

THE WOMAN'S SPHERE.

MATTERS OF SPECIAL INTEREST TO THE LADIES.

Latest Freaks of Fashion--The Nineteenth Century Woman--Danger in Fans--The Value of Onions--Faults of the Walking Skirt.

Latest Freaks of Fashion.

Tailors will again make a stand in favor of short skirts that escape the ground for all walking dresses. Some of these shortened skirts have seams piped with velvet, gullion, or fur, while others are in the new widened shapes, less scant at the top than formerly, and with pleats in the back set in clusters at the belt, or in a broad box pleat that flares gradually wider to the foot. Elastic straps hold the pleats in place.

Belted waists with yokes and plastrons are in as great favor with tailors as with dressmakers. They also show princess gowns, some fastened in the back, others with coat fronts, and still others crossing diagonally. But, above all else, they make the legitimate tailor bodice, the coat in all its varieties, as the long-tail coat, the short French coat, the becoming shape with corset front and coat back, and the simple and familiar riding-habit bodice, which is always in favor for morning and traveling dresses. Sleeves of moderate fullness at the top and closely buttoned on the forearm are preferred for most tailor gowns.

A smooth cloth gown of chateau brown has a pointed corset front outlined on the left, with gumpie and collar cut all in one of pink and brown striped cloth. The simple sleeves are of plain pink cloth, with deep striped cuffs. The French skirt of chateau brown is entered by a slit on the left trimmed with buttons, and there is a wide striped border around the foot. Velvet are much used with chevron-striped wool skirts, notably one of mole-skin-colored velvet made as a short French coat with box-pleated back. The front opens on a smooth vest of blue wool, with the pointed sheron stripes in mole-color. All the edges of the coat are bound with Persian lamb-skin. The sleeves are of the wool, also the skirt, which is straight in front, the stripes meeting in deep V's while the great breadth of the back is laid in a triple box pleat that flares in bell shape. Such gowns are also made with a coat of green velvet, and a wool skirt of black with green chevrons. Princess gowns of black camel-hair are braided with black and gold to represent a yoke, grille, and pointed hip pieces, and are given fullness in the back of the skirt by velvet breathers that make a slight demi-train.

Low-crowned felt hats wear with simple tailor gowns have soft beams of long-napped beaver, without wire and quite straight, and turned up far back on the left side. These are girlish and pretty in black or blue trimmed with navy blue plush, with facing of bright gold and red loosely folded around the crown, the end taken up on the left so that its vivid red will gleam through a great panache of black feathers.

For middle-aged ladies are English walking hats and boat-shaped hats of black felt, with a large double-looped bow of black velvet on the crown, a set ornament in front, and a long ostrich plume passing down along each side to meet in the back. A more youthful hat is quite round, with the brim slightly turned away from the face, and slit open at the side, where it is held by a bow of velvet much lighter than the felt. Small black ostrich tips are then curled outward all around the crown, and larger tips are mounted high on one side quite far back.

Faults of the Walking Skirt. The most striking feature about the so-called walking skirt is that it is quite unsuitable for walking. In windy weather it blows into becoming shapes and tangles one's feet and ankles. In dry weather it gathers to itself from the ground dust and dirt of all kinds. In wet weather it becomes muddy and wet, conveying mud and dampness to the boots and apparel of the wearer, thus causing colds and serious illness among persons forced to be out of doors for any length of time on wet days, or keeping women indoors who ought to be out on business or for exercise.

This so-called walking skirt is so arranged that it is impossible with one hand gracefully to lift it clear at all points of one's boots and the ground; hence, careful souls struggle between a regard for their clothes and the desire to avoid that undue exposure of the boot and stocking caused by holding the skirt on one side too high. The grabbing of the so-called walking skirt by both sides, though ungraceful, is, perhaps, sensible, but is generally also impossible, because of bundles, umbrellas or other impediments. The so-called walking skirt is ingeniously calculated to diminish the strength of the strong woman, and from the weak to take away the strength she hath.

Is not this same skirt worthy of the reformer's steel, and now that woman is free in so many ways to choose sensible methods of dressing, should not the reformer's attention be directed especially to the length of the walking skirt, which fashion still controls, to the detriment of the health and happiness of those forced to use it, as well as indirectly to that of the welfare of the human race. At the reception, dinner party, afternoon tea, in the ball room, the carriage, the house, let her who chooses wear a long-skirted gown--nothing is more graceful or more becoming to the generality of women--but for walking, as for all kinds of open-air exercise, tennis, boating, riding, let her also dress appropriately to the occasion; and, above all, let women dress appropriately for exercise, enlaced or voluntary, in wet weather.--Boston Herald.

First Love.

Ask any very young lady what she thinks of "first love," and she will tell

you that it is the quintessence of all that is ecstatic, compared with which any so-called love that may come after it must be as sky-blue skimmed milk to clotted cream. Put the same question to an enamored young gentleman of 18, and he will tell you that it is the champagne of human existence, to which all subsequent emotions dignified with the name of love are mere Jersey cider. But the mature of both sexes, in nine cases out of ten, can tell a different story. Boy-and-girl love is but a faint shadow of the intense passion which often overcomes and enthralles the middle-aged.

