

THE HUMAN HAIR HARVEST IN BRITANNY.

Many persons have heard of the extraordinary markets held periodically in different towns on the continent of Europe, to which women and girls come to sell their hair for money or goods; but we believe no actual snapshot photos of the traffic itself have ever been taken—or, if taken, have ever been published. Obviously the vendors do not care to be perpetuated in this matter, and M. Geniaux himself had more than one narrow escape from the infuriated ladies who were selling their tresses to the itinerant merchant-barbers.

The traffic in artificial hair is a big business. It is interesting in itself, and quite a readable article might be prepared as the result of an interview with an extensive dealer in human hair in London or any other great capital. This information, however, is accessible to any journalist who cares to go and get it, and beyond bare mention it forms no part of this paper, which deals rather with the fountainhead (the joke is not intentional) of this curious industry.

I visited one of the great Paris coiffeurs, writes Charles Geniaux, in the Wide World Magazine, and he made the startling statement that "when they reach a certain age—say, forty or fifty years—almost all the ladies in Paris use artificial hair, particularly those who wear the hair in twists, or who affect the archaic style. Why," he said, "do you know the price of a single kilogramme (over two pounds) of first-class hair—hair that has been sorted, cleaned and prepared? Well, sir, I do not sell it under a thousand



AN AVARICIOUS MOTHER ABOUT TO SELL HER CHILDREN'S HAIR.

or eighteen hundred francs, according to color, texture and general beauty.

"And," he continued, "thanks to the life of high pressure which we lead in these modern days the demand is becoming greater and greater."

With these interesting statements still ringing in my ears, I left the coiffeur and resolved to find out for myself the origin of those mountains of human hair used by the wigmakers of Paris.

Luck was soon to satisfy my curiosity, for not long afterwards, in the course of a journey through Brittany, my attention was arrested by certain conversations on the subject of a sale of hair. I was told that the peasant women round about had their hair cut off periodically and sold to the merchants who went shearing from village to village. I made inquiries without losing a moment, and soon found out that one of the most important of these markets was about to be held in the month of June at the Fair of St. Fiacre.

In a few days I was blithely climbing the hill on whose summit is held the famous Fair of St. Fiacre, which is attended by practically the whole agricultural population of Morbihan.

In the centre of a large plateau is a round chapel. A few walls, some courtyards, two or three farms, and a little timber on the limit of the far-reaching horizon. Such is the battlefield on which the agricultural interests of the entire Department array themselves. Also, young men come from far and near to this



A RICH FARMER'S WIFE IN THE HANDS OF THE HAIR BUYER—HER SERVANT STANDS WITH HER CAP ON THE RIGHT.

fair to offer their services and hire themselves as laborers to the farmers. They look picturesque enough, these fellows, as they flock in together, holding in their hands long peeled twigs. As soon as a farmer has hired one of them, the young man breaks his willow stick as a sign of the engagement, and from that moment he enters the service of his new patron.

But do you know what the maidens, and even the old women, are doing in the meantime? Why, they are busy exchanging their hair for articles of clothing and miscellaneous sundries dear to the feminine heart! I must now set down accurately and in detail all I saw and heard during my undoubtedly perilous mission. Talk about a sheep-shearing station in Australia! Why, it is nothing to what I saw. First of all, however, a word of explanation is necessary. In England, this extraordinary



THE WIFE OF THE CHIEF HAIR-SHEARER HAGGLES WITH HER CUSTOMERS OVER THE QUALITY OF THEIR HAIR.

traffic would be almost impossible; and, in consequence, very little human hair is exported into Paris from Great Britain. But on the other hand, picturesque Brittany furnishes almost one-fourth of the entire consumption in the capital. Now, why is this? Well, it is mainly because the Breton women wear as head-covering a close-fitting linen cap, which entirely hides the hair with the exception of two flat bands which pass over the forehead and down to the ears. Now suppose for a moment that these Breton caps were replaced by ordinary hats and bonnets. Well, if this innovation took place, the traffic in human hair would simply become an impossibility, as the deficiency in hair would be apparent to every passer-by. Thanks also to the prevalence of the cap, the Auvergne and some districts of Normandy likewise furnish a considerable supply of human hair.

