

FRAN

BY JOHN BRECKENRIDGE ELLIS

ILLUSTRATIONS BY O. IRWIN MYERS

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Latest Fashions Seen on the Aristocratic Boise de Bologne



Two Samples of the most recent productions of the Parisian Dressmaking geniuses.



SYNOPSIS.

Fran arrives at Hamilton Gregory's home in Littleburg, but finds him absent conducting the choir at a camp meeting. She requires further in search of him, laughs during the service and is asked to leave. About Ashton, superintendent of schools, scours Fran from the tent. He tells her Gregory is a wealthy man, deeply interested in charity work, and a pillar of the church. Ashton becomes greatly interested in Fran and while taking leave of her, holds her hand and is seen by Sapphira Clinton, sister of Robert Clinton, chairman of the school board. Fran tells Gregory she wants a home with him. Grace Noir, Gregory's private secretary, takes a violent dislike to Fran and advises her to go away at once. Fran hints at a twenty-year-old secret, and Gregory in agitation asks Grace to leave the room. Fran relates the story of how Gregory married a young girl at Springfield while attending college and then deserted her. Fran is the child of that marriage. Gregory had married his present wife three years before the death of Fran's mother. Fran takes a liking to Mrs. Gregory. Gregory explains that Fran is the daughter of a very dear friend who is dead. Fran agrees to the story. Mrs. Gregory insists on her making her home with them and takes her to her arms. The breach between Fran and Gregory widens. It is decided that Fran must go to school.

CHAPTER VIII.—Continued.

Fran's quick eye caught the expression of baffled reaching-forth, of uncertain striving after sympathetic understanding. "You darling lady!" she cried, clasping her hands to keep her arms from flying about the other's neck, "don't you be troubled about me. Bless your heart, I can take care of myself—and you, too! Do you think I'd add a straw to your . . . Now you hear me: if you want to do it, just put me in long trains with Pullman sleepers, for I'll do whatever you say. If you want to show people how tame I am, just hold up your hand, and I'll crawl into my cage."

The laughter of Mrs. Gregory sounded wholesome and deep-throated—the child was so deliciously ridiculous. "Come, then," she cried, with a lightness she had not felt for months, "come, crawl into your cage!" And she opened her arms.

With a flash of her lithe body, Fran was in her cage, and, for a time, rested there, while the fire in her dark eyes burned tears to all sorts of rainbow colors. It seemed to her that of all the people in the world, Mrs. Gregory was the last to hold her in affectionate embrace. She cried out with a sob, as if in answer to her dark misgivings—"Oh, but I want to belong to somebody!"

"You shall belong to me!" exclaimed Mrs. Gregory, folding her closer.

"To you?" Fran sobbed, overcome by the wonder of it. "To you, dear heart?" With a desperate effort she crowded back intruding thoughts, and grew calm. Looking over her shoulder at Simon Jefferson—"No more

Love Him? This Is Merely a Question of Doing the Most Good."

short dresses, Mr. Simon," she called, "you know your heart must be excited."

"Fran!" gasped Mrs. Gregory in dismay, "hush!"

But Simon Jefferson beamed with pleasure at the girl's artless ways. He knew what was bad for his heart, and Fran wasn't. Her smiles made him feel himself a monopolist in sunshine. Simon Jefferson might be fifty, but he still had a nose for roses.

Old Mrs. Jefferson was present, and from her wheel-chair bright eyes read much that dull ears missed. "How gay Simon is!" smiled the mother—he was always her spoiled boy.

Mrs. Gregory called through the

trumpet, "I believe Fran has given brother a fresh interest in life."

Old Mrs. Jefferson beamed upon Fran and added her commendation: "She pushes me when I want to be pushed, and pulls me when I want to be pulled."

Fran clapped her hands like a child, indeed. "Oh, what a gay old world!" she cried. "There are so many people in it that like me." She danced before the old lady, then wheeled about with such energy that her skirts threatened to level to the breeze.

"Don't, don't!" cried Mrs. Gregory precipitately. "Fran!"

"Bravo!" shouted Simon Jefferson. "Encore!"

Fran widened her fingers to push down the rebellious dress. "If I don't put leads on me," she said with contrition, "I'll be floating away. When I feel good, I always want to do something wrong—it's awfully dangerous for a person to feel good, I guess. Mrs. Gregory, you say I can belong to you—when I think about that, I want to dance."