The capacity for loving is not fully developed in the young miss who has just cast aside her dolls, nor in the youth whose chin is just newly acquainted with the razor. The enthusiasm of these novices in the tender passion is generally evanescent. Of course, there are exceptional cases, but, as a general rule, love does not take firm root in the heart before the age of 25. Professions of undying devotion from young men of 10 or 20 are rarely to be trusted. The question which a lady who receives an offer of marriage should consider is not merely whether she has won the affection of her admirer, but also whether, if won, she can keep them. To have and to hold are two things.--From the New York Ledger.

Floral Bed Rooms.

Floral bed rooms have been an English craze and have recently been adopted in this country. The decorator and furnisher gives the following suggestions in regard to them:

The best decorative houses and wall paper stores keep paper and cretonne suits, and toilet ware can also be had to match. A yellow poppy paper on a satin ground, with a cretonne dado to harmonize, makes a pretty arrangement. The cretonne dado should be run around the room in order to make a break in the wall. All the paint should be cream. The curtains and bed-spread should be of cretonne. The ceiling paper should be yellow and white. All the furniture should be covered with the cretonne, and a pale blue "lily" carpet makes an appropriate finish to the decoration.

Another bed-room might have a wild rose paper, with the wild rose cretonne, and a dull green "lily" carpet. There are beautiful rose papers with cretonne to match in Persian, pink and reds. A yellow and white ceiling paper goes with either of the above schemes.

Other schemes are blue and white poppies, sweet peas and forget-me-nots, in all of which cases cretonnes, paper, carpet and chinaware may be obtained. To make the rooms complete, small embroidered flowers in washing silks should be in the corner of all sheets, pillow-cases, towels and toilet covers.

The Value of Onions.

While the onion stands at a disadvantage among vegetables on account of its pronounced and not altogether agreeable odor, it is, doubtless, one of the most valuable and healthful products of the garden. This value is not confined to its use as an article of diet, since the efficacy of onion poultices in cases of croup and similar diseases are too well known to need repetition. The roasted heart of an onion, placed in the ear as hot as it can be borne, will often relieve cases of earache when other remedies fail, and a very excellent cough syrup is made by putting one-half cup minced onions into a cup each of vinegar and molasses, simmering on the stove for half an hour and then straining. A teaspoonful of this syrup taken frequently will relieve severe cases of cough and hoarseness.

It is claimed that onions, as an article of food are excellent blood purifiers, greatly improving the complexion, and of course, entirely harmless. As a nerve, they are very beneficial, either cooked or raw, and, if eaten in the natural state, the addition of a little salt or pepper makes them more palatable. The large imported varieties are much less pungent and disagreeable to the taste than the smaller native growth, but equally efficient in remedial action.--Good Housekeeping.

Danger in the Fans.

Did woman ever stop to think of the direct result of her fan-waving when in a heated condition? writes a medical man. Attired in a low-necked evening dress, it may be, she seats herself in some quiet nook after becoming thoroughly heated up, and begins to fan herself vigorously, or gets her escort to do the work for her. In a very short time she begins to feel comfortable, and then cool, and finally chilly. Still, from habit more than anything else she keeps the fan going, unless she is positively cold, and wonders where the draft comes from. The next day she has a cold and cannot account for it. A fan makes a current of wind the same as an open door, and when it is used vigorously must cause such a sudden cooling down of the body temperature that a chill is experienced. The fan on hot days is an indispensable article, but there is danger in its extreme use. A little fanning when hot may produce good, pleasant results, but if used too much and continually, colds, influenza, pneumonia and consumption may be traced back to its mischievous use. Besides, some less strong persons next to you may suffer from the cool air which the fan makes. The fan is used more as a habit than for real need, and it is this which should be deplored and discouraged by all, especially in public places.

The Nineteenth Century Woman. There is an old belief of the masculine Anglo-Saxon mind that a woman, to be lovable, should have no marked individuality. But with this world's rapid advance through the Victorian age, woman has become more than ever perplexing to the male atom who poises himself for a moment to make a study of her. She no longer needs man's approval to practise a profession or to journey forth on foot under the green leaves of Arden. She has grown self-reliant and cosmopolitan, equally at home in the White House or on the banks of the Nile. She never plucks caresses and buttercups nowadays, to test her lover's affection by pulling apart their petals. You find her, instead, arranging orchids in a vase, and making cynical reflections upon the worthlessness of the entire race. Individual love or hate in the opposite sex is apparently all one to her.--From "The Point of View," in Scribner.

THE FARM AND HOME.

BEGIN NOW TO USE BUSINESS METHODS ON THE FARM.

The Only Way to Do Sure It Pays--Over Laid Meat is Unprofitable--Keep Your House in Good Order.

Business Methods on the Farm.