The peasant women seem to have reasoned the matter out something in this way: "As our large heads of hair are not seen, and as they have a certain commercial value, why should we over-weight our brains with them, especially when honest merchants come along to buy our hair on such advantageous terms?" And, goodness knows, cash is scarce enough among the Breton peasants.

It is no wonder, then, that the traveling hair-shearers and merchants put up at St. Fiacre, attracted as they are by the certainty of being able to shear practically the whole population of women and reap a very fine harvest of human hair.

I may remark, before going further, that the merchants are not nice persons, or polite; and their language, as a rule, is abominable. Probably by way of violent contrast to the city hair-dresser, who affects distinguished manners and curls his mustache with tongs, the hair-cutters I saw were unshaven and slovenly in their dress. At length I was fortunate enough to be well received by the best-known of them all, a comparatively intelligent man, without whose assistance it would have been impossible for me to obtain the snap-shots reproduced in this article. Whilst actually writing these lines I have open before me my note-book with this entry, in the hand of my friend, the chief hair-shearer:

M. Gerard, Commerçant, A la Chapelle Gacelle, par Carentoir (Morbihan).

Without any appearance of conceit he said to me: "I am a kind of celebrity in my own line. How many heads of hair have I shorn? Perhaps a hundred thousand or more!"

One of the accompanying pictures

end of this number. Madame holds between her fingers a print, which she is handling with studied carelessness for the benefit of an old woman with white hair, who is simply burning to exchange her hair for the gaudy stuff, as it would make her such a fine apron. It is a grand comedy, this. They talk, those two, they discuss, they haggle. Examine closely the caps of the women. You will notice the two bands of hair underneath the white linen on the forehead, but all the rest is so scrupulously hidden



THE CRUEL DEED DONE—COVERING THE LITTLE GIRL'S SHORN HEAD WITH A NET.

that he must be remarkably clever who could tell a woman with her hair on from one who has just been shorn by the merchants.

A fairly rich farmer's wife is seen in the second large picture; and from motives of hygiene, as well as avarice, she has offered her head to the scissors of the shearer. On the right of the photo you will notice an old woman holding the untied cap of her mistress, while the latter is being shorn. Here again, then, we get another curious glimpse of the industry, and we see that all the country women do not act in this way solely for money, but actually seek relief from the weight of their superabundant hair.

I do not know the weird vocabulary of Breton insults, but the mother of the little girl seen in the two single column pictures made my ears positively ring with her furious howls. First of all, she hid her children in her skirts. Then I pretended to go, but suddenly turning round, I secured a snap-shot of the little girl with her cap off, and her pretty, fair hair tossed over her shoulders. The

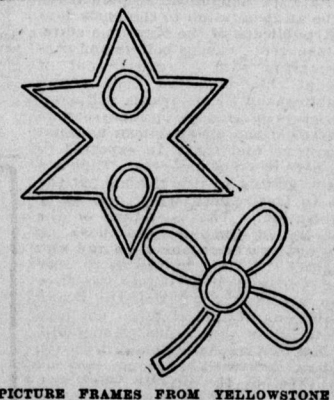


Decorated by a Geyser. The odd picture frames shown in the illustration owe their decoration to the spray of a geyser at Yellowstone National Park. They were made by twisting pieces of wire into the desired shape, and laying these frames upon a rock near a geyser for two days,

poor little thing was crying. Probably some instinct had warned her of the barbarity of this custom. Her mother, however, was eager for gain, and well knew that children's locks, more especially when golden, are worth most of all. And so she bartered the child's hair for a piece of cloth. The two little maidens of five and six were very tiny, but all the same, they were dressed like grown-up people, and had to submit to the common fate. Notice on the right the unintelligent faces of the peasants. So long as the country folk remain in their present condition of ignorance, this strange traffic will continue.

In the other photo the mother is covering the scalp of her shorn little one with a resille, or coarse net, while the child herself looks very disconsolate. Until they have made their first Communion, the little girls of Brittany all inclose their hair in nets.

