

From Moore's Rural New Yorker. Helen Morse - A Sketch. BY HOWE BENNING.

I would like to tell you of Helen Morse, first of her home. A tiny cabin, sheltered in a fragrant bush of the pines stole in at the open door and small casements, and which in winter seemed almost like one of its own lowly children. To this tiny home Jacob Morse had brought his bride many years before, and though his legs had taken a deeper tint from the weather, and one or two lean-to's had been added, it was still their home. Beside Helen there were Mary and Fred, Julia, Lewis and Kitty, to make music and muskets the noise and friends of the wood sprites. But Helen was unlike the others. A child of the most vivid imagination and daring deeds, impulsive, willful, loving and ambitious, she was one of those strange contractions that beset every young life, when grown into one that makes out hearts ache, we cannot tell why, and that we love for the same reason. Her great brown eyes found the loneliest dell in the forest and people of them with children of her brain, and to them only she committed the charge of her most secret thoughts - of her dreams for the life in the great world that seemed such a bright vision. This was Helen as she met her young companions in the dearly loved room, or stood at the western window of her home at twilight, pencil in hand. The healthy breezes of her evergreen home gave a rich color to her cheeks and a buoyant strength to her frame, and as through the shoals and currents that beset every young life, Helen grew into a noble, true-hearted woman. Not in a day. Many was the stern contest and many the failure before the consciousness that she possessed herself was hers. You have seen a boat shoot the rapids, perhaps, turning, tumbling, and riding in the quiet haven at last - and many know what this experience is to the soul, before in the still waters the voice of the Divine Master has quelled, we cast anchor and learn "to be satisfied." In this rest Helen rejoiced, and though her work was bounded by narrow walls, yet she brought to it all the earnest impulses of her childhood's days matured into life purposes. And when she had planted many a precious memory in the hearts of her school children, she turned her face from them and joined that noble band of women who, for love or duty, have sought in the sunny South and its bark-browed children to fulfill the last command of their Master. Two years of her life as fitted her to bear the name of a valiant soldier, and the armor was laid by and she passed within the veil. Southern seas sound as grand an anthem as ever the pine forest, and Helen sleeps well.

Do you ask, "Why so common a story?" To you it may be, but to that young soul standing to-day on the threshold of the yet untried life, there will speak a voice of what grand possibilities may yet be its own, and save it from that saddest of all dooms, "a wasted life." And to that soul we say, would you win the crown of perfect womanhood, you must work for it through the years that lie between, though your work lies at the foot of the cross and you grow weary in the work you do until the throbs of your earnest life wake many other souls from fatal sleep and fit them for His jewels. Then, and not till then, comes your perfect rest.

Dress as a Cause of Disease. In this age, when dress occupies so much of the attention of society, the influence of costume on the bodily condition becomes an important matter of inquiry. Improper modes of dress, whether excessive or inadequate, are fertile sources of disease, and also aggravate an abnormal state of the system by whatever cause produced. If in our desire to keep the body warm we overload it with layers of thick, closely woven, and thus promote an undue heat at the surface, the effect is to suppress the action of the excretory glands and prevent a free perspiration. The vitiated matter which is thus retained is re-absorbed by the skin and carried back into the system, rendering the blood impure and deranged the delicate mechanism of the glandular structure. Air and light are absolutely necessary for the healthy activity of the vessels of the skin, and those articles of clothing which prevent the admission of these two great vital agents are entirely unfit for use. As a free circulation of the blood to all parts of the human body is requisite to the enjoyment of perfect health, so no part of the body should be dressed in such a manner as in the least to obstruct or retard its flow. Tight boots, shoes or gloves are therefore detrimental. Cold extremities, painful humors, swellings and callousities are generally the results of such tight dress.

Insufficient clothing is much worse than too much. The effect of exposure to cold is the immediate contraction of the skin, which suspends the operation of the secretory and excretory organs, and the matter which would be discharged from the system is thrown back into the throat, lungs or bowels, occasioning those forms of disease which are commonly called "cold," "headache," "head-ache," "croup," etc. A change of dress from thick to thin is not beneficial unless accompanied by a corresponding change in climate or temperature. A fashionable lady after wearing a thick, high-necked dress all day, will sometimes array herself in some light, low-cut dress for an evening party. Such an imprudent change has frequently been followed by a sudden death. Head-coverings at the present day are evidently worn by ladies for display, and not for comfort, and we are not surprised when we hear this or that one complain of "such distress in the head" or "neuralgia." A hat, to afford real protection to the head, should be large enough to cover the greater part of it, and at the same time be comfortably warm, but not so heavy as to fatigue the wearer after half an hour's use.

But the most serious feature in the dress of American ladies is tight lacing, a practice most unnatural, and therefore most dangerous to health. Does any one doubt the prevalence of this custom, let him consult the fashion plates in any popular ladies' magazine. How women, servilely obedient to the suggestions of their dressmakers, or else glibly ignorant of the first principles of health, have squeezed themselves to death, the great day of account only will disclose! The record must be appalling, and yet the suicidal work goes on. The com-

pression of the hind hinders, if it does not altogether suspend, the action of the diaphragm, and weakens the muscles of the respiration and the power of digestion. The heart, liver, lungs, spleen and stomach being forced into a space much too small for the proper performance of their respective functions, are weakened, and if the compression is continued, become diseased; consumption ensues; and the mistaken devotee of a barbarous fashion sinks, swiftly into an early grave. Oh, ye who sigh for the deformity of a waspish shape, consider the faultless contour of that chief Zeus of sculpture, the Venus de Medicis, and strive to develop your attenuated bodies into the beautiful proportions of this well-grown woman. Of course the entire dress should be adapted to the climate and season of the year. In climates like that of New York city, where there are sometimes sudden transitions from heat to cold, and from wet to dry, it is hardly safe to dress in a slight manner, except in the summer, when atmospheric changes are least frequent. The most prevailing complaint among people of all classes is rheumatism, a disease which in every instance is the consequence of exposure to a sudden chill. No clothing of any kind should be worn in a moist state, especially while the person is inactive; and care should be taken that the feet are properly shod, not with "snugly fitting" boots or shoes of a kid glove consistency, but enveloped with those that are thick, solid, substantial, and amply large, so that the blood can circulate to the very toe tips, and a comfortably thick stocking can be worn without any sensation of constraint. In the matter of dress, more attention should be given to comfort than to style, and it will be usually found that they who dress neatly, and in conformity with nature's laws are the best dressed and certainly the most sensible. - American Phrenological Journal.

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