With all the exhortations to farmers to make greater use of business methods on the farm, we see very few of them explaining how such methods should be applied, or wherein they would be especially valuable. Generalizing is not the best way to make truths plain. To come down to the root of the matter at once, let me ask the readers how he is to know whether his hogs, his poultry or his cows pay him a profit, if he feeds each class of these animals from the same grain bins? The cows may be making a profit on their feed, and thus concealing a deficit that comes from unprofitable hogs and hens. Or the cows and hens may be concealing the fact that the hogs are running in debt to the farm. It is the same with other kinds of stock, when all are fed from a common quantity of feed stuffs. Occasionally it is even worse than the case mentioned, the cows, hens and hogs might each and all return less than the cost of their keep, and still the truth be undiscovered, provided some other branch of farm operations brought in sufficient revenue to make up the deficiency. How can it be told, whether a certain crop of corn, oats, wheat or potatoes, has been a profitable one to raise, if no account is kept of the cost of preparing the ground, dressing, caring for, and harvesting the crop.

I would have separate grain bins for each kind of stock; then upon the first day of January of each year, or upon the first day of one of the spring months, if one chooses, a large blank book should be procured, and every time a sack of bran or oats is put into the poultry house, its cost should be charged to the account of the poultry. If ground meal, bone or any other article of food is purchased for the hogs, let the cost be charged to them, and whenever eggs or market poultry are sold, let the proper credit be given, together with a credit for the eggs and poultry used on the table. If the hens have eaten a certain number of bushels of vegetables, their value should be charged to the poultry account. At the end of the year it will be pretty plain how the fowls have paid.

The dairy will have charged to it the feed that has been placed in the stable bins, together with the value of the hay, ensilage and roots eaten; and credit will be given to the same, for the butter sold and eaten, the milk sold, and the estimated value of the skim milk fed out. The dairy should also be credited for the value of calves when weaned, and for the manure that is made.

It is not necessary to go farther into details, to show that this is the only way by which we can tell whether the work is profitable or not. This is the only way, if it is not profitable, by which one can tell what branch is handicapping all the rest. It needs no great knowledge of bookkeeping, to classify these important facts. Anyone with good common sense can make such debit and credit entries, under the heading of each branch of his farm operations, as he can himself readily understand, when he comes to reckon up the cost and the value of articles sold and on hand. The great point is to begin in keeping such accounts, and the sooner one begins, the better.--Practical Farmer.

Over Laid Meat is Unprofitable. Almost any sort of animal used for human food can, with greater profit both to the feeder and butcher, be made excessively fat than the sheep, though a superabundance of fat is not desirable, or so profitable, by the average consumer of meat, whether it be beef, pork, veal or mutton; hence such hogs are handled at a loss.

There is a medium line to be observed in preparing stock for the market that will insure better satisfaction to all parties concerned than the extremes of either over or under fattening, and while it is true the lean parts of very fat meat are always sweeter, more juicy and tender than when leaner, the proportion of this fine quality of meat is so small, compared with the aggregate weight of a very carcass, that butchers are shy except at low prices, knowing the large amount of unsaleable bulk it contains. Particularly is this true of mutton, and an excessively fat carcass of that class of meat answers more the purpose of showing the possibilities of the animal or breed to lay on fat, than any ends of profit reached, or satisfactory returns, to either the feeder, the butcher or consumer. A leading Birmingham butcher, who supplies meats to the weekly market, writes to an English paper, touching this matter, and says:

"Advise your readers to avoid sending heavy fat mutton to market, there is no sale, and it is a waste of time, food and labor to grow, and is of small value when slaughtered. It cannot compete with the lean Australian mutton now offered." What more advice than our correspondent has himself tendered is needed? His suggestion is well worth the consideration of breeders. There should not be much difficulty in adopting it. Upwards of a dozen different breeds of sheep should afford material enough for the production of lean mutton. Showy and attractive are not conducive of this result. Nor is the craze for early maturity. These objects are laudable in their way, but it behooves breeders to keep a close eye upon the demands of the age, in as far, at least as they concern their particular industry.--Coleman's Rural World.

The Value of Corn Stalks. At a recent meeting of farmers at Pikeville, in Maryland, Prof. H. Alford, the director of the Maryland experiment station, read a most instructive paper on corn stalks. In the course of his remarks he took occasion to condemn the wasteful method of harvesting the corn crop so prevalent throughout the country, and which he has so frequently denounced. The stripping of the blades and cutting of the tops and then leaving the butts to rot in the field, practically amounts to wasting a large portion of the crop, besides being otherwise economically

wasted, as the cost of this labor is out of all proportion to the value of the product saved. By analysis, the professor showed that two pounds of stalk butts contained as much nutriment as one pound of corn and cob meal, and that two and one-half pounds of stalks were equivalent as food to one pound of good corn meal. He further estimated that there is generally half a ton of butts left in the field after stripping the fodder and cutting the tops, which is equivalent to an absolute waste of 400 pounds of corn meal or six and one-half bushels of corn per acre.--Journal of Agriculture.

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