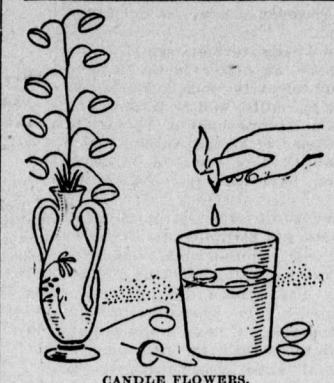
Decorated by a Geyser. The odd picture frames shown in the illustration owe their decoration to the spray of a geyser at Yellowstone National Park. They were made by twisting pieces of wire into the desired shape, and laying these frames upon a rock near a geyser for two days,



during which time the spray collected and hardened. The crust is so hard that it requires a chisel to break it.

FLOWERS MADE FROM CANDLES.
A Pretty Experiment That May Be Tried at Home.

Take a lighted wax candle and incline it over a glass of water, so that little drops of melted wax fall into the fluid. As each drop strikes the



CANDLE FLOWERS.

surface it undergoes a beautiful change, and takes the form of a wonderful white cup, somewhat resembling the white bell of the snowdrop. These little cups can be varied in size according to the angle at which you hold the candle.

Now we have got our flowers, but not our stalk. For every snowdrop you must take a piece of fine wire and slightly curve one end. Heat the straight end of the wire and pierce the centre of the wax flower while it is still in the water. Having made a hole through the flower, push it to the curved end. Prepare a dozen wires in the same way, all tipped with little wax flowers, and then twist them together in the way shown in our illustration.

When Lawton Was Frightened.

Many good stories about General Lawton have come to the surface since his death. Major Putnam Bradlee Strong, who was on the staff of General MacArthur in the Philippines, says Lawton confessed to being afraid once in his life. That was when he was riding with his twelve-year-old son Manley past Paco Cemetery at Manila. It seems that a Montana detail had just buried a comrade when a California burying detail came up. Somehow they failed to get cartridges, and asked the Montanas for some. The latter had nothing but ball cartridges.

"Oh, they'll do," said the California sergeant.

"Ready, fire!" came the order a moment later.

The bullets went whizzing over the grave and over the stone wall, on the other side of which was riding General Lawton, his head only a few inches below the wall. The bullets made a breeze as they went past. "That was the only time I can remember being scared," said the General later, "but my boy spoke up and said: 'Papa, is this like being under real fire? If it is, I like it.'"—Army and Navy Journal.

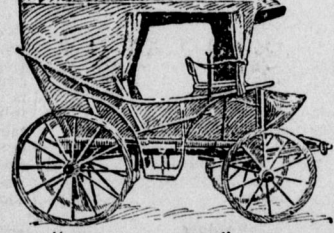
The Best Society in Havana.

Americans generally have the idea that in the old days the most brilliant social element in Havana were the Spanish officials and their suites. I wish they could see the horrible little outhouse in which six staff officers and their families were supposed to live at the summer palace! It would serve to accentuate their mistake.

As a matter of fact, the social circle of Havana has always been made up of Cubans; Cubans with Spanish titles (just as Canadians have English ones), and Cubans without titles; rich Cubans and poor ones, but always and pre-eminently, if not exclusively, Cubans. From the Captain-General down, Spaniards were strangers and foreigners, who might or might not be admitted to these sacred precincts according to no law whatever.—T. Bentley Mott, U. S. A., in Scribner's.

Florence Nightingale's Work.

What Clara Barton has been to the American soldier, Florence Nightingale has been to his British comrade. These two noble women set



THE "NURSING-CARRIAGE" WHICH ACCOMPANIED MISS NIGHTINGALE THROUGH THE CRIMEAN WAR.

examples of self-denying heroism of which both countries may well be proud. Florence Nightingale has just completed her seventy-ninth year, and although now an invalid she retains all her faculties, and her interest in the work she inaugurated continues unabated. Forty years ago all England raved about the young woman who, born of English parents in the city of Florence, from which she took her name, set out to alleviate the sufferings of the wounded and fever-stricken soldiers of her native land far away in Crimea.

During the Crimean War nine of her nurses succumbed to the fever, and many were invalidated home. Florence Nightingale herself still suffers from the great and continued mental and bodily strain that her Crimean services put upon her, but by her unselfish sacrifice she has made it impossible for the armies of Great Britain to ever again suffer from such horrifying calamities as those that she witnessed, suffered and endured.

