

SOCIAL MONOMANIACS

WHAT MANY WOMEN OF FASHION
REALLY ARE.

Jeanne Henri Brown on the National
List of Chrysanthemums—Maides, Wives and
Widows—Young, Middle Aged and Old
Among Them—The Matter of Pedigree.
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OMEEN, whether civilised or uncivilised, are always far more social by nature than men are or can be. When they live in cities and circumstances favor them, when they are in any sense their own mistresses, they become so devoted to, so absorbed in, society as to become often what may be called social monomaniacs. These are well known, though extreme characters in all big American towns, notably in New York, and are curious subjects for study. They are not, as might instinctively be thought, young in the main. On the contrary, the mass of them are wives, mothers, frequently middle aged or beyond middle age. They are not even drawn to society, as many women are supposed to be, in their capacity of managing mammals. Their daughters may be well on their hands, being adventurously married and settled.

When they have very young daughters, children, even babies, their material interests, strange to say, are swallowed up by their social interests. They do not, of course, nourish their own children. They would not if they could. The claims of society are immeasurably beyond those of their own offspring. Women of fashion here could not be expected to do what peasant women alone do abroad. They would regard that as exceedingly vulgar under any circumstances. They perform their entire duty, they think, by securing competent nurses for their small children, by hearing reports from them and about them twice or thrice daily. If a friend inquires about the last daughter, mamma says that she is informed that Clara or Florence is very well, quite over her ailment. She has not herself been to the nursery since the day before.

Mamma has a theory, generally cherished among the titled and privileged classes in Europe and which she is addicted to airing, that children are fonder of and have much more respect for their parents when they see very little of them and only on stated occasions. They can hardly believe this. The opinion is essentially un-American, but it suits their convenience and inclination to act on it, and it accords with their sex.

Whether young, middle aged or old, maidens, wives or widows, all the members of the peculiar class are consecrated to society and are concerned with little else. Society is their common bond, their sole affinity, their one vocation. They seem weary of it; they speak wearily of it. How can they help being weary of such a monotonous round—seeing the same faces, saying the same things, hearing the same stories, eating the same breakfasts, luncheons, dinners, suppers, substantially at least, but not wearing the same clothes or decorations by any means? A woman of fashion never does this. She would not, could not, be fashionable if she should.

It clothe alone that even preserve the charm of society! It certainly appears so at times. Wherever (some) women can wear new gowns continually their paradise must be. But society is no doubt something more than that to them. What that something is may not be understood by the representative masculine mind. It may be the newness of each occasion, the fresh sense of triumph through a distinguished personality, the novelty of adulation at every function, that prevents aught like pall-ing.

As a woman in society is generally an actress, and as actresses never tire of appearing for a whole season in one part, it must be with the completely social woman.

Social monomania is not an exaggerated or extravagant term, as many a woman demonstrates. She really has no counter attractions. She reads somewhat, she travels, she studies music and languages, she gives a certain amount of time to charity, but those pursuits are socially regarded, as are roads having one terminus. She seldom thinks or talks of anything else. The social notes are the first thing she turns to in the newspaper, and she dwells long and intently on them. She is apt to be severe on many persons mentioned there. They are not in society, she is prone to say. She is inclined to call them upstarts, parbores, ad vituperare, nouveaux riches, if she refers to them at all. She commonly daigns to name them in any way. They are not, to her mind, worth her notice, which she condescendingly considers as bestowing favor. As a rule she boasts very little on wealth. That is not, to her thinking, good form—a phrase she is partial to. But it is easy to see how essential she ranks it by taking it for granted that nobody who is anybody can get on without it. It necessarily belongs to every kind of enjoyable life, any life worth keeping. She has it, of course. Otherwise she would not belong to what is now styled the smart set.

Her social views are not uninteresting. She holds that no one should assume to have any place in society who is not rich; that society imperatively

demands millionaires; that it cannot be organised or conducted without them. In this she claims, as she virtually does, though she would deny it, that merit is in some manner mysteriously bound up in a large income she is absurd and chrysocratic. To have grown rich in one generation is vulgar, but to have had wealth for several generations is exalted.

