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MARRIED WOMEN'S PROPERTY RIGHTS

A Plain Statement of the Laws in Various States. (Copyright, 1902, by American Press Association.)

To briefly dispose of single women's property rights, it may be said that they are the same as those of men, with the exception of the ability to influence the taxation of property by vote.

In some of the states there is this slight possible advantage—that the age of legal majority is at eighteen instead of twenty-one for women.

By the old common law theory as set forth in Blackstone, when a woman married it was supposed that she was willing to give up to her husband the entire control of any property she then had or might thereafter acquire, retaining no rights but such as he consented to give her.

Of course this has been mitigated in many cases by a marriage settlement, by which the husband agreed that the wife should retain possession of the property she brought to him.

But we have changed all that, or most of it, by statute, so that today in most of the states the rights of a married woman in her own property are as absolute as those of her husband in his.

The husband's control of his property is not, strictly speaking, absolute, since it is subject to the debts of his wife, to the support of the family, in a few states to the debts of the wife incurred before marriage and in a great many to the dower right.

The wife's rights in her husband's property, therefore, are generally greater than his in hers.

The law, holding a man responsible for the support of his wife and children, regards the wife as the agent of the husband and holds him responsible for any debts she may contract.

In cases where a man advertises that he will not pay his wife's debts the courts may hold that it has no greater force than as a warning, and that he is still responsible for bills for necessities.

In almost every state a wife's separate property—that is, property which has come to her by inheritance, or by bequest or devise, or by gift from any one but her husband, or money which she has earned, or property bought with money acquired in any of these ways—is not liable for her husband's personal debts, nor is it liable for debts for the family unless no property of the husband can be found to satisfy them.

Property given to her by her husband may be so liable if there is a suspicion of fraud in the conveyance. Of course if some distinction were not made no man could avoid paying his debts by simple process of handing his property over to his wife as fast as he acquired it.

The wife's property is free from the husband's control in the sense that he could not insist upon her selling or mortgaging it, yet the increase and profits of the property (interest, rents collected, crops raised, etc.) may be liable for debts for the family support after the creditor has exhausted his remedy against the husband.

In a few of the states such profits form part of what is known as "community property," and are equally liable with the husband's property for such debts.

In some states a husband is liable for the antenuptial debts of his wife. In Tennessee he is as fully responsible for these as for his own.

HOME DRESSMAKING.

THE CORRECT EVENING WEAR FOR YOUNG LADIES.

Some Plain and Simple Rules Which Will Be of Value—The Most Suitable Sleeve for a Plump Arm—Some Points About Silk.

(Copyright, 1902, by American Press Association.) NUMBER V.

In making up the diaphanous material now in vogue for evening wear for young ladies, the dressmaker has but to bear in mind the general rules given in this article and those already set forth as to the proper shape of the breadths of the foundation skirt and the fit of the waist lining, which is easily adapted to the making of low-necked dresses, as will be seen from the accompanying diagrams, the dotted lines showing how to cut away for a low-necked dress.

The inside lining can be of jacquet or lonsdale cambric, covered with tulle or other material, and this draped with mull or chiffon or the material of which the dress is made.

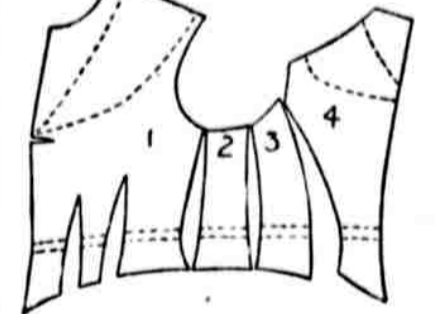


DIAGRAM FOR CUTTING V SHAPE AND LOW WAISTS. (Dotted line shows where to cut out to shorten waists.)

careful, now that the pointed velvet belts are in style, and they are too pretty to be discarded soon. The fullness is all gathered at the bottom outside of the darts, and at the top there is no neck size cut, and the length is then carried to the top of the shoulder and gathered. The front lining should be belted off at the neck and hemmed, and all the rest treated as usual.

The gathers should be sewn in under a belt, and this latter should have the lower edges turned in and the skirt gathered and sewn to that.

