The fierce tropical sun and ever humid atmosphere would of themselves kill any but the hardiest, but when to these is added cruel and unremitting toil it is no wonder that the miserable exiles seek swifter death at the hands of their merciless guards, whose orders are to shoot and kill at the first sign of insubordination.

These islands of safety are three in number, and lie a few degrees north of the equator, off the coast of French Guiana, South America. They are small in area, and except for their narrow maritime selvage are covered with dense tropical forests.

The climate is murderous. To stand bareheaded in the blazing sun for a moment's space is certain death. The wet season lasts eight months, from November to June, and the average rainfall during this time is 180 inches. The mercury never drops below 85 degrees Fahrenheit, and climbs up to 115 degrees during the four dry months.

The convict transports either sail from the Isle de Re, in the Bay of Biscay, or from the Isle d'Aix, in the Mediterranean, near Toulon. The voyage lasts a month, and its horrors are a fit preparation for those to come. The prisoners, already dressed in their infamous garb, are confined pell mell in companies of fifty in great iron cages on the spar deck, the upper deck of those extending from stem to stern. These cages are lined on their four sides by benches, and at night hammocks are slung. Day and night the guards stand beside loaded mitrailleuses, ready to fire at the first sign of rebellion.

Day by day as the ship nears the tropics the heat increases, and at last becomes intolerable. The foul air is sweetened only at intervals, when the narrow portholes are opened. Those prisoners who have been orderly are permitted to walk two hours each day upon the deck.

Sometimes there are outbreaks on these convict ships. Eight weeks ago the transport Ville de Saint Nazaire took from the Isle d'Alix 180 felons and 170 who had been condemned to banishment for political crimes. Among the number were several well known anarchists, named Lantier, Marpeaux, Catineaux and Colombat. As they neared Guiana an exile named Gaouyer broke the rules, and when the guard, ordered by the commandant, came to put him in irons Gaouyer sprang upon him and attempted to strangle him.

The guard, however, succeeded in drawing his revolver and firing, and Gaouyer fell mortally wounded. Seeing this the other prisoners, incited by the anarchists above named, attempted to break from their cages, but the officers drenched them with water and suffocated them with steam from pipes especially placed for such an emergency, and they were soon subdued.

On the arrival of the prisoners at the Ile de Salut they are taken to the "Camp," a clearing in which are strongly built iron barred huts. In these are swung double rows of hammocks, and at night the fetid atmosphere within, combined with the noxious vapors of the outer air and the ever present swarms of stinging insects, render any but the sleep of exhaustion impossible.

From the moment of his arrival the convict has no name. He is known only by the number of his hammock. The work is excessively hard. The new arrivals are put at the most severe tasks—draining marshes and clearing ground—to break their spirits, though it would seem they would have little inclination to rebel after the sufferings of the voyage.

They are conducted to their work by armed guards, who are ordered to fire at the least attempt at flight. Few try to escape, for they know if they evade the bullets of the guards and their pursuit, which seems impossible, it will be necessary to traverse the sea and the virgin forest. At every step will lie in wait for their death by hunger, by fatigue, by disease, or by the poisoned arrows of the natives, who receive a reward for every convict they bring back, dead or alive.

Meanwhile, with bodies broken by their awful toil in a climate where a walk of a hundred yards is a formidable task, they labor in the blazing sun with spades and picks. About their heads hang clouds of stinging insects whose bites swell their faces and hands. Great red ants cover their bare legs, and sometimes poisonous serpents twist about their ankles and inflict mortal wounds. They stand in trenches up to their knees in water and mire, and the putrid exhalations rising from the earth consume them with fever or set their teeth chattering with cold, while the sweat rolls from their foreheads.

## OPPOSED TO ATHLETICS.

### He Values Brains in College Above Brawn.

Prof. Burt G. Wilder, of Cornell University, Ithaca, N. Y., who recently exhibited a brainless frog, has become known as one of the most skillful experts in brain anatomy in the United States.

He spends all his spare time on the comparative anatomy of brains, has made many important discoveries, and his collection of brains is one of the sights of the institution.

Those who know him well find him a genial, warm hearted, almost overconscientious man, eager to help painstaking students. To those students who are not in his classes he is known as the one man in the faculty who has made unceasing war for twenty years on college sports. Every year there is a scare lest Dr. Wilder shall succeed in his purpose of killing athletics, and every year there is a rally in the faculty to head him off. The doctor recently said in a printed article:

"I can probably claim a bad prominence among American professors on the following grounds: I never witnessed an intercollegiate contest, contributed a cent for their maintenance or voted to permit absence of any team or crew. Since 1876 I have objected to the whole system in writings."



PROF. B. G. WILDER.

"Not very long ago society flocked to admire a drooping lily or a nodding sunflower with a slim something in petticoats or trousers behind it, dribbling forth unintelligible—and therefore inestimable—inanities. To-day the obvious college representative is the captain of a successful football team. The game is witnessed by thousands at a high price. Great newspapers devote columns to contests, which, in the total of fury, bodily hurt and bloodshed, surpass some pugilistic encounters and approximate war before the introduction of gunpowder. 'A whole head is worth less than a half back.' The esthetic craze has been succeeded by an athletic craze."

Dr. Wilder has another bad bedside brain study and hostility to football and other athletic sports. It is cats. He was one of the first teachers of physiology to use cats in experiments before the action of the heart and lungs he put hundreds of cats under the influence of chloroform and cut them up in his lecture room. The young women students have invariably stood it better than the young men the first time. Some male freshman is almost sure to faint when he sees the doctor's experiments in vivisection, but the girls, although they occupy the front seats, look on without a quaver. To get cats Dr. Wilder offered 10 cents each for all the small boys could bring him. There was a procession of small boys immediately across the Cornell campus, each with a bag. The doctor had to have constructed at once a cat house and Ithaca became known as the one town in all New York State where midnight feline serenades were unknown.

Dr. Wilder's cat house used to be a great source of much fun for the students, and more than once has it been raided and the cats allowed to escape. It used to be out in a little orchard, now occupied by a handsome building, and there is a record of a case of arson when it was burned one night and the cats were sent scurrying over the campus to disappear in the neighboring gorges. Dr. Wilder and his cats have been caricatured repeatedly in college annuals, and their memory has been made secure in a college song.

## Buried in His Paper.

Some New York undertakers, whose customers are poor people, are using coffins made of paper. The coffins are made in all styles of pressed paper pulp, just the same as the common paper buckets. When they are varnished and stained they resemble polished wood, and in point of durability they are much better than wooden ones, it is claimed. These coffins will do for the burial of the man who is always reading in a street car whenever a lady who needs a seat enters. He claims that he is buried in his paper and does not see the lady. The paper coffin has been made so that at the end of the road for him he can be buried in paper.

## Perfect, Except He Is Tongueless.

John Fellows is the 19 year old tongueless son of a farmer near Louisville, Ky. He has not even a rudimentary organ. In all other respects the boy is perfect. He is bright, a splendid athlete and a favorite with all.