OUR FASHION LETTER.

Cheap and Effective Dancing Frocks For Young Girls.

RING SPOTTED NET IS IN FAVOR

Some Hints as to the Changing Modes of the Day—Jewelry Which May Be Worn With Evening Dress White Still the Popular Color.

The favorite material for young girls dancing frocks is ring spotted net or point d'esprit, which seems to be getting cheaper and cheaper and is quite admirable on account of its fresh appearance combined with its durability. To be effective it must be made very full, and all white or all black is the best, although there are some very chic evening toilets of white or ecru colored net with rings of black chenille. The skirts may be gored around the hips and fall in full folds around the

FRENCH GOWN

feet or tucked at the waist with a series of flounces from the knees downward. In either case the bodice corresponds.

Artificial flowers are worn in the evening, but they must be of the very best quality to look well. Roses and violets are perhaps the most popular. The most economical materials for dinner dresses are silks, satins and panne, for any one of these will outwear several others composed of light fabrics. Black is always smart, particularly when relieved by a good bertha and trimmings of lace. Girls look charming in black, provided they are not too thin, for black accentuates thinness. Pure white is also trying and requires a fresh, rosy complexion.

A gown of chiffon shirred in panels is the subject of the sketch. This effect is both chic and novel.

The Possibilities of Lace.

The up to date tailor is a man of great artistic perception, otherwise he could not cope with the changing modes of the day.

The possibilities of lace, instead of dwindling, increase and get more fascinating every day. Lace berthas are particularly useful in renovating an old frock. These berthas are of various shapes, and every woman can find one to suit her style.

The all lace blouse is more charming and effective than ever. It is worn

WOOL BLOUSE.

usually over an oriental satin blouse. It is sometimes made of fine ecru net threaded with black velvet or colored ribbons, while in direct contrast coarse linen crochet or guipure is softened with a lining of chiffon or mousseline and used with an equally good effect.

[illegible] makes charming winter [illegible]. Some chic examples are in [illegible] of ecru cluny lace in the shape of collars and vests. Very pretty, too, are those of plain oriental satin or tucked chiffon. Blouses worn with a short hanging coat of lace or embroidery are smart.

A useful and up to date flannel blouse is shown in the [illegible]. The tie of folded silk is a recent creation.

The Craze For Ornamentation

The craze for ornamentation of every description is getting decidedly more marked. A fancy for beautiful designs in precious stones is a very praiseworthy one, but if you would be well dressed avoid tawdry rubbish in every description.

Necklaces of [illegible] are [illegible] with low gowns, and dog collars and pearls are considered very chic.

Solid ropes of pearls [illegible] are used as girdles for [illegible] gowns by the favored few who can spend all they desire on dress.

The squirrel set, stole hat and muff, though rather common, is modern

[illegible] SQUIRREL COAT

[illegible] and very becoming to a fresh young skin, though furs should never be worn by a pale or fagged out woman.

Many hats still have most of their trimming on the underside of the brim, but milliners promise a complete change and predict the fall of the single drooping feather. In millinery decorations as well as in every other department of dress oddity is the keynote.

The illustration shows a fancy effect in squirrel fur. These coats are at present all the rage.

Cheap Winter Hats Now

The prices of good millinery are greatly reduced and it is just the time to invest in an extra winter hat.

Fur toques are much more elaborate than of yore, the only simple shape being known as the "shah," in ermine, astrakhan, moleskin and mink, with its big brush in black and white. This is not a shape that suits every one.

White still continues to be very popular, but for out of door wear it is very

AFTERNOON TOILET.

trying, for the sunlight on white cloth is not apt to prove flattering to any but dazzling complexions.

At smart "at homes" and receptions, however, there is nothing so dainty as a white gown, provided it is toned down with mink or sable and is in keeping with its surroundings. A smart gown recently seen at such a function was composed entirely of cream colored crochet lace over crepe de chine in a deep shade of ivory. The bodice seemed to be an inner blouse of accordion crepe de chine with a loose hanging bolero of the lace ornament with a wide waistband of cream panne. The only color introduced was a large bunch of parma violets.