FOR FARM AND GARDEN.

Grain for the Sheep.

Some breeders do not feed grain to their ewes except at breeding time, but there is hardly a doubt but what a farmer would gain financially in the end by feeding it in small quantities all the time. If you use corn there would not be much loss, and certainly time saved, by feeding it in the ear, for it is claimed by a great many that it does not pay to grind the grain fed to sheep.

The Currant Worm Giving Trouble.

A correspondent from California writes saying that last spring her gooseberries had small worms or insects inside before they were ripe and asks for a remedy. The worm is no doubt the one known as the currant worm, which attacks currants as well as gooseberries. As a remedy use about an ounce of hellebore to three gallons of water and spray the plants liberally with the mixture. This treatment is pretty sure to accomplish all that is required of it.—New York Weekly Witness.

The Use of Sweet Clover.

In an address at Sedalia on soil renovation by Dr. H. J. Waters, dean of the Missouri agricultural college, it was said that the common sweet clover is not the pernicious, dangerous weed so many seem to think. It can be easily killed out by mowing twice a year for two years, he said, and it is one of the most valuable soil renovators known. It will grow and thrive on land too poor to grow clover or cowpeas, and it is especially suited to build up the millions of acres of flinty hills that are now absolute waste, growing up in brush. Experiments made at Columbia show that in this quality of soil sweet clover is more valuable than the ordinary clover. After a few years of sweet clover, such soil is built up to a point where it will grow other renovators. In such lands it can be easily seeded and will smother other weeds, and in addition it will furnish as a by-product large quantities of honey.

The Hen and Her Care.

Every keeper of poultry should have a light, warm house and one that is convenient for feeding and caring for the fowls. It should be built in a warm, sunny place, where it will be protected from the cold winds. The front of the house should be to the south, and it should have windows enough to admit plenty of sunlight, as the sun will help warm it in the winter. There should be a walk running the entire length of the house on the north side, so you can feed and get the eggs without going into the pens. The feed boxes and water tank should be made in the shape of a drawer, so you can pull them out and keep the birds from getting into their feed and drink when you are feeding and watering. The nests should also be made so that they may be drawn out as you do the feed boxes. The windows are to be closed, the same as they are in the house, so that there will be no cold wind entering. Cold draughts are sure to make your birds sick and stop them from laying in winter.

Suggestion to Fruit Cultivators.

Many of the tender or half-hardy varieties of raspberries and blackberries would endure our severe winters much better, if in the late fall the cultivator was run between the rows, throwing the earth toward the stems, and in effect ridging or hilling up around them a little. This loose earth forms a mulch which prevents frequent freezing and thawing, and it has the great advantage of being a mulch that can be quickly and cheaply applied, compared to the labor of bringing mulching material from other places and putting it in place. To be most effectual it should be done as late in the fall as possible, and if delayed until some morning when the ground is frozen an inch deep, or about that, it will be none the worse, as the success depends much upon the earth that is thrown up being light and porous.

The fall trimming, pruning and cutting out of old or superfluous canes should be done before this, as it facilitates the working among them, and all the wood removed should be taken away and burned to destroy any insects or their eggs and any fungous diseases that may be on or in them. We do not doubt that similar treatment would be beneficial to the half-hardy roses and many of the shrubs on the lawn, excepting that some of them are better trimmed in the spring. But the hilling up around them will help to protect their roots.

Keep Your Stable Light.

When in a darkened stable the iris, or brownish curtain around the centre of the eye, expands so as to admit the passage of sufficient rays of light for distinct vision, but on emerging into the glare of day the same aperture immediately closes or grows less, a smaller quantity of light being necessary under these altered circumstances. Any person who has felt the pain and inconvenience of coming suddenly from a dark room into the full blaze of day will readily conceive the necessity for lighting a stable in the proper manner. This is too often neglected in confined stables, and the consequences are most distressing to a human observer. The poor horse, led suddenly out to his work, shows his pain by unmistakable signs, stumbles, and runs against anything that may happen to be near, until the eye has in some degree accommodated itself to the new circumstance under which it is placed.

