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WOMAN AND HOME.

NOTES AND COMMENT FOR FIRESIDE READING

Mirror of Current Fashions and House Decorations—A Pretty Japanese Corner—Games for Evening—Glimpses of Ultra Fashionable Life.

An Ultra-Fashionable Coat

THE ULTRA FASHIONABLE coat is nothing if not conspicuous. One of the late novelties is a three-quarter-length garment made of mirror silk velvet. In coloring it is ecru, which shows in certain lights a pale green tint. This coat is made with a bertha of black astrakhan, which falls over the huge puffed sleeves in Vandyke

RATHER CONSPICUOUS.

points. The high rolling collar is also made of astrakhan. From the direct back of the coat hangs a bead ornament of glittering gilt and jet. The girdle about the waist is of jet, brightened with gilt. The skirt of the coat has a decided flare, which suggests crinoline, but the fullness is caused by the very green silk lining.

The Useful Art of Laundering.

Some of the domestic virtues of the good old days when every woman knew how to wash linens and woolens beautifully, to iron her husband's shirts until they glistened, and to "do up" laces, are of necessity being restored. The woman who does not know how to wash her flannels and has not enough money to hire very skilled laundry talent finds her wearing apparel shrunk to a very diminutive size. The woman who does not know how to wash her own laces will soon have no laces.

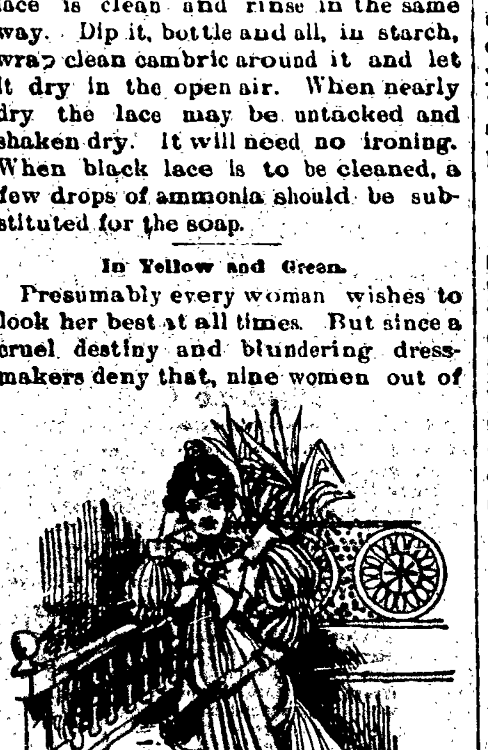
Woolen undergarments and flannel ones have to be differently treated. Flannels should be shrunk before being made up. Boiling water should be poured on them, and then they should be let to lie until the water is cold. Then shake, stretch and fold smoothly to make them straight and even and hang them out. When half dry shake, stretch and turn out. Take them in while still damp, then smooth and in half an hour iron with nearly a cold iron.

To wash them do not soak or put any soda in the water. Wash in lukewarm, not hot, water, finish quickly, and dry at once in the open air. To wash woolens, wash in clean, hot soapsuds, rinse in clear, hot water, and shake out the water without passing through the wringer.

To wash lace, cover a bottle with fine white flannel and tack the edges of the lace upon it, being careful to fasten down every point and to lay the lace quite straight. Squeeze the bottle in plenty of lukewarm suds till the lace is clean and rinse in the same way. Dip it, bottle and all, in starch, wrap clean cambric around it and let it dry in the open air. When nearly dry the lace may be untacked and shaken dry. It will need no ironing. When black lace is to be cleaned, a few drops of ammonia should be substituted for the soap.

In Yellow and Green.

Presumably every woman wishes to look her best at all times. But since a cruel destiny and blundering dressmakers deny that, nine women out of



YELLOW AND GREEN GOWN.

ten prefer to look their best in their own dens, surrounded by their own pet china and pouring the tea, which their admirers declare no one can make as they do.

A gown which ought to help any woman in a laudable effort to make a picture of herself at her tea table was seen uptown the other day, says a New York fashion writer. It was made of primrose yellow crepon in the empire style. There was a yoke of the tender color of green that belongs with primrose yellow and from the side seams just beneath the big puffed sleeves, broad green ribbons were drawn. These were tied in a big bow at the base of the ... and beneath it the gown hung ... in front. In the back there was a Watteau ... beneath the yoke.