The picture shows a smart costume which can be made up in any shade of cloth. The hat is especially good and the plaited skirt worthy of notice.

JUDIC CHOLLET.

Titanium.

Titanium is the hardest metal. It looks like copper, but will scratch rock crystal.

Her Ideal

By JOHN GRIMES

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Cynthia Parker had had ideals ever since she was old enough to read of Jack the Giant Killer. As she grew up she [illegible] painted a Bayard in her own imagination. He was a tall, dark knight who rode a coal black horse and had a [illegible].

Cynthia had a very practical mother and a hard headed father, and when she was old enough to marry and began to turn down the young farmers who offered their love the old folks had much to say. They realized that hay was $16 a ton, butter 18 cents per pound and eggs in demand at 16 cents per dozen, and they couldn't make out why, in the face of these facts, Cynthia should have ideals. If she hadn't been very much in earnest, her Bayard would have gone galloping away in short order, but at twenty-five she was still faithful to her ideal.

"Yes, Cynthia's an idiot," said her father grimly. "If she'd only been a boy, I'd have licked the nonsense out of her before she was fifteen. There's Jim Hudson jest dyin' for love of her, and his father ready to buy him a farm when he marries, but even when he's talkin' love to her she'll look right past his ears to see if that ideal of hers hain't prancin' along the road. As I haven't got no nonsense about me, she must take after you."

"You needn't try to lay it off on to me, Moses Parker. I've done my duty, even to boxin' Cynthia's ears till she was over eighteen years old. She must have got her foolishness from your grandmother."

It is only fair to Cynthia to say that she really liked young Hudson, but her ideal came first and Jim Hudson next. She had begun to get a little discouraged and was almost ready to decide that if Bayard didn't amble into view within a specified time she'd give up looking for him and settle down to butter making and chicken feeding.

She was in this state of mind when her father came up from the woods one day with a couple of ripe mandrakes

OLD UNCLE ELI COGGSWELL CAME LIMPING THROUGH THE GATE.

in his hand. A ripe, yellow mandrake is luscious fruit, and the sight of it makes one's mouth water. There wasn't anything to detain Cynthia in the house that afternoon, and she took a basket and sallied forth for a stroll. The mandrakes were waiting to be pulled and eaten, and the girl had taken a seat on a log and got away with her sixth when a man suddenly rose up out of a brush heap near by. Cynthia screamed out in surprise, but a smile on the stranger's face reassured her. He was tall and dark like her ideal. He wasn't clad in velvet or purple or armor, and his war steed was not champing his bit near by, but the girl felt her heart bounding. He might be her Bayard in disguise.

It didn't take him ten minutes to satisfy her of this fact. He was a wronged and persecuted man, who had been obliged to fly from his enemies for the time being. Later on he would return to face and crush his calumniators. He was unkempt and unshorn, but those things didn't count against him. A chevalier flying for his life must keep hustling right along and look for a clean shirt only when the vengeful pursuers have abandoned the chase.

It never occurred to Cynthia to suspect the stranger of deceit. His story was rambling and disconnected, but he had her sympathies from the start, and when his tale was finished he had the offer of her help.

It was accepted with a knightly bow. He was in want of "grub," as he called it, to break his fast. This was a slip of the tongue. What he meant was viands. She returned to the house and fetched him viands, and she likewise handed over her little store of savings. He seemed disappointed at the sum total, and she felt ashamed of her poor offering. While he banqueted he made inquiries, and after his inquiries he lied some more. Cynthia's mother would have taken him for a sheep thief at the start and had him all tangled up five minutes later, but the girl of ideals saw only a knight in distress before her.

The stranger was to rest in the wild wood for a couple of days and then he forth to fall upon his enemies by the flank. When he had avenged his wrongs, he was to return and lay his heart at her feet.

This was exactly as Cynthia had dreamed, and, though he was smoking plug tobacco as she retired from the scene, she even twisted that fact in his favor.

Next morning, after a night of dreams in which lords and dukes were to be counted by the dozen, the girl slipped out of the house with viands for her ideal's breakfast, but she hunted the greenwood in vain. Even the scent of the cut plug had departed from the sylvan glade.