I guess you hardly know what it means for Fran to belong to a person. You're going to find out. Come on," she shouted to Mrs. Jefferson, without using the trumpet—always a subtle compliment to those nearly stone-deaf. "I mustn't wheel myself about, so I'm going to wheel you."

As she passed with her charge into the garden, her mind was busy with thoughts of Grace Noir. Belonging to Mrs. Gregory naturally suggested getting rid of the secretary. It would be exceedingly difficult. "But two months ought to settle her," Fran mused.

In the meantime, Grace Noir and Gregory sat in the library, silently turning out an immense amount of work, feeding the hungry and consoling the weak with stroke of pen and click of typewriter.

"About this case, number one hundred forty-three," Grace said, looking up from her work as copyist, "the girl whose father wouldn't acknowledge her . . ."

"Write to the matron to give her good clothing and good schooling," he spoke softly. There prevailed an atmosphere of subtle tenderness; on this island—the library—blossomed love of mankind and devotion to lofty ideals. These two martiners found themselves ever surrounded by a sea of indifference; there was not a sign of it. "It is a sad case," he murmured.

"You think number one hundred forty-three a sad case?" she repeated, always, when possible, building her next step out of the material furnished by her companion. "But suppose she is an impostor. He says she's not his daughter, this number one hundred forty-three. Maybe she isn't. Would you call her conduct sad?"

Gregory took exquisite pleasure in arguing with Grace, because her serene assumption of being in the right gave to her beautiful face a touch of the angelic. "I should call it impossible."

"Impossible? Do you think it's impossible that Fran's deceiving you? How can you know that she is the daughter of your friend?"

He grew pale. Oh, if he could have denied Fran—if he could have joined Grace in declaring her an impostor! But she possessed proofs so irrefutable that safety lay in admitting her claim, lest she prove more than he had already admitted. "I know it, absolutely. She is the daughter of one who was my most-my most intimate friend."

Grace repeated with delicate reproach—"Your intimate friend?"

"I know it was wrong for him to desert his wife."

"Wrong!" How inadequate seemed that word from her pure lips!

"But," he faltered, "we must make allowances. My friend married Fran's mother in secret because she was utterly worldly—trivial—a butterfly. Her own uncle was unable to control her—to make her go to church. Soon after the marriage he found out his mistake—it broke his heart, the tragedy of it. I don't excuse him for going away to Europe."

"I am glad you don't. He was no

true man, but a weakling. I am glad I have never been thrown with such a degenerate."

"But, Miss Grace," he urged pleadingly, "do you think my friend, when he went back to find her and she was gone—do you think he should have kept on hunting? Do you think, Grace, that he should have remained yoked to an unbeliever, after he realized his folly?"

There was heavenly compassion in her eyes, for suddenly she had divined his purpose in defending Fran's father. He was thinking of his own wife, and of his wife's mother and brother—how they had ceased to show sympathy in what he regarded as the essentials of life. Her silence suggested that as she could not speak without casting reflection upon Mrs. Gregory, she would say nothing, and this tact was grateful to his grieving heart.

"I have been thinking of something very strange," Grace said, with a marked effort to avoid the issue lest she commit the indiscretion of blaming her employer's wife. "I remember having heard you say that when you were a young man, you left your father's home to live with a cousin in a distant town who happened to be a teacher in a college, and that you were graduated from his college. Don't you think it marvelous, this claim of Fran, who says that her father, when a young man, went to live with a cousin who was a college professor, and that he was graduated from that college? And she says that her father's father was a rich man—just as yours was—and that the cousin is dead—just as yours is."

At these piercing words, Gregory bowed his head to conceal his agitation. Could it be possible that she had guessed all and yet, in spite of all, could use that tone of kindness? It burst upon him that if he and she could hold this fatal secret in common, they might, in sweetest comradeship, form an alliance against fate itself.

She persisted: "The account that Fran gives of her father is really your own history. What does that show?"

He spoke almost in a whisper. "My friend and I were much alike. Then he looked up swiftly to catch a look of comprehension by surprise, if such a look were there."

Grace smiled coolly. "But hardly identical, I presume. Don't you see that Fran has invented her whole story, and that she didn't have enough imagination to keep from copying after your biographical sketch in the newspaper? I don't believe she is your friend's daughter. I don't believe you could ever have liked the father of a girl like Fran—that he could have been your intimate friend."

"Well," faltered Gregory. But why should he defend Fran?

"Mr. Gregory," she asked, as if what she was about to say belonged to what had gone before, "would it greatly inconvenience you for me to leave your employment?"

