

THE CHARM OF YOUTH

IT DOES NOT ALWAYS EXCEL THE GRACES OF MATURITY.

A New Type of Femininity Has Arisen, and the Combination of Angel and Idiot Formerly Idealized in Poetry and Fiction No Longer Exists.

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THE old time superstitions in regard to woman are year by year growing fewer in number, and it is safe to predict that in the not distant future her social and intellectual rights will be everywhere as freely acknowledged as are her brothers'.

In all ages and countries where women have been regarded as intellectually inferior to men and relegated to the animal plane their charm has been considered as a thing exclusively of youth. In eastern lands girls are mothers at twelve, fourteen and sixteen years of age, grandmothers often at thirty or younger and old and passe at thirty-five.

That a woman could possess any personal attractiveness after she had passed her teens would be beyond the comprehension of the oriental mind, and until the last quarter of a century the western world has been hardly less material in its estimate of feminine character. The heroine of the original novel was the fourteen-year-old, "Sweet sixteen" and "blooming eighteen" were the favorite ages less than half a century ago, and it was not until the multiplication of colleges for women kept her from society until past twenty that the world of fiction—usually a fair reflection of a world of realities—discovered the possibilities of sweetness in the early twenties.

The increase in the longevity of girlhood is the result of woman's broader life and a wider recognition of her capabilities and possibilities. Among the better classes the girl's need of education and right to it are as readily conceded to her as are the boy's privileges to him. The old time fallacy that girls mature more rapidly than boys no longer serves as reason for thrusting upon the undeveloped maiden of sixteen cares for which she is no more ready than is the average boy of that age. Up to twenty-one and later the young woman of the period is busy with her books and educational interests, and instead of being a mother at eighteen, as her grandmother was before her, she is now what she should be at that age—a happy, unfettered girl.

Nor is the tag, "old maid," affixed to the unmarried woman as early an age as formerly, when twenty-five was denominated the "second corner" and thirty marked the age of forlorn spinsterhood. A study of marriage statistics in fashionable society will show that more girls marry after twenty-five than younger, and further study of modern society will reveal the fact that its belles are quite as often women in the thirties as in the twenties.

The girl of eighteen has the charm of youth, and the world will always pay tribute to her innocence and freshness, but she no longer poses, as in the earlier century, as the divine creature who can compel all knees to bow before her. Indeed the debutantes of modern society often complain that the adoration which should be theirs is borne off by the young matrons and bewitching widows, and if this is so it only compliments the good sense of society.

Men demand more of women than they once did, and this the woman of the world soon learns. If she is more interesting at thirty than she was at twenty it is because she has learned the importance of being as well as looking attractive. Indeed it may be argued that the wise woman of modern times is learning the lesson of history, which is that the secret of lasting charm is found in the culture of something more than youthful grace.

Cleopatra was no longer a girl when she subjugated the heart of Marc Antony, and it is difficult to believe that the secret of her inexhaustible attractiveness, whose "infinite variety age could not wear nor custom stale," was found in the play of shapely limbs or the flash of beautiful eyes. Josephine had passed the boundaries of girlhood when she won the heart of Napoleon, and the leaders of the French salon were women of years as well as of intellect.

Who remembers to inquire how old Lady Mary Wortley Montagu was when she read of her triumphs as the most brilliant woman of the reign of George II? Who ever thinks of the beautiful Mme. de Recamier as a woman "well on in years," or associates a thought of age with Mme. de Staël?

And in our own country and day are not the women most honored in society, in literature, in the world, women who have studied life, and whose faces often showed lines of thought than cheeks bloom with the glow of youth?

The Charissas and the Lucys and the Marianas have had their day. A new type of femininity has arisen, and the combination of angel and idiot formerly idealized in poetry and fiction no longer exists. The artificial, hothouse specimen of girlhood, in whose nature all spontaneity was repressed, is now rarely met with.

Girls are encouraged to be natural and unaffected, and educated less in stilted ideas of propriety than they were when the innocence of youth was marred by enforced teaching upon the necessity of securing a home and providing one's self with a husband. The instincts and desires of youth are not crushed out as they were under the old regime, and the life, physical and mental, develops more in accordance with natural laws.

The mothers of the present have discovered that enfeebled constitutions and

impaired vital powers are the result of the prudish ideas of past generations of women. In consequence girls of today are encouraged, as are their brothers, in all athletic sport and out of door exercise, and in the better circles of society early marriages are no longer desired by intelligent parents, who are learning physiological truths which the Spartans respected and recognized when they made laws forbidding their females to marry under twenty-five or their males under thirty.

Nor do women marry, as formerly, for the sake of a home or of being supported or to escape the odium of being "old maids." So many avenues of usefulness and honor are now open to women everywhere that in every rank of life women are more independent than their grandmothers would have dared to be. The old time jokes about woman's insincerity as regards her age are rarely perpetrated now. Up to thirty-five no woman hesitates to acknowledge her age, and a successful novel of recent years actually made its heroine an unmarried woman thirty-seven years old.

