

Beautical Arms

How to have them and how to retain their charm of line and Roundness



It is not until the spectator has drawn close enough for proximity to release him in a measure from the commanding power of the Goddess that he realizes the absence of her arms. As he walked down the long aisle, sculpture-lined, at the Louvre, seeing nothing but the grand stone creature at its very end he was blind to the mutilation, and it is a pretty question whether this Venus is more or less compelling because of her loss. And yet the arm in sculpture is magnificently effective.

A great share of the charm as well as the action of the classical friezes rests with it. The whole movement of many of them depends upon the carriage away and gesture of the member of the beautiful human body; the arms even more than the faces and the cunningly devised drapery transcribe the artist's meaning, and in single figures of the goddesses antique art depended largely on the arms to express emotions which would be out of place on countenances of the first attributes of which was Olympian calm.

How well these old artists knew that a perfect arm is the first salient thing noted by the eye in a sculpture and a painting shows their eager study of life. What was true in the glory of the Phoenician is equally true in the glory of the Egyptian. If proof beyond one's experience were required, that it is based on a law of human nature. When we see a perfectly proportioned woman attired in classical drapery our first exclamation is apt to be not what a pretty face she has, but what a beautiful arm.

A Beautiful Rarity
But a perfect arm on a woman to-day is the rarest of all sights, though nature sometimes presents it. Whether it is because of years of covering it up under sleeves of varying style and of every kind of fabric, or because our modern exercises or the lack of it is responsible for this undesirable state of things, the fact remains that the feminine arm in our age falls far short of the standard.

It is too long or too short; it is angular or swathed in folds of unseemly flesh. The pretty dimple at the elbow has sunk to a deep depression, the front of the shoulder is narrow, the narrow bracelet, nature's dearest gift, which should mark the junction of the hand and wrist, is seen so seldom that when seen it is remarked with wonder as almost a deflection from the line of beauty, while of other defects, like too great muscularity or the total absence of vigor, there is no need to speak.

A woman's arm to be perfect should be the natural growth from the baby's. Hardness and coarseness have no right there, while any suggestion of animal crudity or any other mark that of pulsating life will spoil the picture.

Color, soft and sweet, with none of the vermilion tints Rubens' "Genius of Evil" painted, and absolute grace of form should be its easy characteristics. We do not object to a powerful modeling when the type of woman is that of the goddess, "divinely tall and fat," but if her type be humaner we would not miss it.

Silvery-golden should gleam the tints of the soft, firm flesh, without coarse red or black shadows, and the high lights should be mellow like those of palest amber.

Melody of Motion.
Ravishing as a note of melody is the gentle swaying of this white arm, which is not really white, except as the hues of the morning are, and in one's admiration no lascivious thought enters to disturb the music's rhythm. A beautiful arm, with all that it implies, does move one as a strain of amorous music sympathetically rendered, but it is not a pleasure of the flesh and produces no perturbation of the senses.

Artists have made arbitrary rules, and measurers who preceded Berillon have told us the exact dimensions which spell perfection of the type. But nature is careless of rules, and quite frequently she shows us on a frail body a white limb that must be admired as an approach to actual beauty.

Truly one would rather find it where there is the calm of ensemble, for the desire of the student of beauty is to seek pervading harmony. He shall not choose, however, who is after all a beggar, and wisdom will tell him to admire a pretty arm wherever he finds it, though the features and the form, lacking beauty and shapeliness, prove an interruption to his pleasure.

In an actress on our stage too slight of figure for admiration and with a bust almost unfeminine in its narrow contour there is seen an arm which touches ideal beauty. It is exquisitely shaped, neither languorous nor too vigorous; it is dimpled where it should be, firmly and yet softly modelled; it terminates in a delightful hand, while in color it refuses to take hard glazes through the cosmetic, and remains as the Greeks would say, honey pale.

Genuine Admiration.
We do not intend to mention her name, which is, moreover, unnecessary. She is remarked everywhere for the beauty of her arm, just as Maude Granger was a score or more of years ago. And this is another proof of how general and sincere is the admiration felt by any one for a really beautiful arm.

If this young actress did not possess her undoubted talent for acting it is quite possible that this universally acknowledged point of beauty would keep her in an engagement. The possibility has been negatively demonstrated, for one recalls a famous and recent case of a talented lyric soprano whose manager broke his contract with her because the arms she raised to heaven when she appealed for Tannhauser's soul resembled in shape not so much human limbs as they did small smoked hams.

