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Shall Mother Have a Vacation?

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Never before in history did haughty Dame Fashion bow down so humbly and completely to one man as she does today to King Tut. Perhaps tomorrow theickle lady of fashion will model herself to please the eyes of an Indian chief or a Chinese mandarin, but now King Tut holds full sway over her heart and influences her every slightest whim.

From the style of her hair dress to the shoes on her dainty feet My Lady of today is entirely and wholly Egyptian. Her curly hair has become straight, and her slipper may sparkle buckles to match the one on her hat. Tut sandals, a lovely version of the buckle of red, blue, green, and yellow. It is used to hold draperies at the waist line or in the form of a bracelet. It is used to hold draperies at the line of the skirt. Surely one would expect to see My Lady strolling on the banks of the Nile, rather than along Fifth Avenue or Main Street.

As to her jewelry—her earrings grow longer and dangle to her shoulders. Around her neck she wears one of the innumerable types of Egyptian ornaments. On her arms are little transparent ‘slave bracelets’ made of colored glass. Paris has designed a new novelty which is an exact reproduction of documents in red galalith, featuring a broken ring with the pin crossing the circle. It is used to hold draperies at the waist line or in the form of a bracelet. Surely one would expect to see My Lady strolling on the banks of the Nile, rather than along Fifth Avenue or Main Street.

And every day countless miles of materials covered with strange little Egyptian motifs are turned out of the textile factories. One of the favorite types is a beige or navy ground coloring with embroidery of very intense and varied colors, worked out in typical Egyptian motifs, with human figures and medal lion effects. These materials are whisked into gowns and blouses by the flying fingers of designers and dress makers.

Even the veils and gloves and parasols, if they are of the newest, follow in line. And the earth seems to have fairly blossomed out with Egyptian handkerchiefs, worn, for some twisted reason, tied about the neck or wrist, in a most interesting way.

I saw recently an advertisement of a kind of corset and brassier which gave one the straight line silhouette of those ancient maidens of Egypt. So even the extreme faddist will possibly change her form.

The fashion has even cropped out in interior decoration. Draperies with Egyptian designs are shown in furniture magazine advertisements as well as in the shops. Wall papers are now being manufactured with a frieze-like border on which one sees a continuous line of figures which tell a story as those found on the old temples. But it is lack of discrimination that will substitute these designs for the more restful and suitable backgrounds of plain or near-tone wall paper that good taste demands.

Of course the fad cannot last for long at this high pitch. But it is prophesied by Mrs. Olive Quitman, a leading style critic, that the coming modes will have a suggestion of the Egyptian rather than the actuality.

Shall Mother Have a Vacation?

We have all told Mother that it is high time for her to have a real vacation. She admits she’s never had one; at least not the kind we mean. Of course when we were youngsters she used to take from one to four of us and visit Grandmother.

But I wonder now how anyone had the temerity to call that trip a vacation. It usually occurred just after the fourth.” She waited to see how many of us had casualties and if no one was incapacitated by lock jaw or total blindness, we started.

First, of course, we had to be “sewed up.” Best and second best dresses, aprons galore, new hair ribbons, hose all darned and each girl provided with a floppy hat with flowers. (They are in style again, I see by today’s paper.) Then there was the packing! Each of us staggered under the weight of a small trunk and Mother, poor dear, was almost obliterated by the hand luggage. Of course we had to take food! It wouldn’t have seemed right to travel without provisions. Anything could happen in the 60 miles that lie between our home and grandmother’s. Didn’t we take a train once, that was two days late? A wash out on the line is no joke when your traveling companions are children of assorted ages, assorted sizes, and assorted dispositions. I think an occasional convulsion was taken for granted too. Grandmother never has admitted that fried chicken or bananas might have been the cause. She always thought it was the excitement of coming to see her! If the train was on time, and if the horses weren’t being borrowed by the neighbors, and if the hired man hadn’t left the day before and if the mud wasn’t too deep (you know it always rains on the Fourth!) and if everything else was propitious, we usually arrived in time for supper.

We children had a glorious time, but poor Mother! She felt she ought to help with the work; the kitchen was more inconvenient then ours at home, the pump was nearer the barn than the house, the windmill squeaked and everything an imitate and inanimate, conspired to make Mother miserable. She simply couldn’t help worrying about the boys, they were left at home and Father was far too busy to look after them much. She was so afraid they’d play with matches or light the fire with gasoline or do any one of a thousand dangerous things. It’s no wonder that when Mother told us fairy stories, she described a calm and quiet mountain or an imaginary ocean voyage or the splendor of a big hotel.

So now we’ve decided that she must
The Fallacy of An Expensive Standard of Living

By CLAUDE L. BENNER, Dept. of Economic Science

OUR social reformers and professional uplifters have been so constantly talking about the necessity for the masses to maintain a high standard of living that some very detrimental economic fallacies are coming very popular in the public mind. These fallacies are quite widespread among certain classes of people. It is a noteworthy fact that in many circles the free and careless spender is too often pointed out as the undesirable citizen while his spendthrift neighbor is selected as a model, progressive, up-to-date man.

It is no infrequent thing at all to hear a well paid laborer say that he is unable to save any money, because he has to spend it all to maintain his high standard of living. And he may continue to tell you that it is all wrong to save anyway, because when money is hoarded and saved, there is always hard times. This doctrine was actually put in print a short time ago in a short book entitled "The Fallacy of An Expensive Standard of Living." It contains all the time-worn arguments and fallacies that economists have been fighting against apparently without success for the last one hundred years.

The writer asserted that laborers should maintain just as luxurious a standard of living as they possibly could, because wages were set by the standard of living. If the standard of living was high, then their remuneration would also be high. Free and luxurious expenditures were defended on the ground that if the farmers' ills consisted in the fact that he had allowed his standard of living to fall too low, that he had deprived himself of too many of the so-called good things of life.

The danger lies in this form of argument, as in so much specious reasoning, lies in the fact that it contains an element of truth. It is true that wages depend upon the standard of living. But not in the way that our social reformers would have us believe. The standard of living can affect wages only in so far as it tends to restrict the birth rate and thereby limit the total number of laborers in the field.

The same reasoning applies to the case of the farmer. There is no doubt that the farmers' ills consisted in the fact that people do not put on the market as many manufactured goods as they formerly did. And so the argument goes that the world must strive for an efficient standard of living. He sees the human body as a storage battery. Each day it begins with a certain fund of energy. During the day it may direct energy into channels whereby goods may be produced that will build up his body and brain, or he may frivolously dissipate his energy. Altogether too large a portion of the world's resources goes to the production of goods of this nature.

What society needs more than anything else is rational consumption. It needs to comprehend thoroughly a few economic truths regarding spending. It must bear in mind always that saving is a virtue. The unnecessary expenditure is a total loss to society. That the buying of expensive trinkets is not good for business. That the wearing of flimsy shirts has never yet, and never will, raise the wages of the laboring man, and that a community of lavish spenders and consumers will dissipate society's wealth and leave the next generation in poverty.

Another very detrimental effect of the cry for a high standard of living lies in the fact that for some reason or other it seems always to be accompanied by a desire to abstain from work. It is really astonishing upon reflection to see how much of the fashion of the world is due to the tendency to avoid the appearance of having to work, or even to go so far as to advertise the fact that one does not have to work. This point does not need to be amplified at all. Everyone realizes it very keenly. It is said that the origin of the custom of binding the girls' feet in China was to give the world a visible sign of the fact that these ladies were not supposed to work. One can only wonder if some of the customs which were only later practiced in Christendom did not serve much the same purpose.