



**This PDF is part of the
Philadelphia Water Department Historical Collection
Accession 2004.071.0001
Frederic Graff Jr. Scrapbook, 1854-1857**

**It was downloaded from
www.phillyh2o.org**



PLEASURE-SHARINGS;
Or, Clippings, for the Reader, from our Personal
Correspondence.

30-2

[From our brilliant friend LA MOQUEUSE we have a letter, mainly in answer to some queries of our own as to the art and mystery of SHOPPING—so well done that we will give it the conspicuousness of a separate article. It will amuse much, and perhaps instruct more. After an introductory sentence or two, she thus writes:—]

* * "But how I am running on! And not giving you a word of statistics as to the shopping about which you propose to institute an enquiry." I scarce see how I am to approach the subject. It is not altogether a 'branch of industry,' with me, for it, sometimes, I am free to say, covers what mamma calls my 'course of proceeding.' But beaux do not every day stand treat at Maillard's, and so I do sometimes escape the perils of confectionary, and 'shop and come right home,' as bid. Exemplary as that is, however, I should be worthier of whoever is to have me, if I were giving the time to a book. There are better influences, on the mind female and youthful, than the shopping and champagne numbered at present among our daily trials. Is it not wonderful what angels of mothers we become, through it all! Of course you love us, or I should recommend to you earnestly to strive to do so. "But 'the shopping.' Well, it is very various, even in the same family. There is Miss —, who dresses 'within an inch of her life,' while her mamma (once a belle, too!) is one of your friend's 'seventy-five dollar' annuals, the papa's income not being capable of two such, 'with illustrations.' One shops at Stewart's, the other in parts unknown. We know two or three families of girls who all dress alike, and that saves time. It is the custom in Paris, though I have heard it objected to as a parade of family affection, or as looking like getting goods cheaper 'by the piece.' A more common economy is to have a sort of primogeniture of splash, only one daughter 'going out' for the winter, and the others 'in delicate health.' And then some mammas are very vague myths—supposed to be insane or paralytic or painfully disfigured with the small-pox—and, as these girls consequently accept of the chaperoning of other girls' mammas, the family expenses are a one-thousand-dollar mamma less. One of my best dressed acquaintances makes shopping a 'kitchen duty.' Arrayed like a maid-of-all-work, she Sally's forth under a green veil and with all her money in gold and silver, naturally expecting to make better bargains where rents are cheaper and the specie in full view. She is thought to dress from Paris, yet she gets her bonnets made in Division street, her ribbons from the Bowery and her dresses in Canal street. What she costs, per annum, I do not know, but probably her husband gets the worth of his money. "Just now we are in the millinery Sabbath, between winter bonnets and spring bonnets, and I must write of shopping rather historically—three weeks, at least since I bought anything momentous. You ask about the 'amount of time and thought' bestowed on it. For 'Spring shopping,' it takes pretty much all of a woman's both. Those light silks and gay bonnets, if not being all day turned over and tried on are being all day talked of, and even scandal has such a suspension of hostilities during that season, as to suggest the millennium to those who do not know how otherwise to account for it. The average of positive 'shopping-time,' is probably three hours a day. Ladies take it so differently, however! My friend Miss — sits down with her memorandum book and pencil and makes out a regular programme of where she is to go and what to get, and simply follows it. Pretty Miss —, on the contrary, makes a day's dawdle of it. She wants perhaps a coquettish breakfast dress of some simple cashmere. She begins at Hearn's, and gets spread upon the counter everything he can possibly show her of the kind. After a complete inventory of his goods, she goes out with her usual phrase, 'I think I'll look a little further,' and proceeds to air, in a similar manner, the cashmeres and patiences of Arnolp Peck and Stewart, returning, very likely, to the first piece she looked at, with 'I've carried that in my eye all the morning.' She loves

LEMON HILL.—The following petition, signed by upwards of five hundred of our most respectable citizens, has been sent to Councils. It expresses the sentiments of a very large portion of the community.

30-1

To the Select and Common Council of the City of Philadelphia:

The undersigned have noticed with great pleasure in the published proceedings of Councils, that initiatory steps have been taken to dedicate Lemon Hill to public use as a Park. In connection with this measure, there is a matter of much importance to the citizens, to which we now most respectfully ask the attention of Councils. It will be recollected that the Lemon Hill Estate was purchased in 1843 by the Councils of the late City of Philadelphia, on the recommendation, among others, of the Philadelphia College of Physicians, with the paramount object of securing the Reservoirs at Fairmount, as far as possible, from contamination. To protect the Forebay from those impurities likely to find their way into the river, from factories and other buildings to which this land might in time be appropriated if not secured by the City, was a subject which earnestly engaged the attention of those having the health, happiness and prosperity of the citizens at heart. The result of that consideration, is that our citizens have rested satisfied that the water used for drinking and domestic purposes, has remained free from taint, and that a noble tract of beautiful land is about to be appropriated for the use of the people of the present and future generations.

Since the date of that purchase, the districts bordering on Lemon Hill, have increased with rapid strides, and buildings have already reached the borders of the river. Additional works have also been erected a short distance above Lemon Hill to supply the late districts of Spring Garden and Penn with the Schuylkill water, and the City has caused new reservoirs to be constructed.