Cynthia returned to the house to meet a sharp reproof from her mother for her [illegible] so early in the morning, and she was wondering whether her ideal had fallen into the hands of his enemies when a constable arrived. He was on the trail of a jail breaker. Then a second constable showed up. He was on the trail of a horse thief. Then young Jim Hudson put in an appearance. He came with the news that a pair of horses had been taken from his father's barn the night before.

The jail breaker and the horse thief answered the exact description of her knight, and she had mentioned Farmer Hudson's horses as the best in the neighborhood. As the girl stood pale faced and trembling old Uncle Eli Coggswell came limping through the gate, exclaiming in his high treble voice:

"Hoss thieves, eh? Waal now, but what was Cynthia Parker a doin' in the woods yesterday? I was huntin' mandrakes, and I saw her with a feller who sartinly looked mean 'nuff to steal. Speak right up, gal!"

The "gal" had to own up, and tears and reproaches and exclamations and she got no pity except from Jim Hudson. He had more or less of her ideals, and there was a lot of romance in his own nature. When the mother vigorously declared that she had got to box Cynthia's ears Jim stepped in to avert the catastrophe and offer his condolence at the same time.

Cynthia's knight was stopped twenty miles away by a sleepless sheriff and next day was consigned to a cell in the county jail he done ... he had dug out of three days before. There wasn't much said by Farmer Parker or his wife until after the trial, but then the father sat down before Cynthia and asked:

"Well, young lady, now it's all over what you goin' to do? Goin' to have any more of them ideals?"

"One," she quietly replied.

"What in tarnation is it?"

"Jim Hudson!" she said as she left the room with a very red face.

How He Won Her.

He studied palmistry and was looking for a chance to marry money. They sat in a corner behind a big bank of potted plants. One of her hands was in his. The little marks that time is so fond of distributing had begun to be visible around the corners of her eyes. She was still a pretty woman, however, and, notwithstanding the fact that she had buried one husband and divorced another, was inclined to believe that there might be a good, lively romance in her still. He bent low over the slim, soft hand. He noticed the splendid rings upon her fingers. He had heard of the fortune that was at her disposal. "I hate to tell you anything," he said, "that will be likely to make you feel uncomfortable, but shall I tell you what I really see?" "Yes," she said, drawing a quick breath. "Tell me everything." "It looks to me," he went on, "as if a great sorrow were in store for you. It will come along about the time you are twenty-seven years old." Two weeks later the gossips were asking one another how in the world she had become engaged upon such a short acquaintance. "Why, he can't be over thirty," they declared, "and she's at least forty!"—Chicago Record.

To Keep Eggs Fresh.

According to the London Lancet, the change in an egg from a fresh to a stale condition is partly due to a loss of moisture and partly to a "disturbance of equilibrium caused by external agencies." This can be avoided and the eggs kept fresh, that scientific journal alleges, by simply coating the shell with grease as soon as it is laid and before it has time to cool. Eggs treated in this way, the Lancet declares, are so well preserved months after they are laid that they cannot be distinguished from ones newly presented by the hen. It is also declared that eggs can be kept fresh for six months by dipping them as soon as they are taken from the nest in a strong solution of silicate of soda, which stops up the pores of the shell and hermetically seals the egg. If an egg once gets cold, it is of no use to treat it after these recipes, for it will then be past preserving.

A Business Asset.

Mr. Lane was a small man and far from strong. He admired strength in others above almost anything else, but he showed his admiration as he showed all his feelings—in a cautious way.

He was an expressman. Having called one day at a house for a heavy box of books, he was amazed to see the young athlete of the family, who was then enjoying a vacation from college, take up the box, after a pitying glance at him, and bear it out to the cart as if it had been a bag of feathers.

"I wish I had his strength," said the little expressman, with enthusiasm, to the young fellow's mother. "I would give 50 cents, ma'am, for such strength as your son's, and 'twould be well worth that to me in my business."

THE FAKED RECORDS.

SOME OF THEM THAT ARE HEARD IN PHONOGRAPHS.

A Gullable Public Now Seems to Believe Everything Said in the Squeaky Voice—How Artificial Genius Is Kept on Tap for Delighted Listeners.

