

OUR FASHION LETTER.

Gray Ball Gowns Are a Novelty of the Season.

BRUSSELS NET IN PALE SHADES.

All kinds of Mirror Velvets Are Worn, Though Chiffon Velvets Still Holds Its Own—Camellias Are Smart For Millinery Uses.

The wreath of small flowers has long been a favorite evening headress, but it is now a trifle out of style. At any rate it is only becoming to a well shaped head and hair dressed low.

Gray ball gowns are a novelty of the season, but this demands bright hair and a brilliant complexion. An evening gown of pale gray oriental satin seen recently had a wide bertha of silver ribbon and a white girdle of creamy duchess lace. The skirt was laid in flat plaits at the waist and flared out into a pretty fullness.

Chinchilla is the fur to go with gray materials, and when this is combined with silver embroidery and cream lace the effect is very rich.

Pale coffee shades growing into cream are very smart trimmed with narrow



GRAY CLOTH GOWN.

touches of bronze velvet or mink. They are trimmed in addition with bands and applications of heavy lace dyed sea to match.

Bright blues if becoming to their wearers make stunning dinner and theater frocks, but they must be trimmed in the same tone with dyed lace, sequins or chenille fringes.

The picture shows a gown of gray cloth trimmed with chiffon of the same shade and bands of oriental embroidery in red and green. The hat is of gray felt trimmed with a greenish owl.

FABRICS AND HUES.

Brussels net is dyed in all the fashionable pale shades, and when this is made up over chiffon and silk it forms a beautiful and dainty costume. A gown of this description seen recently was in pale turquoise blue. The bodice, made décolleté, had a draped bertha of dyed lace and chiffon, with tiny bows of velvet. The skirt and bodice were laid in graduated horizontal tucks, growing wider as they reached the bottom, and the belt was of swathed velvet, with a beautiful jeweled buckle having stones of a much darker shade of blue.

Jet robes have returned to favor, and they are made up with much chiffon and a spray of beautifully shaded velvet roses.

Black and white chiffon effects are particularly smart in evening gowns.



A Dainty Waist.

and Parisians are especially fond of black chiffon gowns trimmed with medallions of lace embroidered in black and white sequins.

All kinds of mirror velvets are worn, both plain and spotted, but chiffon velvets in black, gun metal and a new shade of brown is the leading fabric for reception gowns.

Cloth gowns are trimmed with fanciful applications of velvet, diamonds, squares or round spots, and these spots are worked into a shaded design, interwoven sometimes with embroidery in leaf design.

Chenille is frequently seen not only

in fringe, but in embroidery designs. Cut jet ornaments and even those of amber and pearl are being used on lace gowns.

The picture shows a cream crepe de chine waist made up of wide and narrow tucks and cordings.

MILLINERY NOTES.

Camellias are quite the smartest millinery flower. There is something about its stiff waxen petals and important exterior which adapts itself particularly well to millinery purposes, and the foliage, too, is particularly effective against fur or lace. To get the very fluffy effect in hats the skins of cats and rabbits are being dyed all the hues



WHITE BEAVER HAT.

of the rainbow, and flowers in velvet are placed on them of a contrasting or harmonizing shade.

As for the vogue of beaver, it still is on the increase, and no smooth felt can hope to be fashionable by its side.

The fluffy white beaver is the most fashionable material for hats, and this is often sewed with little ermine tails and trimmed with white ostrich tips. Black silk beavers are also modish, and they are trimmed with gold or silver braid and white or shaded pink roses.

Toques of moleskin and ermine are trimmed with white or shaded ostrich plumes.

Hats both for grown people and children are extra large. The prettiest hat for a child is a French sailor shape in beaver to match the little coat and trimmed with two big rosettes of ribbon of a pale contrasting shade.

The illustration shows a French sailor or of white beaver bound with a deep shade of heliotrope velvet and trimmed with a twisted bow of the same and clusters of violets.

WAISTS AND FANCY EFFECTS.

The most fashionable and really the most practical waist, although it is rather expensive at first, is of crepe net trimmed with shirred insertions of yellow lace and embroidered figures. This is made up over a slip of white china silk, and the whole thing will clean or wash beautifully.

Crepe de chine waists in white and pale colorings are largely taking the



BRIDE'S DRESS.

place of the softer silks. They are trimmed with embroidery, white or dyed lace, and many of them are made very dressy by the addition of chiffon.

Whole waists of chiffon trimmed with lace are very dressy, but, alas, very perishable. The all over lace waist trimmed with taffeta bands seems to be the most practical to wear under a coat, and it can be softened around the neck by the addition of a tulle bow.

Owing to the low dressing of the hair tulle bows are now worn in front under the chin instead of at the back of the neck.

The wide flat stole is with us to stay, and every tailor made is improved by the addition of this charming piece of neckwear. When not of fur it is of heavy dyed lace and cloth, of chiffon and lace or of white or pale gray feathers. In any case it must harmonize with the gown.

