UR FASHION LETTER

THE SUMMER SHIRT WAISTS AND SEPERATE SKIRTS.

Though Fashion May Frown They Hold the Supremacy—These Ready Made Garments are a Blessing to Woman Kind—Handsome Linen Costumes.

Women are having their tailor-mad. gowns ironed on their own backs. In fact, to be her own ironing board is the newest aspiration of the woma of fashion. This end-of-the-century fad comes out of the West. After the gown has been made, fitted and almos finished in the conventional way, then the startling process of ironing it up on the wearer is begun. Madam stands up in the nearly completed gown and first submits to a wet towel being laid against the gown. It is wet enough for her to be unpleasantly conscious of it And then the tailor begins to move the iron to and fro. Over and over the wet towel the hot iron is passed until the lines are pressed absolutely into every undulation of the body. The ironing continues until there isn't the slightest

Taking Out the Wrinkles.

suggestion of a dimple, indicating overshrinking, or the faintest sign of overstretching. And madam—poor madam—she is enveloped in the rising vapors and scared nearly to death besides. But these are trivial considerations when she realizes the way her gown will fit. And the thought of her completed costume helps her to bear the ordeal of being "pressed"—by a hot iron—with gracious fortitude. After madam has been partially parboiled and ironed until the tailor is content she must still stand in her moulded-to-the-figure gown until every seam is perfectly dry. The man who introduced this end-of-the-century fitting claims that his first gown ironed upon the wearer was designed for the Princess of Wales.

From the headquarters of fashion the latest information says that all costumes are to be made with skirt and waist of the same material, and that no longer are separate skirts and waists to be fashionable. That there is some truth in this rumor is evident from the numbers of smart gowns with coat and vest to correspond that have been turned out by the dressmakers lately; but, on the other hand, there have never been so many smart waists of all kinds that can be worn with any and every skirt, nor has it been known in the memory of woman when it was possible to buy so many different and such satisfactory separate skirts as are to be found nowadays.

The dressmakers, the unsuccessful ones, that is—and their name is legion—are making a hue and cry over the fact that their business is so bad and that the department shops are ruining their trade. That their business is falling off is certainly without question; but they have only themselves to blame for it, for no sensible woman is going to pay from $8 upward for the making of a summer dress, not to mention a bill of extras or findings, a more mysterious term than anything else, and which generally costs more than the making, when she can go into a shop and buy, ready made, a skirt and coat that have infinitely more style and are better cut, for, we will say, $6.50. The material may not be so good, and again it may, for as a rule the ready-made suits of wash material are of good stuff, and this year especially are exceedingly smart. As for the waists, when ready-made ones are offered for $6, and dressmakers refuse to charge less than $8 for the making alone, it is small wonder that they are rapidly losing their customers.

One straw, however, should be taken as an indication that there is a strong wind blowing against these wonderful bargains in separate waists. One or two of the smart retail importing houses have lately offered for sale silk shirt waists for $10 and $12 that earlier in the season sold for $25 and $35. These are not shop-worn goods, but, on the contrary, are perfect in cut, material and design, and far superior to anything else for the price that has ever been offered. In some instances the tucks have been put in by hand and the lace used is real. These waists are not tight fitting, but have a decided bias in front, while the side seams are well curved in to the figure. There is a little fulness in the back, held down by a drawing string. They are lined with India silk and are fastened with crystal buttons and are exceedingly attractive.

No well-appointed summer outfit is in any way complete without five or six shirt waists; that is, silk shirt waists. These are of all colors of the rainbow and are worn not only with dark skirts, but with the pique and linen skirts. It was the fashion last summer at Newport to wear in the morning immaculate white pique and duck skirts with taffeta silk waists, and the fashion is renewed again this year, but besides the silk waists there are any number made of the finest cambric and lawn, trimmed with insertions of lace and little lace edges. These are in delicate colors and look exceedingly well with white skirts. They are not for sale everywhere, and are not to be classed among the wonderful bargains, but for the amount of work that is put on them they are certainly cheap and effective.

White waists are fashionable this year, and perhaps the coolest and prettiest of all are the unlined white silk ones, made, of course, with a great many tucks and considerable insertion. The difficulty is about "doing them up," for it requires careful laundering to prevent their turning yellow, and by rights they should be sent to the cleaners. The same style of shirt is sold in all the delicate shades in linen, and even in black. It is another fad to use the thin wash materials in the waists, and many are made up of dotted Swiss muslin. These look cool and dainty, especially when worn with skirts of wash material, but they look badly when worn with heavy skirts or for street wear. The silk ones, on the contrary, are not inappropriate, even in the street.

The dense mass of jets, spangles, and fancy, sequins which have so long been popular on gowns of lace, net, satin, etc., are gradually giving place to a later and more comfortable fancy for black Chantilly and Venise point appliques over white mouseline de soie, tulle, chiffon, or crepe lisse. The seams, which are indispensable on some of the oddly shaped tunics, are covered with applique bands of lace, which give the effect of a gown shaped all in one piece.