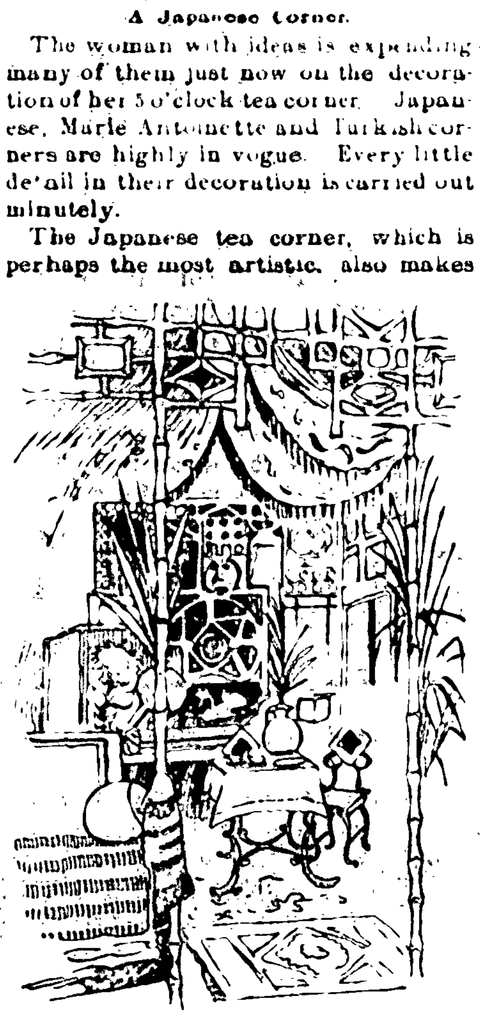
American Beauty Roses.

There is an unwritten code in the giving of flowers which directs that it is better in the eyes of a New York up-to-date girl to receive a single perfect long stemmed rose from the smartest shop in town than a whole roomful of ordinary posies sent in from an unknown florist. The present fashion in the wearing of flowers restricts them to a single large and fragrant American Beauty rose or a bunch of violets. The chrysanthemum has had its day and is going out of season now, but the rage for violets increases, and the fickle fancy of woman is true to the modest little purple flower all the year around. She tucks them in the belt of her summer gown or pins them on her sealskin coat, and at one of the recent swell balls a belle had a gown all trimmed with violets, which looked very pretty until the flowers began to fade. And following the same idea it is accounted more desirable to present a lady with two or three long stemmed "selected" roses for the tall, straight vase in her room than with a profusion of common flowers. Sometimes the vase accompanies the roses, and a very pretty gift it makes, and one which conventionality winks at, even between people not really entitled to give or receive valuable presents. If any one flower were selected as the prime favorite this year, the American beauty would carry off the palm by a large majority, because its vivid and rich coloring accords happily with the season's tints, and indeed matches one of the most worn shades used in decoration.—N. Y. Sun.

A Japanese Corner.

The woman with ideas is expending many of them just now on the decoration of her 5 o'clock tea corner. Japanese, Marie Antoinette and Turkish corners are highly in vogue. Every little detail in their decoration is carried out minutely.

The Japanese tea corner, which is perhaps the most artistic, also makes



THE CORNER COMPLETE.

the most comfortable den. The floor should be covered with a matting in Japanese design, over which rugs of oriental coloring are thrown. Growing palms and rubber plants in big yellow bowls should aid in the decoration. Have the fret work of black and gilt and let the draperies be of brilliant colored Japanese crepe. There must be an abundance of Japanese fans and a bamboo table and desk. The 5 o'clock tea table should stand beneath a bamboo cabinet, which would look well ornamented with bits of palms and artistically arranged cups and vases in Japanese ware. Have a low, broad couch banked with pillows all covered with gay designs of Japanese silk. Of course, there must be a big wrought iron lamp with a shade of scarlet crepe. Ornament the walls in any way your fancy dictates. To complete it all have a Japanese gown yourself, and wear it when you serve tea. The tea corner is also the proper setting for the Japanese doll, now so popular.—New York Exchange.

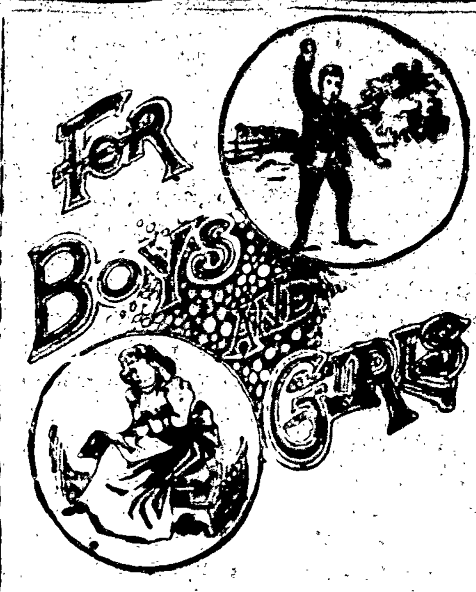
Is the American Child Spoiled?

