From the Trite to the Novel in Handkerchiefs

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From the Trite to the Novel in Handkerchiefs

By HARRETT SCHLEITER

Ever since the days of princesses and knights, handkerchiefs have been romantic little bits. Fair ladies threw them to black plumed warriors on baying steeds. If they hadn't what ever would the poor dear warriors have pressed to their lips when they lay dyin' on the field of battle? Of course gloves might answer the purpose, but they are such expensive things to drop about on all occasions, and handkerchiefs do just as well. Besides they don't make such a bulge in the left breast pocket, when picked up and cherished by modern plumeless lovers.

Even if you don't use them for such purposes, you always feel more swag­gerish if you have just the right kind and color of handkerchief tucked in your pocket, or your sleeve, or down your neck.

Now what I started out to say was simply, only, merely that perhaps your rather depleted supply of handkerchiefs wasn't replenished at Christmas as you had expected it to be. Even though I remember an aunt who invariably sent each one of us a box containing a half dozen plain white ones, every twenty-fifth of December, she doesn't do it any more, and if I always did suspect that she bought a car load and just wrapped up a half a dozen for the holidays you can be sure there loomed up and mailed them to all relatives and friends, I'm really almost sorry. It may be best though for I'd probably get so tired of plain white ones, when now-a-days there can be such a delightful variety. Not only linen but gingham, pongee, crepe de chine, and color of one of the shades of Brooke, the rainbow never thought of possessing.

You know you can buy handkerchief linen cut in squares just the right size, and make them into red and drawn threads and little embroidered flowers or appliqued designs in one corner. Pongee can be fixed in these same ways. And by the way, who judges fair who dote on the pongee kind. Try them on His Highness, and when you see a corner of one glistening proudly out of his pocket, and see him throw his chest out a little more when people say, "Men, you will then be rewarded for all the times the thread broke when you were drawing it. Men, after all, are just as vain about such little things as are we women.

For dress up in light clothes for parties there is nothing daintier than a crepe-de-chine handkerchief with a ruffle of lace around the edge. They are such soft things that the scarpa left from an orchid or pale blue terry can be turned into such a cunning handkerchief you're glad it's after Christmas and you don't have to give it away.

Voile ones look lovely with lace edges, too. They are even more adorable made of white, with little squares of color hem­stitched on, or a wide border of another color joined with hemstitching.

And now—when the Christmas rush is over, make yourself a present of some lovely new handkerchiefs for the new year.

Are You a Book Lover?

Now that the long winter evenings are here, it's time to climb into the big arm chair and examine one's book shelf. What one finds there is probably a matter of personal tastes and inclinations. But whether they be books or poetry, travel, science, romance, or thought, let's read them.

Coming home from a full day, what could be better than settling oneself comfortably and renewing acquaintance with Lorna Doone and John Ridd, big fellow, or Angel Sedley and her friend, Becky Sharp; or sympathetically plot­ting with Nora in her "Doll's House"; or finding oneself in the heat and the magni­tude of "The Garden of Allah"; or galloping by the brush pile with "The Brushwood Boy"; or rescuing fair maldens in distress with Don Quixote.

"If one be modern should one go gaze a moment into the mirror Sinclair Lewis creates and "see ourselves as others see us;" love Mark Sabre in A. S. M. Hutch­inson's "If Winter Comes;" admire Peter Wescott in "Fortitude," by Hugh Walpole. All of which, in fact, means just losing oneself in delightful adven­tures, with delightful people, in a world of enjoyment.

And then there are the books of poetry, so many and so varied that one can scarcely list them without omitting too many favorites. "Poetry" says Max Eastman, "is a countryman and greets every experience by its own name. It is a gesture toward the world. The novice must learn now lovely it is to be indirect, and when you set out to go somewhere, instead of going there, to back up and turn around and go somewhere else." Thus the poet is the key to the enjoyment of poetry, be indirect and browse about according to your interest and mood.

For ruggedness and life there is Rob­ert Browning and if your soul is weary and needs food give it some of Edward Rowland Sill. There is Wordsworth for love and nature, and wind and beauty, and for love songs, Mrs. Brown­ing and Sara Teasdale—they are differ­ent, though. If one be filled with the spirit of youth then "Rip Van Winkle" or "Brooke," that vivid young Apollo, and should one be a man one cannot overlook the red­blooded poems of Service and Kipling.

Poetry. Art, beauty and fantasy, quickens life,—intensi­fies it, and in its subtle poignancy touches that inside person of ours whose existence we are scarcely aware of.

Of course, should one return home with deep thoughts and an open mind, an essay is in order. One of Emerson's, perhaps, or Bacon's. An essay that takes lots of time and lots of thought. Great, then, is the enjoyment of rolling out deep, perplexing, thundrous truths with the air of one who knows. Or if one be whimsically inclined why not a little of Christopher Morley or Gilbert K. Chest­erton? "Tremendous Tribes" is a leisure­ly book to start on. For strict en­joyment there is Charles Lamb, Samuel Carruthers, and Robert Louis Stevenson, and for a mental massage try Oliver Wendell Holmes' "The Autocrat of the Breakfast Table." A pastor once said that when ideas would not come in the preparation of his Sunday morning ser­mons it was the Autocrat to which he turned for a mind­rouser.

So do not overlook your books of es­says; there are good ones in them.

Neither forget books of travel: John Muir; books of science: Masterlinck's Life History of the Bee; outlines of scien­ce by John Arthur Thomson and Sloe­son's Creative Chemistry; books of his­tory: Wel's "Outlines of History" and "History of Mankind" by Van Loon.

Books, like those pink pills your mother used to give you, cure all ills. Whatever your mood of the moment may be there is a book to fit it. All that you need is an R. Mifflin, proprietor of "The Haunted Bookshop," that C. Morley created to prescribe for you.

Obviously there has been room here for only a few suggestions. If my favor­ites aren't on your book shelf read what YOU have. One's own personal tastes should be the criteria for the selection of reading matter. But READ,—taste, tasteful order, and soon you can gather your own loves about you.

We can't all climb the Swiss Alps, sail on stormy seas, or languish under southerns palms in tropical moon light. But in our own lives, commonplace and prosaic as they seem, books can bring to us the romance of foreign lands, can acquaint us with the most interesting of people.

And although without continued study we cannot become trained connoisseurs, clever critics, or specialists along tech­nical lines, nevertheless by reading we may gain a large appreciation and understand­standing of those things that are good in life.

Nor have we ordinary people an ade­quate means for self-expression. We cannot dance or sing, our tongues and pens are awkward, and our fingers clumsy. Our souls are buried and stifled, carried out for open spaces. Books meet this need of self-expression. When we find our own thoughts and feelings, longings and striving so well expressed, when we see beauty shimmering and vivid, we are satis­fied.

"Reading maketh a full man." Yes, and what life, what people, and what en­joyment it imparts before one. To value books, to read books, and to love books—that fellow housewife-booklover is to love life itself.