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RED CLOUD CHIFE

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Red Cloud, Webster county, Nebraska.

A weekly journal devoted to the interests of the world in general and Webster county and adjacent territory particularly. The largest and best equipped paper in the great Republican valley.

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SEALSKIN SACQUES.

The demand for the genuine Alaska sealskin, manufactured into sacques, dolmans, and wraps, increases faster than the call for the cheaper and inferior qualities of skin and imitation skin. This is the time of year the furriers are busy supplying the ladies who come to buy new garments or have old ones repaired.

Sealskin was first utilized as a garment in 1867 at London. Forty years ago the skin was considered to have little value. A boy's cap that now costs $18 could then be bought for $4. For the introduction of the skin into America the credit is due to C. B. Camp of Cincinnati, O., who, in 1868, had several capes made by manufacturers in New York. Mr. Camp got his idea in 1867 from Revillon of London, who was the first man to make up the skin. Revillon has now an extensive establishment in Paris as well. The first garments were made little capes that covered the shoulders. In 1874 jackets began to be made, but they were without any fit or style except in the rich appearance of the goods. In 1876 sacques were made to fit, and in 1880 the first long Newmarkets were put on the market. Since 1882 cloaks and sacques have been made with as much care as to fitting as any cloth garment, and the seal sacque is the standard and fashionable wrap of the day.

The process of manufacture is interesting. The raw skin goes to London, where it is dyed and dressed. This labor consists of two dyeings, with a plucking of stiff and gray hairs in between. Good dyeing is performed with a comb and brush, and requires great patience. Women are the best workers at this, as their touch is more delicate than the man's. An entire day is necessary to properly dye a skin. The process of dipping a skin into the dye works harm to the hairs and materially injures the skin. As yet the Americans have not perfected the art of dyeing and dressing, and the London people have most all of that business, although a firm in Albany and another in Brooklyn do very good work and are steadily improving. Dealers say there is no doubt that the time will soon come when dyeing and dressing will soon be done here as well as in England.

Manufacturers here can manipulate other skins with better results than the Londoners. Only about [illegible] out of every 1,000 [illegible] be used for dressing. When the dressed skin arrives here the manufacturer stretches it and nails it to a board, with the fur inward, and a search for imperfections is made. These can only be discovered on the skin side, and it takes a keen and experienced eye to find most of the blemishes. They are generally shown in minute, almost imperceptible discolorings of the skin, which, if not immediately cut out, will extend and rot the fur above them until the hairs drop out. Seal fur must have healthy skin. When discovered these spots are cut out and skillful hands are set to work to sew up the incision. Few men can do this properly. Often a cut six inches long has to be made to get rid of a spot not much larger than a nail's head. To bring the pieces together again, without patching and without visible seam, requires the utmost delicacy. After this is done a paper pattern is placed on the skin and it is cut accordingly. Then the skin is finished and lined, and the garment is ready.

It is stated that there were never so many inferior skins on the market as at the present time. Thousands of seals are caught on the coasts of China and Japan and the skins sent to London for dressing. These are of the same shape and general order as the Alaska seals, but they do not wear on the edges, and they turn red and soon begin to look shabby.

It is estimated that some of the sacques can be sold at a profit as follows: Made of Lobos Island skins, $60; Japan (known to the trade as "cape") and China, $75; Victoria Island, $100, and Copper Island, $125. They are bought by the New York manufacturers at from $15 to $16 per skin, after being dyed and dressed. It requires from three to four skins to complete a sacque, according to the size. The English dressed Alaska skins cost from $40 to $50, dyed and dressed, and the cost of manufacturing a sacque is between $25 and $35. Then there are the imitations of sealskin in plush and kindred materials, but these are not so popular as formerly.

It is considered in the trade that the Hudson Bay otter-skin, when plucked and dyed, is fully as handsome and far more durable than even the Alaska sealskin. These are all American dressed and dyed. Sacques made from otter cost from $150 to $500.

Fur lined and trimmed sacques are also growing in favor. Mink and sable are the popular furs for lining, and Kamschatka, Lake Superior, and Hudson Bay beaver and natural otter, unplucked, are preferred for trimming. More expensive trimmings are found in the silver-fox skin and the sea otter. The skin of a silver fox is worth $150, and of the sea otter from $150 to $300.

The employes in fur factories can command good wages. Cutters average $100 a month, and the sewing girls $10 per week. More sealskin goods are used in New York than any other [illegible] in the world, and to illustrate the [illegible]ty of work done by New York [illegible] goods are shown that h[illegible] for parties in Montre[illegible] and a coat and [illegible] John Peck and [illegible]

A Kansas [illegible] violin [illegible]

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A marvel of purity [illegible]. More economical [illegible], and cannot be sold in [illegible] the multitude of low test, [illegible] or phosphate powders. Sold [illegible] Royal Baking Powder Co. 106 [illegible]