The picture shows a bride's dress of crepe de chine and fine lace. There is a tucked yoke, a big bertha and wide flounced sleeves, which give a picturesque air to the whole. The shirred skirt has its fullness increased around the feet by a double chiffon frill.

JUDIC CHOLLET.

WASTED INDUSTRY.

A House That Failed Because of a Lack of Ingenuity.

A number of white footed mice which I had in captivity, says a writer in Country Life in America, escaped from their cage to a cupboard in the kitchen, and thence through a hole in the plaster and between the laths to the walls of the house. Every night they came out for food. One evening I saw a mouse come out of the cupboard, and attempted to carry it up the wall twelve inches to the hole in the plaster. But, alas, the crack between the laths was too narrow, and after fumbling with his burden for a minute or two he dropped it to the floor. Next he tried to push it in ahead of him, and falling in that, he went in himself, turned round and attempted to pull it in after him. Occasionally it would slip out of his paws and roll upon the kitchen floor, and then out he would come and repeat the whole performance. He tried it again and again, but with no better success. He kept at it until far into the night, and when I awoke at 7 o'clock the next morning the first thing that I heard was that mouse or another one fumbling and dropping the hickory nut.

Since then I have kept them well supplied with nuts, and although they still spend hours in carrying them to the crack in the laths and letting them fall, they are always forced in the end to eat them in the cupboard. There is plainly a lack of ingenuity, because ten minutes' gnawing would have solved the problem. Had the aperture in either case been too narrow to admit themselves they would have quickly widened it with their teeth, but to apply the same principle to get the nut through seemed to be a piece of reasoning entirely beyond them.

HISTORY OF THE COACH.

The First of These Vehicles Was Built in 1457.

As popular as coaching is in some parts of the country, but little reliable information has ever appeared in the public press respecting its history and development. At the town of Kotze, in Hungary, in 1457, the first coach was constructed. This was soon afterward presented to Charles VII. at Paris. The first authentic record of a stagecoach in England shows that six of such vehicles were in use there in 1662. So popular did they become in that country that a few years later they were in general use on all the principal roads of the kingdom.

Steam railways have to a large extent done away with the use of the coach as a link in the commercial chain, but as a means of furnishing the highest type of recreation the coach and four is as popular today in the British empire and in France as it was when this was practically the only means of locomotion in those countries.

Stagecoaching in America was almost coextensive with the settlement of the colonies, and in the early history of the country there were few if any places of any importance that did not welcome the sound of the coachman's horn as one of the fascinating incidents of pioneer life. As civilization pushed itself westward the stagecoach was ever in the lead of those agencies which blazed its pathway. These vehicles, as well as their equipments, were comparatively crude in their construction and unpretentious in their appointments, but they admirably served the purpose for which they were intended and laid the foundation for the popularity of coaching as a pleasurable pastime developed in later years.

Coaching parties had been popular in England and France for several generations before they were introduced in this country, yet the sport is so wholesome and enjoyable that it cannot be doubted that in time it will become as popular here as it is across the Atlantic.—Illustrated Sporting News.

Zola and Dreyfus' Book.

The editor of a Paris paper, recalling what Zola had done for Dreyfus, called upon the novelist to have him review the unfortunate captain's book, the history of his troubles. The visitor found him at the big table in his library, doing his day's work. "Review Captain Dreyfus' book!" he repeated when the proposition was made to him. He got up and ambled round the table—a short man, with a stomach and no presence—grunting at intervals. Finally he said: "Why should I review his book? He never even read mine."

The Bigger the Better.

A Scottish parish minister was one day talking to one of his parishioners, who ventured the opinion that ministers ought to be better paid.

"I am glad to hear you say that," said the minister. "I am pleased that you think so much of the clergy. And so you think we should have bigger stipends?"

"Aye," said the old man. "Ye see, we'd get a better class o' men."

The Retort Unexpected.

"Yes," she said with sarcastic bitterness, "I believe it is true that a man is known before marriage by the company he keeps."

"No doubt," he smilingly replied. "I remember that I kept company with you for fully four years."—Minneapolis Times.

The Criminal Escaped.

Jack—You've heard about the escaping criminal who stepped on a slot machine and got a wealth? Mack—Yes; that's old. Jack—Well, even the bloodhounds couldn't get his cent.—Yale Record.

Keep on trimming your lamps, tilling your soil, tugging and pegging away. You can never tell when the messenger of success will come.

A DISRAELI EPISODE.

How the Statesman Took His Brandy Neat in the Commons.

I was stationed in London nearly two years during the seventies, when Disraeli was prime minister, and often heard him speak, frequently saw him upon Whitehall, walking home with Lord Russell, by his side, once "interviewed" him and witnessed the solemnities of his elevation to an earldom. But the most characteristic and thoroughly Disraelian incident I recall has never been told.