The accomplished young woman visiting the city with her father clung to the arm of the New Jersey banker in mournful terror as they hurried past a gloomy building.

"How I pity the poor maniacs," she sighed, "their haunting screams pierce my soul." But it was not an asylum—only a phonograph factory. They were making "records" inside, those wax cylinders sold by the crate to country Barnums for their nickel in the slot machines. You press a button and the invisible maniac does the rest. Every variety of noise is furnished on these wax cylinders. A crying child, or political orator, the prima donna suffering from the effects of boarding house breakfasts, a maniac in the last agonies of recovery—anything you want, from a wedding march on a German band of three trombones and a flute to Dixie is embraced in the list of phonograph specialties.

Next to the madhouse uproar of a Coney Island phonograph or graphophone, or whatever you call it, there is nothing more appalling if not curious than the noise that pours into the machine hot from the performer's mouth as he shouts song or speech at the phonograph receiver. The recording factory may be called a noise cannery. It is a great scene when on a sunny day the artists assemble in the "record" making room. An alleged prima donna in blond hair whose complexion may or may not have been spiked on with trunk nails, mounts the rostrum and prepares for business. A square headed young athlete, a sort of racehorse tout, begins the work of the day by shooting introductory speeches into the phonograph funnels. "La-

You Think You Hear Melba

dies and gentlemen—Mlle La Scala, whom I have the honor to introduce to your critical attention, will now give a representation of Mme Patti before ten thousand people at the Crystal Palace in London. Ladies and gentlemen, I take pleasure in calling your attention to the wonderful distinctness of her vocalization and the indescribable sweetness of her voice as reproduced on the Gravesend phonograph, of which we hold the exclusive patent. Mr Edison admits its unapproachable excellence."

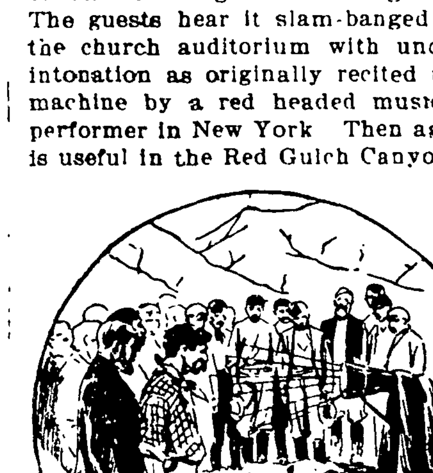
Then the singer begins. You can hear the firemen knocking in the doors, big iron safes crashing down stairs, water pipes bursting, naptha tanks exploding, followed by the dying agonies of the factory girls who are carried out in rubber blankets. It is undoubtedly famous music of its kind. A month later when the country Barnum tries a dozen or two of these cylinders on his South Beach audiences the effect is great. Next comes the man with a banjo. He is as white as a barrel of chalk, but to give naturalness to the music he is blackened up and wears a collar above his ears. He sings plantation melodies, throws the notes against the diaphragm of the phonograph, but no damage was done.

Later, when the Oil City museum man turns these minstrel cylinders loose, the nickel-in-the-slot victims hear the plantation negro sing his songs, hear the notes bang the machine just as they did three months before in the New York phonograph asylum. Now and then there is an occasional "singer," now and then a Patrick Henry from Flatbush or Long Island City, who is a fairly good orator. One could not expect the eloquence of Cicero or John Bright from a wax cylinder, punctured with a four-dollar-a-week voice. It is a singular fact in science that a performer who is expert on the telephone can seldom make himself understood on a phonograph. It is said that a vibratory tone, the voice of one of those pretty girls whose silvery articulation is one's delight on a telephone, is "no good" in phonograph work. The utterance is not reproduced. For phonographs the performer must have a sledge hammer delivery that bangs itself into the wax strong enough to reproduce with force on the talking cylinder. The quality of the voice is the thing most necessary. The pleasing, clean, penetrating voice of a child may come out more distinctly on the phonograph than the baggage smashing tones of the professional phonograph artist. The ordinary phonograph productions are monstrosities. They turn music into a nightmare of noise. But what about the reproductions from the speeches of great men? They, too, are the work if imitators. In Atlantic City is a hall one hundred feet long with talking machines as thick as monuments in a churchyard. You drop a nickel in the slot and hear Gladstone's voice. Having never seen the great man you take the attendant's word for its authenticity. But the man "fibs."