He was electrified. "Grace! Inconvenience me!—would you could . . . I have not decided—not yet. Speaking of being yoked with unbelievers—I have never told you that Mr. Robert Clinton has wanted me to marry him. As long as he was outside of the church, of course it was impossible. But now that he is converted—"

"Grace!" groaned the pallid listener. "He would like me to go with him to Chicago?"

"But you couldn't love Bob Clinton— he isn't worthy of you, Grace. It's impossible. Heaven knows I've had disappointments enough—" He started up and came toward her, his eyes glowing. "Will you make my life a complete failure, after all?"

"Love him?" Grace repeated calmly. "This is merely a question of doing the most good. I know nothing about love."

"Then let me teach you, Grace, let—"

"Shall we not discuss it?" she said gently. "That is best, I think. If I decide to marry Mr. Clinton, I will tell you even before I tell him. I don't know what I shall choose as my best course."

"But, Grace! What could I do—without—"

"Shall we just agree to say no more

his teachers at school. At any rate, I kept missing the skirts off my saddle. It was an awful vexation to start out in the country from Somerville and find my saddle stripped to a naked tree. My hostler convinced me after some difficulty that he was not stealing the leather."

"Finally I found that the youngster, Walter, stripped the saddle to keep his trousers' seat lined with a saddle skirt against a whipping at school—" Memphis Commercial Appeal.

Repartee.

"My only fear in respect to woman suffrage," said Mr. Baldibrow, "is its possible effect upon the public life of the future. Woman's love of a bargain would cause her to go in for cheap statesmen."

"Yes!" said Mrs. Baldibrow, with an indulgent smile. "Well—look at the pile of illustrious remnants you men are still sticking to!"

Whereupon Mr. Baldibrow began to hem like a stump-speaker, but nothing came of it. His eloquence was not equal to the occasion.—Harper's Weekly.

LESSON FOR ARDENT SWAIN

Startling Experience Cures Him of Making Love to Maidens at Balls.

It happened at a public ball. He was a man of serious intentions and numerous attentions, and she was rich and weddable. They sat in the hall under the stairway. It was a nook for lovers. There was not a soul in sight and, he thought his golden opportunity had arrived. Down he flopped on his knees, and clasped her hand.

"Dear one," he whispered, not very loud, but loud enough, "I have loved you with the whole strength and ardour of a man's nature when it is roused by all that is pure and good and lovely in woman, and I can no longer restrain my pent-up feelings. I must tell you what is in my heart, and assure you that never yet has woman heard from my lips the secrets that are throbbing and—"

Just then a rustle was heard on the stairs above them, and a card fastened to a thread swung down and

dangled not two inches from the lover's nose. On it were these portentous words:

"I'm a bit of a liar myself."

Then the awful truth flashed upon him, and he fled. As he went out of the door, sixteen girls from the head of the stairs sent sixteen laughs out into the damp night after him. He makes no love at balls now.

Anesthetized Rejection Slip.

Elizabeth Jordan said that with all the manuscripts the late Margaret E. Sangster had occasion to return, not one ever carried a heartache with it.

She saw everyone who wanted to see her, receiving all callers. She was greatly interested in young writers.

And when they had no writing gift, tactfully she would set them going on in some other direction. Perhaps some woman who had brought her poor little efforts to Mrs. Sangster could bake sweetmeats, though she couldn't write. Then would Mrs. Sangster work around among the club women she knew until she got sufficient orders for sweetmeats to give that woman employment.—Christian Herald.

CHARACTER SHOWS IN FACE

Good Thoughts Look Out Through Kindly Eyes and Fair Pleasant Features.

Our faces are open diaries, in which any one may read the record of how we spend our days, what we think, the sort of people we are. When we say of a man that "he has a fine face," or of a woman that "she has a beautiful face," we speak of the life back of the face. What is a surer indication of this than when we see a child draw away from a first glimpse of a person? What is often so truly condemnatory as the instinctive remark of a child: "I don't like her face, mamma!"

Not always true, perhaps, not in every instance is the child right, but how often is it unerring!

If we waste the precious passing years in chasing butterflies and fitting pleasure; if we grow hard and narrow because of disappointments, or through self-indulgence, it is registered where even the child who draws away from us reads it.

new Paris model

French Expert Says Style of Hair-dressing for This Season Will Be Simple.

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Blue and White China.

Blue and white German china, decorated with Delft designs, is good china for the blue breakfast table. It is made on good lines, is thin enough to be dainty and thick enough to be durable. A coffee cup and saucer in this china is priced 50 cents.