In English and American society, as well as in France, the women recognized as social leaders and society belles are women of the thirties than in the twenties. The woman of the world knows that with years she gains in charm—that where in her first season she bored and irritated the man who took her out to dinner she has in her fuller maturity and experience a stimulus and a fascination for him. Women of society know, too, that to retain their sovereignty they must cultivate individuality and be something more than reflectors of the life around them. Hence it happens that instead of the exceptionally brilliant woman of the last century the women of today are as a whole women of wit, of intelligence, of versatility. Women have more interests in life than they had in past years. Literary clubs, reading circles, language classes and a host of other stimulating interests keep the modern woman young and active. People grow old not from years, but from want of purpose.

Some one has said that the age of grandmothers is past and deplors the departure of the picturesque old ladies who, adorned with spotted kerchiefs and close made caps, formerly occupied the rocking chairs in the warmest corners and industriously knitted endless socks. But if they have gone we have in their stead worthy successors, of whom Mrs. Livermore, Julia Ward Howe, Mrs. Henry Ward Beecher and Elizabeth Cady Stanton are illustrious examples. These women are all past "threescore years and ten," and still no one of them has as yet laid her scepter down. No one thinks of these women as old, for their lives are full of the fragrance of eternal youth.

Lives cease to be measured by time's calendars when they rise above the material plane. The women who fear the years for the wrinkles they may bring or the lines across beauty which they may make will never possess the freshness of spirit which is life's greatest charm. But the women who stay young in spite of years are those whose lives hold many interests. They are the ones who do not feel that with the attainment of a certain age desuetude of all the powers must ensue. They never grow "too old" to enjoy life and all its stimulating influences.

Fifty years ago it would have been a most unusual thing to have met women past thirty as students in any department of active effort. Today women of all ages are found in every field of activity. The woman of forty takes up a new language or a fresh study with as much zeal as a girl of twenty, and the world forgets to consider the age of those who fling over its dusty highways the flowers of new thought and the fragrance of fresh life. LAURA GIDDINGS.

A Novel Bridal Procession. A pretty little bride-to-be-in-a-month-or-so is cudgeling her brain for novelties and has hit upon a decided one.

"I am going to have Rex bring up the rear of the bridal procession," she announced.

Everybody laughed. Rex is her favorite setter and a beauty.

"Yes, I'm in earnest," she continued. "Of course it wouldn't do in church, but as it's at home I don't see why not. I'm to have six bridesmaids and the last



pair my two little nieces, five years old. They shall be dressed in light blue and lead Rex between them with light blue ribbons from his collar. I know he'll behave nicely, and of course I couldn't think of leaving the dear fellow out."

Somebody said it sounded dreadful because it reminded one of an Indian brave's funeral, which his favorite warhorse is allowed to attend; but the bride-to-be is practicing Rex in walking up the parlor in leading strings, and it only remains to be seen whether she will adhere to her fancy when the evening arrives. M. H. F. L.

Trust to Yourself. When you make investments of your little savings, look about you on all sides and find out for yourself where it is wise to put your money. Do not trust anybody implicitly. Women often lose their money through sheer laziness in finding out what sort of risks they are taking. Naturally nobody is as much interested in your affairs as you are. Do not expect, therefore, that anybody else will take trouble for you that you are unwilling to take for yourself.

FROM FOREIGN LANDS

LADIES WHO GRACE THE LEGATIONS AT WASHINGTON.

Margaret Manton Merrill Describes the European and South American Ladies of the Diplomatic Corps—They Are Unanimous in Praise of America.

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The ladies of the diplomatic corps in Washington may be divided into three distinct classes. Those coming from the empires of Japan and China are so thor-



LADY PAUNCEFOTE.

oughly unlike all the rest, belonging as they do to the Mongolian race, that they live a life apart. Their manners, customs and ways of living are not at all like anything either American or European women are accustomed to. Then there are the American women who have married foreigners. While each of them has spent most of her time abroad, yet there is still a something that divides them from the others, and they announce the fact that they are Americans with a certain degree of pride that seems wholesome and quite as it should be.

The few remaining ladies of the legation who are natives either of Europe or South America are in a way different from all the others. The one who holds first rank among them since the going away of Baroness Fava is Lady Pauncefote, wife of the British minister. She is a charming type of the English matron. Although her daughters are all grown to womanhood, she has lost none of the freshness of her youth. There is not a thread of gray in her brown hair, nor scarcely a wrinkle in her comely face, and her figure, like that of most English women, is wonderfully well preserved. Whether it is her residence in America, or whether it is her natural manner, she certainly lacks much of the reserve common to English women.