A reformed expert confessed the other day the alleged songs by Lillian Russell, Melba and other artists are "fakes." They are from mimics. Irving does not talk from the waxened cylinders. It is some red haired, beefy looking chap from a London music hall who fills the record with imitations of Gladstone, Lord Randolph Churchill and other men of renown. Some old time music hall favorite now earns a pittance by counterfeiting Della Fox, Pauline Hall and other singers. Suppose Gladstone did talk into a phonograph. The "record" would wear out in an hour or two with a seaside crowd dropping nickels into the slot to hear his English accent and parliamentary eloquence. But notwithstanding the disgustingly low depths into which phonograph science has been dragged by the talking machine fakirs there are fortunes in the business. Since Edison discovered the original phonograph idea, and sent his first machine to London, in 1877, to astonish the British public, half a dozen companies with side inventions of more or less value have been exploiting machines of this character based on the Edisonian idea. Out at Edison's Orange factory records are being made by the carload under the direction of Edison's own men. In New York companies, using his patents in combination with other patents which they have secured have established immense factories in the country and are kept busy supplying the trade with machines and cylinders. The wax records are made in New York. To handle the business great offices have been opened in downtown sky scrapers, with a president, secretary, treasurer and imposing Board of Directors. Some day an unknown genius who never took out a patent will stumble on some little principle that will change these machines from their present crude mechanical features to pleasing instruments of speech and song.

It is the little things that have revolutionized the world. Edison was practising with his first rude telephone machine one day when the vibrating disc in the mouthpiece sent the little steel point into his finger. The hint was sufficient for Edison. He ran a strip of telegraph ticker paper under the steel point and as it danced up and down in response to the voice in the 'phone he secured "impressions." After a few experiments by reversing the machine and running the tape backward his words were reproduced. He distinctly heard his own "Hello!" "Hello!" A new world dawned on him at that instant. When he put his ear to the 'phone and ran the little strip of paper backward under the same point that a moment before had made indentations he heard his voice faint and far away. That whisper was enough to stagger even a genius. Days and nights, weeks and months of incessant experiment and exhausting toil followed. From that little pin point pricking Edison's finger has come the phonograph. Its possibilities are infinite. The next great step will be to remove its pandemonium features and bring it within the pale of civilization. Because the fakirs and hucksters of science are making money out of the invention on a music hall basis they do not care to perfect it—to make it practical for recording conversation, sermons, speeches and dictations to any length. It is now an uncanny toy, a machine yet in chains and degredation amusing the ignorant—a sort of mechanical circus clown to attract the mob. However it is some consolation to know that fancy is putting its airy touches on the invention and developing its possibilities, even as a useful toy. It is said that with a miniature phonograph in your watch you can press a spring and hear a little fairy voice giving you the time of day or night.

In backwoods districts it is the fashion to yank out the phonograph and make it do duty in the clergyman's absence. It will give a wedding service. The guests hear it slam-banged into the church auditorium with unctuous intonation as originally recited to the machine by a red headed music hall performer in New York. Then again it is useful in the Red Gulch Canyon dis-



In Place of the Minister at the Grave.

trict when a miner is to be buried and the only clergyman within fifty miles is above timber line hunting for bear. The Red Gulch undertaker starts the machinery and you have a dirge, then the solemn funeral march from Beethoven (with enough omitted to make up for the shortness of the cylinder); then the funeral services hoarsely recited by the machine, followed by a prayer and the closing service for the dead. Another feature is political. The campaign horn throws out a voice big enough to annoy a mule. It is estimated that a couple of big horns in each election district ought to secure the election of all the reformed gamblers in the county.

As a cure for insomnia the phonograph is said to be a specific. The wax indentations on the cylinder weary the wax in your ear, and before you know it you are sound asleep dreaming of the mines of Golconda, where diamonds as large as turnips make agriculture impossible.