An interesting piece of blue and white fluted Copenhagen tableware is a square egg dish with scalloped top with a dainty egg cup held by the stem in each of the eight scallops.

New Collar and Cuff Sets.

One set is in softest, finest black net, with a straight-hem embroidered in many colored silks in tiny cross-stitch. Another set is of very finely tucked lawn, the tucks running across and across, the edge being finished with an almost invisible ruche of the lawn.

A Flexible Bracelet.

A flexible bracelet of dainty workmanship is composed of sterling silver, decorated with French enamel in turquoise blue and white, and can be adjusted to fit the wearer's arm. These watches are chiefly to be recommended for their lightness, durability and general attractiveness.

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A new washable shirtwaist is made up on the lines of a man's shirt, with platted bosom front, dickey collar and black cravat. It may also be had in white crepe de chine.

SOAP TABLETS FOR TOURISTS

CLOTHES FOR RAINY DAYS

NEW PARIS MODEL

HAIR A LA POMPADOUR AGAIN

ago, shades who would never again assume even the palest manifestation to mortals, when this old lady had gone to join them.

Usually Fran brought her back, with gentle hand, but today she divined subtlety; the tale was meant to hide Mrs. Jefferson's real feelings. Fran ventured through the trumpet:

"I wish there was a man-secretary on this place, instead of a woman. And let me tell you one thing, dear old soldier—there's going to be a fight put up on these grounds. I guess you ought to stay out of it. But either I or the secretary has got to get it."

Fran was not unmindful of grammar, even of rhetoric, on occasion. She knew there was no such word as "git," but she was seeking to symbolize her idea in sound. As she closed her teeth, each little pearl meeting a pearly rival, her "git" had something of the force of physical ejection.

Behind large spectacle lenses, sparks flashed from Mrs. Jefferson's eyes. She sniffed battle. But her tightly compressed lips showed that she lacked both Fran's teeth and Fran's intrepidity. One step cautiously at seventy-odd.

Fran comprehended. The old lady must not let it be suspected that she was aware of Gregory's need of cotton in straining ears, such as had saved Ulysses from siren voices. The pretense of observing no danger kept the fine old face uncommonly grim.

"Little girls shouldn't fight," was her discreet rejoinder. Then leaning over the wheel, she advanced her snow-white head to the head of coal-black. "Better not stir up dragons."

Fran threw back her head and laughed defiantly. "Bring on your dragons," she cried boastfully. "There's not one of 'em I'm afraid of." She extended one leg and stretched forth her arm. "I'll say to the Dragon, 'Stand up—and she'll stand'; I'll say 'Lie down—and down she'll lie. I'll say 'Git'—and she'll—" Fran waved her dragon to annihilation.

"Goodness," the old lady exclaimed, getting nothing of this except the pantomime; that, however, was eloquent. She recalled the picture of David in her girlhood's Sunday-school book. "Are you defying the Man of Gath?" She broke into a delicious smile which seemed to flood the wrinkles of her face with the sunshine of many dear old easy-going years.

Fran smote her forehead. "I have a few pebbles here," she called through the trumpet.

Mrs. Jefferson grasped the other's

thin arm, and said, with zestful energy, "Let her have 'em, David, let her have 'em!"

(TO BE CONTINUED.)

Marine Telescope.

Make an oblong narrow box out of four pieces of quarter-inch board about two feet long by sixteen inches wide, and fit a piece of clear, clean glass across one end, held in place by brass-headed tacks, driven into the wood and overlapping the glass. Fill all the cracks with sealing wax to keep out the light. Then plunge the glass end two or three inches into the water and look through the open end. This simple marine telescope is made on the principle of the more elaborate glasses through which to look at the famous gardens under the sea near the Catalina islands.—Christian Herald.

"Bring on Your Dragons," She Said Boastfully.

"Grace! Do you think you could?—Yes, I will leave everything to you."

"She'll go," Grace repeated fixedly.

The window at which they stood overlooked the garden into which Fran had wheeled Old Mrs. Jefferson.

Fran, speaking through the ear-trumpet with as much caution as deafness would tolerate, said, "Dear old lady, look up at the library window, if you please, for the muzzin has climbed his minaret to call to prayers."

Very little of this reached its destination—muzzin was in great danger of complicating matters, but the old lady caught "library window," and held it securely. She looked up. Hamilton Gregory and Grace Noir were standing at the tower window, to catch the last rays of the sun. The flag of truce between them was only a typewritten sheet of manuscript. Grace held the paper obliquely toward the west; Hamilton leaned nearer and, with his delicate white finger, pointed out a word. Grace nodded her head in gentle acquiescence.