Nothing has been given to the world of women of late years that has been half the service as ready-made separate skirts. It is not possible for a poor dressmaker to hang a skirt well, but the department stores—indeed, all the establishments where ready-made costumes are sold—turn out remarkable skirts at remarkable prices. At one or two of the recent sales there have been linen and pique skirts sold, trimmed with embroidery and made after the latest French designs, that have cost as little as $6.50, and in some instances $3.50. These have been well cut and well fitted, and as for the entire suits that are ready made, of skirt and coat, when they are fitted to the figure they look as well as those that are turned out by the tailors.

Very smart and handsome are the all-linen costumes made up in skirt-and-jacket style, like the plain or fancy piques, in simple tailor fashion. Lighter French linens, with very fine reps, are much more elaborate, being made up over silk underskirts, or those of very fine lawn, and trimmed with bands of heavy insertion.

Close-fitting waists on tailor-gowns are now considered smarter than those with any sort of drooping blouse effect, even when very light-textured materials are used. These, however, have not the usual severe appearance, for there is a slight fulness left just in front, which does not, however, sag at

Season of Parasols.

all, and the waists are relieved by vest and guimpe effects, by jacket outlines in embroidery, lace, or gimp, and by shaped and notched revers, more or less decorated. Waists belted at the back, with open jacket fronts, are quite a feature of tailor-gowns of summer cloth, white or colored pique, duck, Holland, and English drill.

A pretty way to freshen a white chiffon organdie, grenadine, or other waist is to cut away the entire portion that covers the upper part of the bodice and shoulders, stitching the raw edges thus made to secure them, then adding a yoke either of all over embroidery, figured net, lace and insertion, puffed or tucked, India muslin, or shirrings of organdie alternating with rows of ribbon. Another effective method is to add from the shoulder seams long surplice scarf ends laid in soft folds. Bring these, in diminuendo plaits, to the waist, knot lightly or catch with lace pins, then let the sashes fall undraped well over the skirt-front; add new sleeves that match in fabric the fresh accessories arranged upon the waist.

LAKES OF KILLARNEY

THE JEWELS OF IRELAND WHICH AMERICANS WOULD BUY.

The Famous Song by Balfe—There are Three Lakes in County Kerry, Ireland—The Most Famous of Ireland's Famous Scenery.

With the present talk about Americans buying the lakes of Killarney the following will be of timely interest and, anyway, the famous words of the charming old song are well worth reading.

The beautiful lakes of Killarney are three in number, called the Upper Lower and Middle Lakes. They are in County Kerry, Ireland, and at present owned by an insurance company. They form the most famous of Ireland's lovely scenery. Thackeray when asked which of the lakes he thought the most beautiful, said: "The finest is the one in which you find yourself." The lakes are studded with pretty islets. It has been said: "Ireland is the jewel of the West, Killarney is the jewel of Ireland and inisfallen is the jewel of Killarney." Here is a song about them by Balfe, which is known the world over and delights the sons of Erin wherever it is sung:

By Killarney's lake and fells,
Em'rald isles and winding bays,
Mountain paths and woodland dells,
Mem'ry ever fondly strays.
Bounteous nature loves all lands,
Beauty wanders everywhere,
Footprints leave on many strands,
But her home is surely there!
Angels fold their wings and rest,
In that Eden of the west,
Beauty's home, Killarney
Ever fair, Killarney.

Innisfallen's ruined shrine
May suggest a passing sigh,
But man's faith can ne'er decline,
Such God's wonders floating by—
Castle Lough and Glena Bay,
Mountains Tore and Eagle Nest.
Still at Muckross you must pray,
Though the monks are now at rest.
Angels wonder not that man,
There would fain prolong life's span.
Beauty's home, Killarney
Ever fair, Killarney.

The Lakes of Killarney.

No place else can charm the eye
With such bright and varied tints;
Ev'ry rock that you pass by,
Verdure broiders or besprints.
Virgin there the green grass grows,
Ev'ry morn Spring's natal day,
Bright hued berries daff the snows,
Smiling Winter's frown away.
Angels often pausing there,
Doubt if Eden were so fair.
Beauty's home, Killarney,
Ever fair, Killarney.

Music there for echo dwells,
Makes each sound a harmony;
Many voic'd the chorus swells,
Till it faints in ecstasy.
With the charmful tints below
Seems the Heav'n above to vie,
All rich colors that we know,
Tinge the cloud-wreaths in that sky.
Wings of Angels so might shine,
Glancing back soft light divine.
Beauty's home, Killarney,
Ever fair, Killarney.

Reed's Apology.

Tom Reed said the day before he sailed on the New York: "One of the little things of life that hurt me more than anything else that ever happened was a pass I received from Mr. Blaine when he was Speaker of the House. Of course, I never expected to hold that exalted office, and when it fell to me I remembered. He was exactly twenty years ahead of me in the Speakership, and I supposed we were great friends, and there came back a simple pass for myself, properly signed and countersigned, but not a friendly line from the Speaker. It cut me to the quick, and I threw the paper away. It took me a good many years to get over what I regarded as a slight, but in the end everything was explained. The circumstances, however, taught me a lesson in courtesy—of which we all supposed Blaine was a past master. If ever a friend or acquaintance asked me for a pass or permit, which it was in my power to give, I never failed to write, or to have my secretary write, a note expressing the pleasure it gave me to comply with the modest request. It has made for me more friends than anything else I have ever done since I went to Congress, in 1877."