Nor is this all. By a continuance

of this change from darkness to sudden daylight the eye becomes seriously injured. The retina, or sensible nervous expansion, becomes deadened and more or less useless; the horse's sight is injured; he starts and shies at objects which he sees imperfectly; and many a rider who has received a dangerous injury has had to thank his inattention to this simple cause rather than any vicious habit of the animal, to which it has been attributed. Blindness is almost certain to be caused by inattention to the above caution; but even blindness itself is less dangerous to the rider than imperfect sight. In the first case the horse is forced to trust entirely to the bridle; but in the latter objects only half distinguished terrify and startle, though they would under ordinary circumstances be passed without notice.—F. D. Coburn in The Horse Useful.

Breaking up Sitters.

Some find the breaking up of sitting hens a very difficult thing to do, and they really think they have to torture the hen in order to make her abandon her desire to brood. We have known poultry men and women to duck the hens in water several times and then turn them loose; have known the hens to go about with hoods on so they could not see, and to be shut up in dark places without food or water for a week or more. It is not necessary to resort to cruel methods to break up a hen that wants to sit, says a writer in Blooded Stock. What is wanted is to turn the desire to sit into the desire to lay again. It will be but little advantage to have them broken from wanting to sit and have them lay four or five eggs only to again become broody, which they will do if they are not cared for as they should be. The reason for this is that the conditions which caused the hen to become broody have not been changed and they cannot be changed by force. When a hen becomes broody it means that the egg-producing capacity of her system, for the time being, has become exhausted and that recuperation is needed. The first step to such recuperation is rest, and being an industrious bird, they feel that they might as well raise a brood while resting as to flog away their time. Some animals and birds will be stimulated to do that which is not natural for them, but is it best? The tired horse may be urged on by the aid of a whip.

A practice that is recommended by some thoughtful breeders which will break the hen, and at the same time have her in a good condition to go right to business, is to place one egg under her, letting her sit for one week, feeding her once in two days during the time as if she were really sitting on a whole clutch. But very little food will be needed on account of lack of exercise. At the close of the week place her in a coop with a slatted bottom raised a few inches from the ground, for a couple of days, and she will lose her desire to sit and in a few days will begin laying in earnest.

Items of Interest to Farmers.

Keep charcoal and salt where the fattening hogs can have easy access to them.

Breed the young sows so that they will farrow their young litters in the spring after the grass has come.

That the hog is a filthy animal is the fault of its owner. Hogs prefer cleanly quarters and will take them when they can get them.

Only a small amount of cornmeal should be used in feeding the pig, and it should be combined with other feed that makes bone and muscle.

Growing pigs must have exercise, but not too much of it. If they run over an extensive range they cannot be kept in sufficiently good condition to give the best results.

It takes the least feed from the time of weaning until the pig is finished for market if it is kept always in good condition. If it loses that condition there must be extra feeding and longer time to bring him up to it again.

To raise them profitably the pigs should be kept in good health and continually growing. There is something wrong in the breeding or care if the pig cannot be made ready for market by the time he is ten months old.

The scraps from the table and kitchen and vegetable waste, fruit peelings, etc., should all be utilized as feeding stuff. The pigs and chickens will eat them, and they furnish a variety, and the kind of food that is needed.

When the weather is cold and wet remember that a portion of the feed is employed in keeping up the animal heat, and that consequently more feed is needed at such times. Well-sheltered, clean, dry, warm quarters, economize feed.

Extirpation of Gulls.

A New London correspondent gives some details of the work of feather hunters in exterminating the small herring-gulls at the eastern end of Long Island sound and the islands beyond. The herring-gulls used to be very common in that region, but the feather hunters have killed or driven away almost all of them. On Fenikese island there used to be a large colony of these birds, which was protected and thrived so long Agassiz had his summer school there, but afterwards the feather-hunters began their work, and a woman who visited the island last summer saw hundreds of dead birds with their wings torn away and many wingless birds still alive, fed by their mates. There used to be a colony of the birds on Plum island, but now driven away by the federal works, and the birds are rare at Nantucket. The larger gulls are not killed by the feather-hunters, as their wings are too big to be worn on bonnets.—New York Post.