She invariably assumes illustrious descent of some sort, though she may be chary of alluding thereto. Several ancestors of renown appear in her pedigree, albeit she may either have placed them there or have created for them a history that are not entitled to. She must have some authority, however spurious, for lineage, for she deviously imitates the old world in regard to blood. In nine cases out of ten she is, allowing for her good qualities, a tuff hunter, a pretender and a snob. She can scarcely be otherwise in a democracy where uprightness and labor are the sole nobility. She is unrelated to the republic, a savage nature on herself.

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A BRIGHT WOMAN.
Sketch of Mrs. Alice Moque, Writer
and Amateur Photographer.

Alice Lee Horner Moque was born in the city of New Orleans during the war of a northern father and a southern mother. Judge Charles West Horner, her father, a descendant of an old Philadelphia Quaker family, was for many years a prominent lawyer in New Orleans; but, being an abolitionist, he returned north at the close of the war, returning from his profession and settling with his family in the city of Philadelphia.

After a few years' residence in the City of Brotherly Love the judge moved to Washington, renewing his relations with his former partner in the south, Thomas J. Durant, forming anew the old law firm of Durant & Horner, well known in that city, and of which Judge Horner, the surviving partner, as the ripe old age of 84, still remains the senior member of the Washington bar.

While in her teens and still a schoolgirl, Mrs. Moque married and went to reside in New York city, three sons being born of this union. When very young, she had given promise of future talent as a writer, and even in the early years of her motherhood she found time to study chemistry and the technique of photography and platemaking and became a regular contributor to Wilson's Photographic Magazine and other leading photographic authorities.

In 1890 Mrs. Moque, being left a widow, returned to Washington with her children, continuing her literary

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A handsome, refined and talented young lady of my acquaintance, Miss Edith J. Griswold, has gone into the patent and trademark business on her own account in New York city. When an invention or trademark is placed before her for examination, she searches into the records of patents already granted at Washington to see whether anything like the applicant's device has previously been made. She examines all kinds of inventions, trademarks and labels foreign as well as domestic. The young lady is an excellent French scholar and has already had large experience in the line of work she has now adopted in an office of her own.

When Lieutenant Governor Brush opened the joint session of the Colorado legislature this year, he began, "Ladies and gentlemen of the Eleventh general assembly of Colorado."

Mary Roberts Smith is assistant professor of sociology in Leland Stanford university. An earnest advocate of cycling, Mrs. Moque, has written much in favor of it for women, being herself a pioneer who braved criticism in the days before cycling became a fad, when the sight of a female cyclist was greeted derisively.

In 1894 Mrs. Moque married, and with her husband, Mr. John Oliver Moque, made a tour by wheel of England and the continent, accounts of her unique trip being published later in The Outing Magazine.

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The chief clerk of the last Utah senate was Mrs. Lilly R. Pardee. When the legislature assembled, Mrs. Pardee was the official of the old senate on whom devolved the duty of organising the new one for work. This was how she did it: She called the members to order, read the roll of their names and then asked the pleasure of the senate. A member nominated a man for president. Mrs. Pardee, without a moment's hesitation or embarrassment, put the nomination to vote and declared the gentleman elected.

E. A. C.

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THE NEW WOMAN.

West Street's Bicycle Dress as Pictured
by an Artist.

A New York paper goes out of its way to offer one of the most gratuitous insults to the feminine sex that I have ever seen. It speaks of the fashion of bicycle dress for women, saying that the style for next summer will be knickerbockers. Women bicycle riders, it says, will by common consent don knickerbockers instead of skirts because they are tired of the dangers and discomforts arising from wearing skirts on the wheel. If the paper had stopped there, nothing more would have needed to be said, and we should never have known how stupid and malicious the writer of the paragraph could be. But he or she, as the case may be—suppose we say "it"—for convenience—has not sense enough to know when to shut up. "It" goes on to picture the sights that will greet the public gaze when this happens.

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