

HAPPY AS A MAN, SHE SAYS, AFTER 15 YEARS POSING

Her Own Sex Only Walking
Advertisements for Milli-
ners and Jewellers.

A remarkable bit of biography is the life story of Mary Johnson, the middle-aged Canadian woman who arrived in the steerage of the American line steamship New York in male attire. She admits wearing men's clothes for fifteen years, and was detected only by accident while trying to pass inspection at Ellis Island.

In many respects her experiences parallel those of Gautier's famous character, Mademoiselle de Maupin. Like the lady of fiction, she has lived all these years as the companion of men without a suspicion of her real sex, although Miss Johnson's motive was different and her conclusions relative to the opposite sex of a more charitable nature.

While Mile. de Maupin, after her ten years' association with the "lords of creation" would have no more of them, Miss Johnson is ready to defend the sterner sex, and declares most men to be "chivalrous and disposed to protect their gentler sisters."

Her impressions of men came out during an interview which she accorded to an Evening World reporter this morning in the room assigned to her in the hospital building on Ellis Island by Commissioner Watchorn.

Feminine Attributes Restored.

The discovery of her long and well kept secret has completely changed the woman's attitude and demeanor. As Frank Woodhull, while she stood in line yesterday awaiting the formal questions of the registry clerk, she was jaunty and composed, fearless of discovery. The moment her secret became known

to men all the feminine attributes buried for so many years beneath the masculine mask asserted themselves, and she became a shrinking, shy woman again, more humiliated by reason of the garb she wore. Even a little pocket mirror and comb had been propped on the window sill nearby.

The woman's height is about five feet four inches. She wore to-day a dark ready-made suit of man's clothes and a celluloid collar from which flowed a four-in-hand tie of dark green material. There is nothing in the contour of her figure to suggest her sex. Her hands are large and knotted from rheumatism. Her feet, probably, would take a No. 6 shoe, man's size. Her head is finely proportioned and covered with gray hair. Her features are regular with a slightly aquiline nose, from under which sprouts a small but distinct mustache. Her voice is soft, well modulated, and somewhat effeminate.

Of her earlier history Miss Johnson was extremely reticent, refusing to divulge even the location of her birthplace further than to state that she came from Ontario in Canada. Of her experiences while masquerading as a man she talked freely.

"Until I was thirty-six," she began, "I worked mostly as a drudge doing housework. Then rheumatism attacked me so fiercely that I could not continue the work. The little down on my upper lip gave me a masculine appearance so I determined to bury my identity in male attire. To make detection less liable I went to California, donning my first suit of men's clothes in San Francisco. I chose canvassing as the easiest means of earning a livelihood and started out selling toilet articles and have held to that vocation ever since. Never before has my identity been suspected except by children. By some instinct they frequently gaze at me quizzically and suspiciously. Once a little girl asked me if I wasn't a woman.

"What impressions have I formed? Well, that men have all the advantages in this world.

"Woman is simply a walking advertisement for the dry goods merchant, the milliner, the jeweller. Men are chivalrous and inclined to protect women always.

"It is too bad that I have been discovered. Do you think they will let me in? I have been quite happy during my later years. You know a man can live on so much less than a woman. Do you see that hat?" pointing to a slouch, broad brimmed one on the bed. "I have worn that one for three years. How many hats do you think a woman would have to buy in that time?"

"Have you learned to shave?" she was asked.

"Well, I am not a barber by any means, but," with a smile, "I can manage to scrape myself all that is necessary."

HAMILTON RESULTS.

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