A Boston paper has been getting together several opinions from persons supposedly informed in the matter upon the question, "Is the American Child Spoiled?" They are especially interesting because every contributor to the symposium in one way or another, ... his idea that the children of ... are having too much done for them. Very many persons share and often express a similar opinion. Said an old man, speaking on this matter very lately: "Children are taking the journey of life these days just as they are taking their railway journeys—in Pullman cars. Every luxury of education is provided for them, every dose of learning has the bad taste taken out, or is compressed into tablets that can be swallowed at a gulp. And the process isn't going to make the sturdiest kind of men and women, in my opinion."

Not as Pretty as We Thought.

Two more idols have been shattered by the iconoclastic hand of modern research. It now appears that Mary, Queen of Scots, was not a beauty, but a cross-eyed person, who shaved off her hair to save the trouble of dressing it and wore wigs. And Sappho, instead of being "love's priestess mad with pain of love and song," was a respectable matron with a large family, which she raised carefully, writing her ... the "between times."

For Boys and Girls



GARDEN AND CRADLE.

When our babe he goeth walking in his garden,
Around his tinkling feet the sunbeams play.
The posies they are good to him
And bow them as they should to him,
As fareth he upon his kingly way;
And birdlings of the wood to him
Make music gentle music all the day,
When our babe he goeth walking in his garden.

When our babe he goeth swinging in his cradle,
Then the night it looketh ever sweetly down;
The little stars are kind to him
The moon she hath a mind to him
And layeth on his head a golden crown.
And singeth then the wind to him
A song, the gentle song of Bethlehem town,
When our babe he goeth swinging in his cradle.
—Eugene Field.

A Dog's Charity.

Late in the afternoon of a raw day in November, as a doctor alighted from his carriage at the door of his stable, after a long drive over frost-bound country roads, he was somewhat startled by the sudden appearance of a hound, which trotted up to him without ceremony, and, seizing him by the skirt of his long driving coat, endeavored to pull him in the direction of a shed adjoining the stable. The doctor remonstrated rather vigorously, whereat the dog immediately released his hold, but instead of running away retreated in good order towards the shed, whence he presently reappeared, and tugged at the coat as before.

Having freed the horse from the shafts of his buggy the doctor went into the house for a lantern; as he came out of the house the hound again approached and repeated his previous performances. This time, greatly to the creature's delight, the doctor followed him into the shed; and there, in a remote corner, stretched at full length upon his side, and evidently in a condition of exhaustion, lay what is known as a "coach dog"—a short-haired animal of medium size, whose coat is thickly covered with black and white spots.

By the light of the lantern the doctor looked the poor fellow over carefully, and soon found the cause of his break-down in torn and bleeding feet that made travel impossible. Here was a charity case indeed, and to such appeals of charity the physician is ever ready to respond.

A comfortable bed of straw and a good supper were quickly provided for the sufferer. His feet were then cleansed, annointed with a soothing ointment and wrapped in bandages, the hound looking on meanwhile with every manifestation of interest and pleasure. He was invited by the hospitable doctor to spend the night with his canine friend, but he declined the invitation. Having seen his companion properly cared for, he hurried away as if on important business, but when the doctor went to the stable next morning he found the faithful creature at the stable door waiting for admission.

When he was permitted to enter, he went straight to the patient, and I wish I could report word for word what passed between the two. I have no doubt the hound inquired into his friend's condition, congratulated him upon having found an asylum in his extremity, and, in reply to expressions of gratitude and obligation, protested that he had done no more than any self-respecting dog would do in the same circumstances. He remained about the stable for half an hour and then left.—Our Animal Friends.

What Dreamers Hear.

A lawyer who had been overworked rose in his sleep, went into the hall of his house and discharged a pistol. The household hurried to the place and found him at the head of the stairway, awake, but much bewildered. He had dreamed of burglars and had gone to attack them. One member of the family slept through the noise. When he came into the dining room—before he heard the events of the night—he complained that his sleep had been much disturbed.

He had dreamed that he had been condemned to be shot, that he had been led to the place of execution and had fallen senseless when the guns were fired, says Kate Field's Washington. A lady dreamed that a man came into her room, poured some water into a basin, carried the splashing water to her bedside and began to sprinkle it over her. She awoke and heard a loud splashing. At first she was motionless with fear, but presently she lighted a candle and went to the basin, where she found a mouse making frantic efforts to get out of the water.

