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all functions that occur after the day's end.

Of course, there are women in town progressive enough to have already done this, but they are so distinctly in the minority as yet that they are conspicuous. As we have no leader of fashion, unfortunately, let the press advocate this important question of evening dress for women with the same vigor that it used to for the suppression of the theater hat—let the press urge the adoption of the evening dress for women as a national custom, as in England, and the women of this country will be under as great a debt of gratitude as the men were when the knell of the theatre hat was sounded.

By evening dress, I do not by any means want to convey the idea that every woman should be required to appear "en grande toilette" after the lamps are lighted. What I do mean is the absolute suppression of hats and the adoption of gowns for evening wear without high, choky collars—without hats, high collars are invariably unbecoming; and having the throat free and the gown cut ever so slightly decolete adds immeasurably to every woman's comfort and appearance.

I have commented before upon the slowness of the American woman to adopt the fashion, so long and much in vogue among French women. Of dispensing with collars whenever it is possible, on their house gowns and theatre gowns in winter, as well as on their day gowns in summer, substituting often collars of pearls or coral with diamond slides.

This season the fashion seems to be growing, however, and I hope to see it firmly established before long.

The smartest of these jeweled collars I have seen has fourteen strands of pearls and only two slides set with jewels. The front slide is a wide affair, often measuring four inches. The slide worn at the back is an inch wide, and the pearls or jet or coral that are strung on the slides are held in place, on either side, by a knife-edge of gold.

Mrs. "Jack" Astor, Mrs. George Gould and Mrs. Ogden Goellet have superb collars of pearls and diamonds.

The less expensive ones done in coral or jet, such as Mrs. "Tommy" Tailor wears, are equally smart, quite possible, through the economy exercised in one's milliner's bill to the average purse.

Transparent collars are one of the novelties on the day gowns and blouses.

They are done in lace or gold gauze, and sewn with mock jewels and gold thread, and will be worn throughout the season. There is a touch of gold in everything, apparently. Mrs. Potter Palmer wore off the ship, the other day, a gown of dark gray rough cheviot, braided with dark military braid outlined with gold.

Rather an incongruous combination in description, but distinctly smart in effect.—Town Topics.

Bixby—It's the little things that worry us.

Mrs. Bixby—Is your conscience troubling you again?—Town Topics.

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"Dobley has at last painted a picture that will keep the wolf from the door."

"That so? Painted it on the door, did he?"—Town Topics.

"Higbee made a record on his first trip across the ocean."

"How was that?"

"He didn't lose a meal."—Town Topics.

## FASHION LETTER.

Lady Modish on Evening Dress.

It seems only yesterday that women—most women, that is—were rebelling—and rebelling with noticeable violence—against the innovation of appearing hatless at the play.

It is a pronounced feminine characteristic, happily, that once the feminine mind recognizes the inevitable, it generally accepts it with considerable philosophy, supplemented by a liberal supply of graciousness—not an easy combination to acquire. But I have noticed that a fine cultivation of it results mostly in giving the casual masculine observer the mistaken impression that woman's way is woman's will.

Most men, for instance, in glancing over the auditorium of a crowded playhouse, who notice the absence of the offending "theater hat" from the feminine head, would undoubtedly experience a brain wave of congratulation for the women, and argue that at last the "dear sirs" were doing just what pleases

them best, and were having such a nice time doing it!

But the masculine eye should pursue its observation further. Let it drop from the level of the tops of the women's heads to their laps, and it will quickly discover that the majority of these lucky (?) creatures, though bowing to the inevitableness of the fiat of "Hats off, ladies!" have removed their hats from their heads only to wear them on their knees, where they are nursing them and their gracefully concealed wrath simultaneously.

And this brings me to the question I want to discuss.

Why should women submit to the annoyance and inconvenience of this same nursing of hats during a whole evening at the play?

It is a foolish fashion that destroys pleasure and ruins headgear.

Why, in the name of all that is sensible, when it is good form to sit at the play hatless, should it not be good form to dine hatless—even at a restaurant—before the play, or to be seen hatless en route to and from the play?

As a matter of fact, it is good form, only the American public is led by the New York public, and the New York public is afraid to introduce the custom.

As a nation we have the queerest habit of copying other nations and stopping half-way.

Since England serves mostly as our pattern for our mode of living and code of manners, why hesitate to adopt her methods thoroughly?

Women do not wear hats at or after dinner in England, as we all know, but they do wear dinner gowns invariably of one kind or another appropriate and comfortable for the occasion. They don't take off, and put on again, hats in crowded playhouses, and go afterward for supper, looking as though they had been involved in a melee of some kind.

Hats should be abolished by American women altogether, and at once, from

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