As the courts sustained him, the lady had no appeal, except against nature, al-

though it is easy to suppose that as she had first sinned against that tribunal by neglecting exercise, she deserved no mercy.

How to possess a beautiful arm, or, if nature has been a niggard, how to approximate to such a desired possession? Exercise is the prompt answer, but judgment and wisdom must be invoked. Not all forms of exercise will attain the end, and, in fact, several of them will put hideous obstacles in the way. The severer kinds of calisthenics are fatal. They will produce the rather vulgar arms seen in the pictures of Giulio Romano, which are quite as ugly in their way as the splashy, vermilion dyed women of Rubens.

Virtue in the Medicine Ball.
Throwing the medicine ball will develop the arm in graceful contours if it is not too violently carried on, and golf, played in an episodic way, and not fanatically, is likewise beneficial. Both forms of exercise straighten the arm, carry off superfluous flesh and develop the lower arm naturally without putting too much muscle on the upper arm. This is a point requiring insistence; the entire arm ought to be developed harmoniously.

It is the heavy masculine sports that dwarf the lower arm by increasing the muscle near the shoulder. Simple gymnastic motions, up and down and rotary, carried on regularly under a professor of the Swedish system, are more likely to produce the desired harmony than are any of the exercises where complicated machinery is required that are so much in vogue to-day.

An excellent arm developer along harmonious lines is fencing. Studied in the French school—which is the best for grace

and precision—the thrusts and parries, the guard and lunge positions produce the wished for consummation—a fine arm denoting grace and agility without pronounced muscularity.

This exercise, which, it may be said, is passing is conducive to a general toning up of the body—leads to the acquirement of noble gesture, and a woman's arm may be never so pleasing to look at, and still without suavity of movement it will not be an effective weapon in her quiver of attractions, who more than any other reached flexible the rigid verse of classic French tragedy, early learned its power, and in Wagnerian drama Lehmann carried conviction as much by her heroic breadth

of gesture as by the studied tones of her voice. It is said that Josephine, first Empress of the French, the "chère Duda" of Martinique, captivated the simple colonists and later the Parisians by the marvellous versatility of her arms, which could "talk" when her charming lips remained closed.

Standard of Excellence.
While the painters since Josephine's time have left some examples of the beauties of the feminine arm on canvas, the greatest of them are seen to have failed in this cardinal point of excellence whenever their work is measured by the standard set by the artists of the antique world.

David, a sculptor in two dimensions, succeeded better than the artists who followed him. He, as a sort of court painter, had the fascinating Empress before his eyes, and he was, besides, deeply steeped in the classic conventions, and he could not

Every Woman at Newport Now Wears Yards of Veiling.



VESTAL virgins in Newport! It sounds odd, but that is what they look like, swathed in coats of snowy gossamer that cover their faces entirely.

The great summer resort of the East, always sybaritic in its tastes, seems to have grown more than ever like the land of silencing temples and shrouded beauties since this new idea has been introduced by fashion's high priestesses.

Every woman now wears yards and yards of veiling wound about her face. You peer at each one you meet cautiously, anxiously, boldly, baffled in your hope of recognizing her unless you can hit upon some little trick of carrying herself or some individual pose. The veil is an impenetrable mask.

Shades of the ancient Calypso! Memories of azure seas! What has come over the spirit of gay Newport and its ravishing beauties that they should go about like this?

Is it just a summer fad or do they resent the openly admiring gaze of the public?

Does some queer religious motive prompt it, or must one look for a dark and mysterious reason for this concealment of fair features?

Up to two weeks ago Newport was

rather proud of its number of bareheaded, and sunburned young women. There was a fresh and healthy air about them that did one's heart good just to see, and everybody knew that it had taken a long time to produce that much prized type of ruddy brown. One summer does not make a good tan. Several in succession are needed to put on the right tint, and besides, it had to be applied judiciously. That's the reason so many young men and women could be seen at the Casino, on the avenues, driving, walking and playing games without any kind of head covering. It was such a sensible fashion and, hardly necessary to add, one that was followed all over the country. But now everything is changed.

The ruddy tint of years gleams through the meshes of semi-transparent white chiffon, and all Newport seems to have gone mad about religion—the religion of beauty.

Who is responsible for it? Nobody knows. Of course, some pretty little feminine head began to think it out and wonder if she would ever come off, since the winter in town seemed to have had very little effect on it. The more she thought of how the fine texture and delicate coloring were past recall the more she wanted to possess them again. A consultation followed, probably, and the valiant young woman awoke to a realization of the attractiveness of a fine complexion and decided she must have one, whatever the cost.