Another dreamed that she had a severe earache; that she rose, unlocked the door that separated her room from one in which two children slept and went to a shelf where there was a lotion which she applied to her ear. When she awoke she found herself in her own bed and without pain. The door was still locked, but in a few minutes one of the children began to cry that his ear ached, and she rose and went to the shelf for the lotion.

A young man dreamed that he was in his office busy with a troublesome estimate when a woman came in with a screaming baby and began to walk rapidly up and down the room, so that it was impossible for the calculator to remember his figures. Presently the woman thrust the child into his arms, and he was so startled by this that he awoke. But the screams still troubled his ears, for a mother in a neighboring room was walking about vainly trying to quiet a crying child.

Several years after the death of her husband a widow, lying awake one night, recalled vividly some scenes of her husband's last illness. Presently her daughter, who was beside her, awoke and said: "Oh, mamma, I have been going over in my dreams all the scenes of papa's last illness." She then told her dream, in which the scenes were almost the counterpart of those that had been recalled by her mother.

Indispensable Authors.

There are certain books which it is necessary to read; but they are very few. Looking at the matter from an æsthetic point of view merely, I should say that thus far only one man had been able to use types so universal, and to draw figures so cosmopolitan, that they are equally true in all languages and equally acceptable to the whole Indo-European branch, at least, of the human family. That man is Homer, and there needs, it seems to me, no further proof of his individual existence than this very fact of the solitary unapproachableness of the "Iliad" and the "Odyssey." The more wonderful they are, the more likely to be the work of one person. Nowhere is the purely natural man presented to us so nobly and sincerely as in these poems.

Not far below these I should place the "Divina Commedia" of Dante, in which the history of the spiritual man is sketched with equal command of material and grandeur of outline. "Don Quixote" stands upon the same level and receives the same universal appreciation. Here we have the spiritual and the natural man set before us in humorous contrast. In the knight and his squire Cervantes has typified the two opposing poles of our dual nature—the imagination and the understanding as they appear in contradiction. This is the only comprehensive satire ever written, for it is utterly independent of time, place and manners.

Faust gives us the natural history of the human intellect. Mephistopheles being merely the projected impersonation of that skepticism which is the invariable result of a purely intellectual culture. These four books are the only ones in which universal facts of human nature and experience are ideally represented. They can therefore never be displaced.

I have not mentioned Shakespeare, because his works come under a different category. Though they mark the very highest level of human genius they yet represent no special epoch in the history of the individual mind; the man of Shakespeare is always the man of actual life as he is acted upon by the worlds of sense and of spirit under definite conditions. We all of us may be in the position of Macbeth or Othello or Hamlet, and we appreciate their sayings and deeds potentially, so to speak, rather than actually, through the sympathy of our common nature, and not of our experience.—James Russell Lowell's Posthumous Essay in the Century Magazine.

Born Without Muscles.

Charles Tolley, who recently died in Delaware at the age of seventy-three years, was born without muscles, and for a year after his birth it was thought that he would never be able to move or speak. He could not cry like other children, and his expressions of pain or discomfort, which are made known by vigorous yells by other babies, only brought from him a kind of noise that sounded inhuman.

That he could hear was evident and when less than a year old there was an expression in and about his eyes that was more eloquent and effective to those who saw him than any outcry could be. The baby was a source of wonder to the country folk about and no one ever thought it possible that this weakest of weaklings would ever reach his seventy-fourth year. At one year of age the boy had never lifted his hand from the pillow on which he lay, and when he was dressed or other little things done for him which babies must have done, he was literally as limber as a rag. At 12 years of age the only suggestion of locomotion the boy had ever made was a sort of dragging himself forward on the ground.

It was about this time that the boy first began to show indications of that marvelous will power which carried him through a long life and enabled him to see his boyhood's friends, who were of sturdy mould, drop one by one and go to the grave while he lived on. He never spoke a word in his life. He had a way of expressing himself which his friends learned to understand, but to a stranger the noise which came from his mouth had a startling and frightful effect.

As he grew older, by great will power he was, after many years of practice, enabled to stand upright and remain standing by a great effort. Later he was able to make progress with his feet, but his going forward was a tottering, faltering motion which seemed as if he would fall at every step if his efforts could be called a step at all. As he grew to young manhood he had a good appetite and he made flesh and bone, but no muscle. He was as big as the average man of his age and would weigh as much. He lived with his parents.

What's on the Paper.

This must be played with a person who does not know the trick. Tell the guests that you will undertake to do a little "mind-reading." Ask someone to write anything he likes on a piece of paper. Take the paper, roll it up, and after a few passes of the head, say: "Now drop the paper on the middle of the floor, and to show you how fair I am you may actually stand on the paper with both feet." After a few mysterious motions and a moment of silence turn to the person and say: "You are on the paper, are you not?"