"Amen," muttered Fran. "Now let everybody sing!"

The choir leader and his secretary vanished from sight.

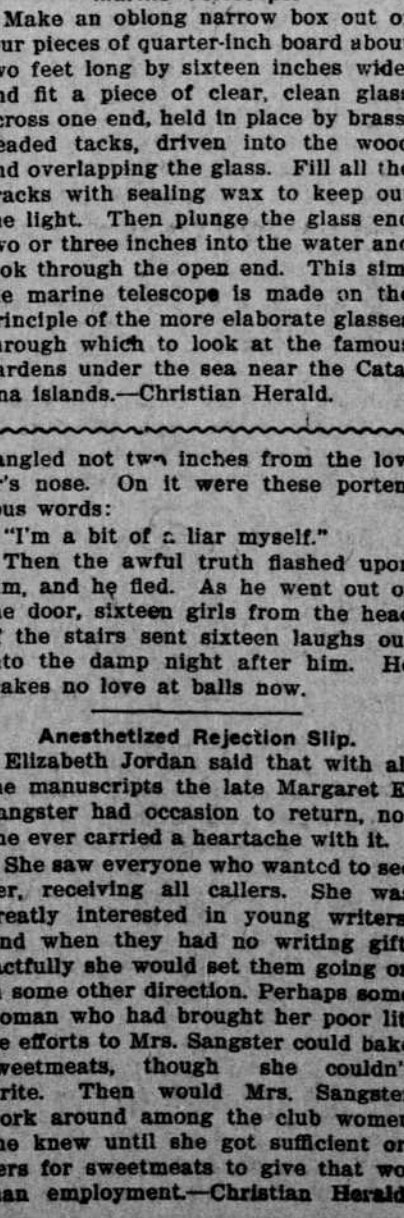
"Just like the play in Hamlet," Fran said half-aloud. "And now that the inside play is over, I guess it's time for old Ham to be doing something."

Mrs. Jefferson gripped the arms of her wheel-chair and resumed her tale, as if she had not been interrupted. It was of no interest as a story, yet possessed a sentimental value from the fact that all the characters save the raconteur were dead, and possibly all but her forgotten. Fran loved to hear the old lady evoke the shades of long



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(TO BE CONTINUED.)



A gown of blue and silver brocade trimmed with lace and pink maline, the latter forming the short corsage.

New Preparation That is Likely to Appeal to Traveler of Fastidious Tastes.

Somehow soap powder has never taken the fancy of fastidious folk. It is not especially pleasant to use and it never smells like anything but the washroom of a railway station or department store. It moreover, has a way of sprinkling itself around everywhere except on the hands in a messy and disagreeable way, and dainty women, who travel will have none of it, preferring to carry the wet cake of personally preferred toilet soap in a rubber lined receptacle in the traveling bag. A new soap tablet, however, will be likely to appeal to the fastidious traveler, because of its convenience and the attractive way it is put up. Fifty of these tablets are packed like bonbons in a pretty little box less than three inches square. A pair of nickel tweezers are tucked in the box for extracting the tablets—again like bonbons—and the tablets themselves, though firm in composition, dissolve easily in the water. And the entire package costs no more than the ordinary cake of good toilet soap.

Fashions and Customs Have Undergone Remarkable Change in the Past Ten Years.

Fashions and customs have changed overwhelmingly in the past ten years, but in no other respect more than in the rainy day garb. Everyone remembers with many a hearty laugh the way people used to look out of the window and say, in a resigned way: "Well, it's raining." That meant very positively that good looking clothes were not in decent taste in such weather, and one must wear a mackintosh—was there ever a more hideous garment made?—heeless rubbers, dark clothes, shabby shoes and one's oldest hat. And who ever did enjoy anything in her oldest hat! Nowadays the girl who looks on the cheerful side of things and rather enjoys the rainy day for a change has a bright red or purple hat that, of course, has no feathers, but is plain and serviceable, but which she knows is most becoming. She wears her tailored suit, but it has a short skirt and is protected by a good looking raincoat. Her shoes are high and thick, but they are just as good looking as those she keeps for sunny days, and often, to add another bit of color, she carries a red or purple silk umbrella. It keeps one and it just makes you feel better. It is wonderful what a becoming hat and gay umbrella can do toward chasing away the blues on a stormy day.

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