There is a certain gracefulness about these fluttering veils, and the way they half conceal, half reveal sparkling eyes and pretty features is most bewitching. They recall the time when our grandmothers—or was it our great-grandmothers?—thought it the proper thing to wear linen masks whenever they stepped out into the sunlight. There was always a feeling of superiority about us when we thought of this quaint little fashion—we seemed so far above silly vanities; but here are our leaders setting a price on a fair skin.

Some of the veils are long, with lace edged ends fluttering to the waist, which reminds one of the fashion set by John Hading. A few women find it becoming to cross the chiffon in the back and knit the ends under the chin. Others drape one veil over the hat and pull another loosely about the face. It is nothing to see two or three little face veils, a drapery on the hat and a long scarf wound about the throat. If there were any possible way of adding one or two more bits of the

have taken his place in the Villa Medici and addicted himself to the study of paintings of Pompeii and Herculaneum without realising that the power and the passion, or it may be the frivolity, of those works lay in a large measure in the strange expressiveness of the arms of the female figures.

Gros, who was patronized by the Empress and Ingres, who had been the friend and fellow student of Louis David at Rome, kept up the tradition and gave almost equal importance to the painting of the arm.

But the romanticists followed these, and exaggerations and irrelevances threw their blight upon art, in which the arm as an exponent of their expressiveness suffered. From the noble gesture of classical art the arms of women models were thrust into violent action to conform to the strange belief then prevalent that the aim and end of painting was the representation of emotion and not beauty. The women of these canvases were no longer women of good society, careful of form, attentive to deportment, but nomads, wildly passionate, and tossing their arms aloft in violent gestures.

Rivolts' Art.
During the same period in England art did not suffer—hardly felt, indeed, the battle so wildly raging across the Channel between the Romanticists and Classicists. Sir John Ruskin and Gainsborough were painting, and additions to history may be brought justly against them, if they may be said that either distorted or falsified by feebleness the dignity of the arm in portraiture. The crown for being the completest artist must go to Sir Joshua, and when his many pictures of women are studied it will be seen that he gave to the detail of the feminine form we are discussing its proper distinction, and that he never failed to paint the arms as well as the faces of his lovely sitters with a curious intuition of their values.

From men like Sir Joshua, who recognized Raphael, Titian and Van Dyck as their masters—and those great artists raised the feminine arm with ideal perfection—we pass by great leaps over the crude imaginings and half-phrased ideas of a hundred artists and come to the moderns, who seem to have defied the

usuly.

A woman's arm is too often painted nowadays with an air of solemn painting brush work, until it stands for nothing in any art which demands respect for the dignity of style. The pity is great, but the evil is one, which will bring its own corrective.

Miss Alice Roosevelt seldom makes her appearance unprotected by veils, and she fancies the long kind, with loose ends that fall to the waist.

Miss Roche wears a veil for tennis and driving, and so does Miss Gwendolen Burden.

Miss Cutting sometimes wears one, its length apparently depending upon the style of her frock. If it's a walking gown the veil is apt to be rather short, with the ends tucked in at the back and just a little hand, she appears in a long dress, the veil accompanying the costume almost invariably reaches to her waist.

It is not so very astonishing to meet the belles of Newport driving in their smart little victorias, riding and walking, with veils hiding their features, but it is rather surprising to think that they are carrying the fashion to the tennis court, where veiled young women play the game dressed as though they were arrayed for some quaint religious ceremonial. How they manage to see a ball, much less to hit one with their eyes veiled is more than ordinary mortal can understand, but they do play, and play well, too, without removing the layers of fabric which serve as a protection for their fair skin from the burning rays of the sun.

From the physician's point of view this fad is deadly to the eyesight, and some physicians are predicting all manner of bad results from the added strain imposed upon the optics. Of course, if women have determined to have a fancy for the game, there is nothing more to be said on the subject, but the question crosses the mind if such a flimsy thing as a veil could possibly undo all the good that has been done in the way of promoting outdoor exercise for young women. What a pity that would be, and if it comes to an issue the trend of the times shows which would win in the end, beauty or athletics.

Automobile driving has been suggested as being responsible for the introduction of veil wearing, and possibly this is the case, but there never was a time when women could resist the temptation to hide their features behind thin meshes if there was any excuse in the world for doing so. It's vainly, pure and simple, but a pretty one and so very feminine that no one can have the heart to say anything against it.