MME. MONTT.

There is not a trace of coldness or hauteur about her. She is gracious and kindly and makes the British embassy a most delightful place for guests and callers.

Lady Pauncefote was educated in England and France. She is a descendant from one of the oldest and noblest families in England, and her bearing has the unmistakable stamp of inborn refinement. She gives during the winter a series of dinners, and any one bidden to one of these delightful affairs is very much favored. There are three young ladies in the family. All of them more or less resemble their charming mother.

Mme. Montt, the wife of the Chilean minister, is a native of Valparaiso. Senor Montt was born in Santiago, and it is in that city that the minister and his wife have their home, which is said to be very beautiful, surrounded by picturesque gardens and commanding a view of mountains and sea. Mme. Montt has only lived in America a little more than a year, but she likes it, she says, "because it is not only beautiful, but so big. My country is beautiful," she said enthusiastically, "almost as beautiful as this. But it is such a narrow country. Over there lie the mountains, and here are we, and yonder is the sea. That's all. But it is so pretty when the sun goes down."



MME. LOTTIN.

Mme. Montt is one of those fair women who always keep the look of childhood. She is something of an artist and a very good musician. Her enthusiasm is boundless. She is pleased with everything in Washington. She never gets tired of the receptions and balls. "There are always new people there," she says,

"and they always do such 'unny things, and they say such funny things, and I am much amused." She speaks excellent English.

Mme. Lottin, the wife of the military attaché of the French legation, is one of the most beautiful as well as the most charming women in Washington. She is very young and has all the chic and taste that seems to belong by right to the women of France. She is enthusiastic; all Frenchwomen are that. But Mme. Lottin is unsparring in her praise of America and American women. "They are so charming," she said, "and so kind to us who are foreigners."

Mme. Yrigoyen, the wife of the first secretary of the Peruvian legation, is another pleasing South American. She is a native of the capital city of Peru, Lima, as is also her husband, Mme. Yrigoyen does not speak very much English, but she is very eager to learn the language. "When I came," she said, "I learned to say 'Talk to me,' and I say it to all people I meet, for to me the English tongue is music. I like it, but I cannot say it well. I am like *Zénas*, Virgil wrote of him, you know. My voice is tangled in my throat when I try to say English words."

The social life of Peru, Mme. Yrigoyen says, is very formal, and after living in Washington it will not be pleasant to go back to so much formality.

The wife of the Spanish minister, Mme. Suarez, is a typical daughter of Spain. She has soft black eyes and an olive skin, with a voice that seems to have been made to accompany the guitar. She is a very accomplished pianist, and her music and her babies occupy her attention almost to the exclusion of society, for which she cares very little. She was born in Madrid and educated there. Mme. Suarez cannot forbear to wonder



MME. SUAREZ.

that Americans, "who are," she said, "so clever in most things, should be so ignorant of Spain. You judge of us," she says with fine scorn, "from the dancers of the concert halls who come over here to amuse you, and that is not fair. We are not a nation entirely given over to lace mantillas, mandolins and moonlight, with here and there an occasional stiletto. Ours is one of the greatest commercial countries in the world. We have wealth and power and great men, and we have castles, too, that are not chateaux d'Espagne."

"Come and see us," said madame hospitably, "and"—this she added with a touch of rebuke—"learn something of the truth about us. You Americans should remember that Queen Isabella was a Spaniard, and she sacrificed her jewels that your country might be found. Was not that a great deal? I admire America very much, and I like your women, but I like my own country, too, and I wish that it was better known in the world," continued Mme. Suarez, "as that seen in the mountains of Spain. Our people are born artists and



FRAU MUTZENBECHER.

musicians, because they are born with beauty and song around them everywhere."

Mme. Norighian, the wife of the first secretary of the Turkish legation, also lives in Washington. But the environments of her country are still about her. She does not mingle at all with the outside world.

Mme. Perreza, the wife of the Venezuelan minister, is a newcomer in Washington. She has not yet learned to speak the language, nor has she grown accustomed to American ways. She thinks, however, that she will like them. She says submissively that she means to try. She, too, is young and pretty and seems a great favorite with her people.

Frau Mutzenbecher is the pretty little wife of one of the attaches of the German legation. Hers is beauty of a very dainty type. She resembles a New York debutante. Her manners are very sweet and winning. She said through the interpreter that she would be very willing to talk if she only knew how.

There is no more interesting sight in Washington than to see these ladies from the various countries in attendance at the White House receptions. Nearly all of them are beautiful women, and though they lack something of the vivacity of their American sisters it is more than accounted for by their charm and grace of manner. MARGARET MANTON MERRILL.

HOME DRESSMAKING.

SOME SUPPLEMENTARY POINTERS REGARDING EVENING COSTUMES.