"Jack" Astor's Method.

Colonel John Jacob Astor says of his estate of Rhinecliffe, on the Hudson: "I run it on a business basis. Each department has a responsible head. There is a chief dairyman, chief stableman, chief gardener, farm superintendent and general superintendent. I have a report in writing from each division head on my desk every morning. I can tell each day just what has gone on and precisely what is under way. Every month my accounts are balanced, and I know how I stand, just as if I ran a grocery store instead of a country place."

The House of Commons produces "bulls" and mixed metaphors of rare quality.

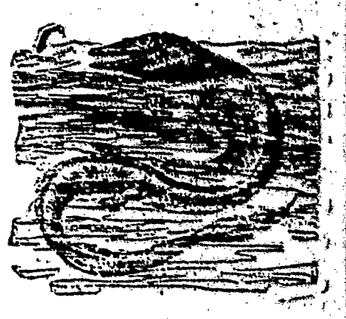
A WONDERFUL CREATURE.

The Great Marine Lizard in Imprint and Form.

In the American Museum of Natural History in New York there was recently placed on exhibition the imprint and form, in stone, of one of the most wonderful creatures, known or unknown. It is called "The Great Marine Lizard" for lack of any other more intelligible name, and is a relic of the chalk period. The period of chalk, by the way, dates from any guess a teacher might make in any school. The most recent guess at this lizard is that it lived one million years ago. It is dead.

Two years ago the signs of the monster were discovered in the chalk formation found in Kansas, which formation has a history no man can tell.

It was taken out in slabs of chalk, and an expert was sent to look at it. He reported it was no dream of a lover of a Kansas "original package," but a real marine lizard. Quarrymen hunting for the cream-colored chalk were



The Great Sea Lizard.

more careful after the report of the student in the history of the last million years or two, and finally took out the imprint or skeleton of the lizard in slabs. When placed together it was found they joined perfectly, and that the lizard was no less than thirty feet long.

These slabs were cut away from the skeleton far enough to permit it to stand out in bold relief. Then, being the most remarkable discovery of the Chalk Age—whatever that is—it was purchased by the American Museum of Natural History in New York, and is now on exhibition. This specimen is most interesting in the fact that it is more perfect than any found. Heretofore any imprints of such giant lizards have been lacking in that there was no sign of neck, breast or abdomen. But in the case of this discovery the cartilage or flesh of those missing portions is plainly marked. From the outlines in the chalk of the neck and breast scientists have been able to make what might be called an accurate picture of this relic of the time when the United States was a thousand fathoms beneath the Great American Mediterranean Sea.

The Making of a Singer.

was born at Farmington, Me. My name was not Nordica, but Norton. Well, my parents believed a musical career to be about as reprehensible as a stage career, and for that they had no tolerance whatever. They did make an exception in favor of church music, else I should never have received the slightest encouragement. They thought music in churches was permissible, perhaps laudable. So when I displayed some natural qualities of voice, I was allowed to use it in behalf of religion, and I did. I devoured church music then, indeed, ignored all but that. The money I earned was no object. It seemed sufficient to my parents when I had risen to where I could earn a thousand a year in Boston, but I decided differently. I might have rested upon my oars there, for the distance from singing once a week in a church to singing in grand opera is long. Right there came in the question that confronts every musical aspirant at one time or another: Will he be satisfied with a part or does he want all? Will he, when he has gained a competence, regard it as nothing and work as though he had nothing at all? To go higher means to pay all that you can earn into the pockets of able teachers, and contribute all your strength for study in the bargain. They say Paderewski practiced eighteen hours a day at a silent piano until his muscles would stand no more. I believe it. Professor Tyndall says that he studied eighteen hours a day at Heidelberg for years. I believe that. I have heard dozens of stories of how hard people have worked, year in and year out, and I never doubt them."—Lillian Nordica in Ainslee's Magazine.

New Cure for Drunkards.

Curtain lectures are, as benedicts know to their cost, one of those amenities of life that might with advantage be dispensed with, says the Berlin correspondent of the London Daily Telegraph. And perhaps wives who live on the Rhine will henceforth avoid administering the cold water cure when their husbands return home in a state of intoxication.

The police court at Mayence has sentenced an old man of sixty-one to a year's imprisonment for the mode in which he resented his wife's ideas of applying a remedy against drunkenness. He returned home one night visibly in his cups, whereupon his wife gave him a very sharply worded curtain lecture. Not being one of those who are satisfied with inflicting stings by linguistic combinations alone, she added force to her scolding by pouring a bucket of ice cold water on his head. The man thereupon took up a loaded pistol and fired it point blank into his wife's face, inflicting wounds in both eyes—one of which she has completely lost, the other being severely injured.