Where the skirt is to be quite full, which is now the style for thin dresses, a lining of silk or saten, of the prevailing color, is made and finished off and worn under. The bodice to the outer dress are cut straight, and the skirt should be quite five yards around, a little longer in the back and simply hemmed. A pretty finish is to have a ruffle of the same thin goods, with a still narrower and fuller one under that, set on the under skirt. Ribbons can be added if desired.

The neck can be finished in any manner, but just now berthes of lace or chiffon or of the dress material are used, and there is practically no limit to the variety of trimming one can use for light dresses. Tulle and crape, mull and India muslin are all made about alike. Jabots of lace are pretty, and are made by gathering lace very full, giving it a shake and then fastening it as it naturally falls. Never try to make it fall as you like, but fasten it where it falls itself, or you will lose the effect.

Festoons and light effects are to be sought for in thin materials. The most suitable sleeve for a plump arm is a simple full of lace or the dress material. For a thin one a long bouffant effect, open if liked at the wrist, on the upper part of the arm, fastened with tiny knots of ribbon, or a sleeve can be a series of puffs held in place by bracelet bands of ribbon.

Wash gowns should always be made with a view to their looking as well after washing as before, and to that end the good dressmaker should aim. Cotton goods, whether zephyrs or satens, should be plain and neat, graceful in model and perfect in fit. All cottons, except satens, are pretty with tucks or bias bands. Satens require more elaborate trimming, such as cuffs, collars, etc., of velvet or lace.

Silks require a different treatment from any other material, and if it is possible to avoid it a hot iron should never be put on silk. Black silks, the heavier and richer kinds, like armure, peau de soie, faille and grosgrain, should be made as plainly as possible, their richness showing better when little trimmed. Black silks, being alike on both sides, cut to good advantage, but as it is apt to fray the seams should be rather deep. The waists can be cut after the model waist and any trimming desired added. Nothing is more suitable or elegant than beaded passementerie unless it is a little real black thread lace; therefore avoid cutting up the silk into ruffles and broken bits. Let the skirt be plain, but ample. Bind it with velvet, and, if desired, add a narrow puff or rose plaiting around the bottom. Pay more attention to the fit and style than trimming. The richest gowns are those made plain, but perfect.

Silk waists should never be quite as tight as they could be, for the richer the silk the worse is the habit it has of stretching at the seams. All the light summer silks can be made without these precautions, but even they will not stand stretching.

To finish a handsome silk dress properly requires the utmost attention to details. The waist seams should be bound with lustring, the ease belt be nice, the loops for hanging up be of ribbon and every stitch set with precision. The finish of the best dresses sent from abroad is about as nice on the inside as on the outside, and lined with black or colored glace silk.

The facing should be carefully made, as told before, and on the inside of that are now set two or three narrow pinked ruffles of glace silk, and beneath this again is a balayuse of black lace. When the lady prefers her dress unlined there is a silk underskirt cut on the model lines and about four inches shorter than the dress. This has one 10-inch ruffle on the under side, pinked, narrow plaited and hemmed, one on the edge of the skirt and two to five narrow pinked ones on the outside. Sometimes these are alternately Spanish lace.

Velvet is not so much worn for dresses as it was, yet there are many elderly ladies who like it better than anything. The same rules that hold good in the making of fine silk gowns hold good in regard to velvet. But in making velvet the seams should be pressed, and it is done in this wise: A flat iron, pretty hot, is turned upside down and held firmly in place. A damp towel is laid over it, and as the steam rises the velvet seam down and spread open, drawn over it, and is pressed so that it can be not visible. This is also done when the top is pressed down, or to make it lie velvet like new. OLIVE HAYDEN

WOMAN'S WORLD IN PARAGRAPHS.

A Happy and Successful Woman Farmer of Long Island.

A shining example of woman's ability to succeed as an agriculturist is given in the case of Mrs. Taber Willetts, of Roslyn. The editor of The Rural New Yorker gives a charming sketch of a visit lately made to the lady's farm. The farm contains 500 acres and has been known for generations as the "Old Brick." This name, however, has no particular application to the owners of the farm, but comes from the farmhouse itself, one of the first brick houses built on Long Island. Mrs. Willetts used to run the place as a dairy farm, but gave it up because it was all hard work and poor pay. In this respect she had more common sense than a majority of the men farmers in the milk supply districts around New York city have to this day.