In view of the increasing population of our City, and the imperious necessity of supplying all portions of our citizens with water as pure as our utmost care and foresight may be able to furnish, we are convinced that the river front from the Forebay at Fairmount, to a point above the Spring Garden Water Works, should by all means be most carefully guarded and forever kept free from all buildings calculated to injure the water. To accomplish this important object would be attended with a comparatively trifling outlay of money, and the undersigned therefore earnestly hope that Councils will give their attention to the subject before it shall be too late. Between the Forebay and Lemon Hill, lies a small strip of ground now appropriated to uses which we consider prejudicial, and between the Lemon Hill tract and the grounds of the Spring Garden Water Works, lies a piece of land with an extensive river front, and through which Girard Avenue will soon be opened; these two parcels of land are of incalculable value to the City in connexion with the Water Works above and below them. The purchase of these two pieces would be the means of uniting the grounds now owned by the City, in an unbroken stretch of land, giving a clear and unobstructed river front extending from Fairmount to the Spring Garden Water Works, and thus affording protection to the water for some distance above the curve in the river.

At the same time the City will be provided with a most valuable and elegant tract of undulating land, more suitable than any that can be named for the purpose of a public Park—a project much desired by large numbers of our citizens.

The undersigned are fully aware that in the present condition of the city finances, the utmost caution should be used in the public expenditure, but the vast importance of the proposed measure, to the health and prosperity of the city, compel us to ask the serious attention of Councils to the subject while it is in the power of the city to secure the property unincumbered with buildings of any value.

The really small outlay necessary for consummating this measure, will, we are convinced, be cheerfully borne by our citizens, who have ever shown themselves willing to meet whatever expenditures may be considered necessary for measures of a sanitary character. The recent calamity at Columbia, should admonish us to be ever alive to the importance of giving our watchful attention to those fountains from which we draw health and happiness or disease and death.

But when we reflect that the measure we propose, will not only be the means of protecting our drinking water from impurities, but furnish the citizens with a large, elegant and central public Park, abounding in natural beauties, with extended lawns, groves, and water scenery, easy of access from all parts of our extended City, we are led to believe the purchase now recommended, and the dedication of the whole connected tract from Fairmount to the northern limits of the grounds of the Spring Garden Water Works, to the public use forever, will be hailed with heartfelt pleasure by all classes of our citizens.

'stopping as she does her life; possibly because it keeps her fibs in practice, as her cheapening, is highly imaginative. There is no silk at Stewart's for two dollars a yard, than which she has not seen a 'finer and better at Arnold's for a dollar and a half, etc., etc. Then there is Mrs. —, who has lived in Paris and can find 'nothing worth looking at, in this semi-civilized country.' But she does look at everything, and decries everything, and in such a loud voice that Stewart would probably make a discount even on her semi-annual bill of a thousand dollars, not to have her frighten off his other customers.

30-3

"Shops have no 'attractions beside shopping,' I fancy. There is little or no conversation there, between ladies, except about what is on the counters, and as it is etiquette for gentlemen to take leave of us when we enter a shop, there is no 'carrying on the war over the calicoes.' It is quite as serious a place as a church, I think; for we seldom get up the steam for each other to smile-heat, and money-spending is among a woman's sincerities and solemn responsibilities. Some ladies have quite different manners there; crowding other ladies and talking with coarse energy to clerks, when they are the souls of soft courtesy in society. Acquaintances are never made over mutual goods, I fancy. Ladies might converse half a day over new shawls without any recognition elsewhere. As to the 'trouble we give to clerks,' and their 'opinions of customers,' I do not suppose a lady thinks more of such oversteering and overhearing, than of a door-handle's opinion as to being once or twice turned before opening the door. Habit makes us think them autotomats, though I suppose they are human and are seen somewhere else sometimes by somebody.

"To me, shopping is purely detestable. I cannot reconcile the value put upon five minutes of my time given to an admirer, and two hours spent in just matching a ribbon. Either the beau or the ribbon is a mistake. I should like to be dressed, like the hills about Idlewild, twice a year, (the snow-white dress for summer, as a difference of taste merely.)—the millinery spontaneous, and fashion altogether a matter of almanac. If the bills could be got rid of, by evaporation and the falling of leaves, of course even that return to nature also would not be objected to by the refined mind. Shops have but two pleasant uses for me—places into which I can turn to get rid of a tiresome acquaintance, and refuges on cold days, where I can vary my walk by stepping in and standing over the hot-air flues as fortitude requires. If they would but unite picture-galleries with the Broadway shops, giving us an upper shelf of something to look at, while our mammas or companions are matching ribbons below the level of the eye, I should look with more self-respect on the 'dry goods' portion of my experience.

"This is Lent, and of course there is no society news, even if you had not been in town so recently as to require no enlightening. 'Family parties' prevail, and you know what I think of those entertainments! They are perhaps the only 'gayeties' at which people pass for exactly what they are. And with no room for imagination, I doubt whether human beings naturally admire each other very much. We had the promise of a music party at the —s, but the war between the spunky Vestvalli and the other stars made the harmony of the evening doubtful, and it was abandoned. So, till news overtakes us again, adieu."

Science, Art and Discovery

SHARPENING EDGED TOOLS.—The following is from a German scientific journal for the benefit of our mechanics and agricultural laborers. It has long been known that the simplest method of sharpening a razor is to put it for half an hour in water, to which has been added one twentieth of its weight of muriatic or sulphuric acid, then lightly wipe it off, and after a few hours set it on a hone. The acid here supplies the place of a whetstone, by corroding the whole surface uniformly, so that nothing further but a smooth polish is necessary. The process never injures good blades, while badly hardened ones are frequently improved by it, although the cause of such improvement remains unexplained. Of late, this process has been applied to many other cutting implements. The workman, at the beginning of his noon-sleep, or when he leaves off in the evening, moistens the blades of his tools with water acidified as above, the cost of which is almost nothing. This saves the consumption of time and labor in whetting, which, moreover, speedily wears out the blades. The mode of sharpening here indicated would be found especially advantageous for sickles and scythes.