Demitrains and Court Trains—The Modeling of Waist Lining—Biding Habits. The Making of Children's Garments. The Jacket and Covert Coat.

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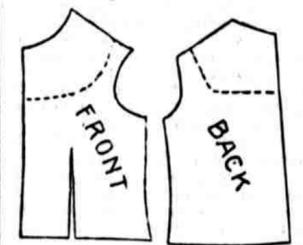
There are a few more words to add with reference to evening dresses. If a train is desired, the four side breadths and the back breadths are tapered down so that the back breadths are 1 1/2 yards long. A demitrain is 1 1/2 yards, though the train can be longer if desired. It is finished on the inside like any nice skirt and should have a balayouse. A court train is made of two breadths of material lined with silk or satin, and plaited and fastened at the shoulders in the back, and then tacked to the sides of the skirt at the hips, and the rest left loose to fall over the other skirt.

A few words more regarding the modeling of a waist lining. If the wearer is short waisted and stout, an "impression" can be taken, as is done with other waists, but the proportion in drafting the model is to allow in width in proportion to what would be one inch to each seam and to eliminate one or more inches at the waist line, just as if a slice that wide had been cut out of the way around and the lining sewed up again.

Almost every lady, be she amateur or professional dressmaker, may wish to make a riding habit. Directions have already been given for making the basque, but it is almost as difficult to make the skirt now as the waist. It is cut to fit snugly around the hips in the same style as the skirt model as to the front breadths, but the back consists of a single breadth laid in flat plaits at the back. The skirt should be roony over the knees and fall gracefully without straining. The model skirt will allow this, and the riding skirt should be a trifle more than walking length and simply hemmed at the bottom.

If it is possible to have the lady sit on a saddle to try on the skirt it will be of great advantage, as it is easier to "hang" the skirt so that it shall fall just right. The riding skirt should have a stout belt and fastening. It should open on the left side and button over with small silk buttons. The pocket is placed almost in front and has a flap, and is cut across instead of lengthwise. In sewing the skirt of a habit, which should be of serge or cloth, each seam should be carefully pressed and finished in the neatest manner.

A finish often adopted for the edges of basque, front, etc., is to baste a silk braid with the edge even with the edge and on the right side of the goods, lying backward; then stitch this down, and afterward turn the braid around to the wrong side and fell it down. This is flatly pressed and is the same as the braid on men's coats. Nothing could be neater.



MODEL FOR CHILD'S WAIST. (Dotted lines show how to cut away for low neck for gimp.)

The making of children's garments is quite different from those of the mother's, and every dressmaker ought to know how, whether they are ever called upon to practice or not.

In the first place, simplicity is to be studied, and the fact that they have no "form" taken into consideration. When new material is used, the dressmaker can cut to suit herself, but it is best to have the gowns, etc., designed so as to have the different pieces as large as possible, and have a hem deep enough to allow for a child's rapid growth.

The present styles have full sleeves, following those of their mothers in form, and the waists are draped in much the same manner.

To make a dress for a little girl, begin by drafting the lining, which try on, as with the others, and take the impression with pins, but loosely; then baste the outside on, following the same general plan as for the mother's gowns in the marking and finishing of the seams, but of course no bones are required. The waists close in the back, and the skirt is usually gathered and sewn on with a piping.

The skirts of children's dresses now are cut in straight breadths and require very little trimming, but considerable can be and is frequently put on the waists.

It is not considered necessary to finish off and line a child's dress with the same care employed on fine gowns for grown people, with the exception of their cloaks, which require tailor finish.

If a jacket is to have pockets, the best way for an amateur to do is to take a gentleman's vest and study the manner in which they are made and sewn in. It she cannot do this, let her cut the slit for the pocket with the front part half an inch higher than the back. Cut the lining for the pocket an inch wider than the slit and cut two pieces of the material of the jacket 1 1/2 inches wide and an inch longer than the slit, the nap running the long way. These two strips should be basted to the pocket lining and stitched on tightly, after which basted to the outside of the jacket in such a manner as to insure their being turned to bring the pocket inside, leaving these strips for facings. When the pocket is sewn in, stay the corners with arrowheads and stitch the edge of the lower side. The pocket can then have the sides sewn and stably overcast.

The difference between a jacket and covert coat is that the jacket is sewn on the inside, the seams laid apart and pressed, while the covert coat has the seams lapped and double stitched. Only thick, fine cloth will bear this without fraying. Covert coats have no front darts. Jackets may have them or not. Blazers have no darts and usually are rather shorter in the back than front, though this season they are quite long.

The collars to covert coats are standing, and the coat buttons are in a double line down the front of white bone or pearl. The collars to the jackets are according to taste, either Medici or Stuart style, or the plain rolling or the long rolling collar, which may be lined with fur, and which extends down the front. These collars are very troublesome, but by getting a special pattern they can be achieved. OLIVE HARPER.



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