Mrs. Willetts says that she had no say in the price she got for milk, and between the railroads and wholesale milk dealers the milk farmer was picked bare. So she turned her attention to stock breeding. Note particularly this bit of golden wisdom from the woman farmer's lips: "One must have a definite aim to begin, have the matter all thought out and know exactly what he wishes to accomplish." After having the matter all thought out Mrs. Willetts began the breeding of black Berkshire swine and Guernsey dairy cows. She has since added the breeding of trotting and road horses. Highland Girl and Highland Lassie are two of the trotting colts from the Old Brick farm. The way this woman farmer went to work when she decided to go into the breeding of trotters is instructive. She "began to study up the standard" to find what sort of a horse she wanted at the head of her stables. She searched into gait, ancestry, reputation and all the other mysterious points that go to the making of trotters. Then she looked about till she found the animals that filled the bill and bought them. She has now on her farm from sixty to seventy horses and seventy head of Guernsey cattle. She sells the Guernsey butter at fifty cents a pound. But her greatest success is as a breeder of stock for sale. It is sold as fast as it is old enough, whether Berkshire pigs, Guernsey cows or trotters and road horses.

There are people who appear to read a certain well known Scripture text as follows: "What man hath joined together let not God put asunder."

The exigencies of politics in New York city demand that women shall be excluded from the school board. Tammany has no use for women. The time is coming when women will have no use for Tammany.

Some time ago I had the ill fate to be fooled by a rascally falsehood in a New York paper to the effect that the mayor of Salem, O., had forbidden the young women of that town to walk upon the streets after 8 o'clock p. m. I might have known on the face of it that no Ohio man would do a thing like that, but I did not stop to think. I made some comments on the story in a manner which I now confess was not exactly mild in tone. I find that my comments did grievous wrong to one of the best woman's rights men living. Mayor J. W. Northrop, of Salem, O., writes that in his judgment the proposition of woman's equal rights with man, politically as well as otherwise, is so self evident that it cannot be directly disputed. He adds also this fine, strong statement: "My dealings with the world as a merchant, a soldier, a journalist, a public officer, and, lastly, a magistrate suggest that woman's political enfranchisement may be essential in order to make man morally her equal in all respects and to lift both sexes higher in the social scale and nearer the standard of true manhood and womanhood."

A crying need of today is for women to take an interest in city governments. The movement to have a central home and clubhouse for trained nurses in every city is a good one. They need a house all their own, with a laundry, restaurant, telephone and rooms full of sunshine and air. Trained nurses, as one of them has said, are set apart by their profession in many ways and need to be specially provided for.

Strive to cultivate a sweet, magnetic voice. When Lady Henry Somerset was in America a clever person remarked of her that centuries of culture sounded in her voice. Make them sound in yours.

I have been following up lately some divorce cases in which the husband sought to take the children away from their mother on the ground that she was not a fit person to bring them up. In every one of the cases it has become evident that, whatever the wife may or may not have done, she was a good deal more fit to bring up the children than her husband was.

An English woman, Mrs. Pell, fills the office of church warden in the Episcopal church of Hazelbech with the approval of the bishop of Peterborough.

Chair—Any young women who like to ask friends to the excursions are more than welcome to do so. Bring as many as you like—sisters, cousins and aunts. From the Floor—And brothers? Chair—Well—no—because there's a boycott, you know.—Far and Near.

Mrs. W. G. Ford, of Bensonhurst, Long Island, helped her husband capture a burglar, and after he had surrendered dressed his wounds for him. Just like a woman.

Egg farming is a business that would make many a woman now poor independent. Incubator chickens served, broiled in a restaurant are all too often a delusion and a snare, but there is always good demand for eggs. Everybody eats them. The woman who would study her ground carefully, select a location near a good market and go slow, learning as she went, could not fail, with a small outlay of capital, to succeed well. The egg business is in no danger of being overdone, especially that branch of it which looks to the production of fresh eggs in winter.

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