About 1 o'clock in the morning, shortly after the return of the earl from Berlin bearing "peace with honor," I left the press gallery of the house to go to the cable office. Passing a stand in the lobby where a stoop shouldered woman was wont to sell spirits and "soft" drinks, I dropped into line with half a dozen men and waited my turn to be served. I paid no attention to the man directly in front of me except to notice that he was hatless and to comment mentally upon the dangers of such conduct in that cold and drafty place.

"Sixpenny 'orth o' brandy, neat," said the broad shouldered little man directly ahead. The dame courtied, an unusual attention to a customer, served the spirits, and the purchaser drained the glass at a gulp. "Put it on the book," said the customer as he replaced the glass upon the counter. Then he turned, facing me, and made his way through the crowd toward the house of lords. The man was unnoticed in the badly lighted corridor, although his name was ringing throughout the civilized world, the Earl of Beaconsfield!

The interesting feature of this episode was not that his lordship took a drink of brandy during a long night's session, but that he had an account with the woman tapkeeper and from sheer force of habit had walked over to the commons end of Westminster palace to get his "brandy neat" at the familiar place—Julius Chambers in Harper's Weekly.

WORKED BOTH WAYS.

Clever Manager in Which a Paris Concierge Was Outwitted.

Honore Palmer once outwitted a concierge in Paris very neatly.

A lad of sixteen or thereabout at the time, Mr. Palmer was spending the winter in Paris with his mother. One cold night in February he stayed out unusually late, and desiring to get in without awaking any one he rang up the concierge softly. The concierge, with equal softness, came downstairs. He whispered through the keyhole, "Is that you, Mr. Palmer?" and then he said positively:

"I can't let you in, sir."

"Why not?" asked the young man. "Because the rules are very strict," said the concierge. "No one ever is let in after midnight."

The boy desired ardently to enter. He thought a moment and then he slipped a gold louis under the door.

"I have just slipped a gold louis under the door for you, concierge," he whispered. "Now, let me in; that's a good fellow."

The concierge instantly drew back the bolt. "Come in softly. Make no noise, monsieur," he said shamelessly.

But young Palmer was already regretting the gold louis, his last one. A thought struck him, and he had no sooner entered than he said:

"Oh, by the way, I left a book on the stone balustrade outside. Do you mind getting it for me?"

With great politeness the concierge, in his bare feet, tiptoed out upon the cold stones. While he fumbled the boy pushed to the door and locked it.

"Let me in, monsieur," whispered the concierge, who had nothing on but a nightdress of white linen.

"I can't let you in. We let no one in after midnight, unless—"

But young Palmer had to go no farther. The concierge, freezing in the cold, perceived he had been outwitted, and, in his turn, slipped the gold louis under the door. Pocketing it, the boy admitted the man and then went quietly to bed.

The Art of Growing Young.

To retain the spirit of youth while age weakens the body is a splendid thing. There are those of whom we say "He never grows old." Their hair may be whitened, their faces wrinkled and their shoulders bent, but in heart they are young. "If their strength is labor and sorrow," their lively interest in the things that concern those of younger generations gives no indication of it. Their tenderest and inmost thoughts may be of the past, but they live in the present.—Springfield Union.

Self Made.

A Philadelphian was at an evening gathering recently, where he met a widow to whom he wished to be especially complimentary. "The fact is," said he during the after dinner conversation, "you women make fools of the men."

"Sometimes, perhaps," said the widow carelessly. "Sometimes we don't have to."—Philadelphia Ledger.

The Mean Thing.

"Phyllis is the meanest kind of a gossip."

"What makes you think so?" "Because she never tells you anything herself, but gets you to tell her all you know."—London King.

Not a Compliment.

"He hasn't a very high opinion of your intelligence."

"How do you know?"

"I heard him refer to you once as an 'Meal Juror.'"—Exchange.

If you be poor do not seem poor if you would avoid insult as well as suffering.—Goldsmith.

An Animal Story For Little Folks

The Rooster's Advice

Tommy was in trouble. Tommy was also in bed, for his trouble was a broken wing, brought on by hitting the ground as he fell out of the apple tree. He was lying on his white pillow and dreaming of the good times the boys were having outside when the door opened, and to his great amusement he walked Jack, the old rooster. He was carrying a big book under his wing, and he came straight for the bed. Tommy felt like crying out with mingled fear and surprise as he saw Jack hop up on the table beside him, but his voice seemed to be stuck somewhere down in his stomach. Jack said nothing, but pulled a big pair of spectacles from beneath his other wing and opened a large book of notes. Tommy's eyes bulged.

"What are you going to do?" he asked timidly.

"Going to read you a few helpful rules for climbing trees. Some from my own valuable experience," said Jack, winking one eye and turning the pages with his claws. "If you will climb trees, you should know how to do it."

"This certainly is queer," thought Tommy, "but I'll listen."

"Rule 1.—Squat firmly, on both claws."

"That's so," Jack assented. "Well, try again."

"Rule 2.—Then spread your wings out wide."

"But I have no wings," interrupted Tom.

"That's so," Jack assented. "Well, try again."

"Rule 3.—Then hold your tail out straight."

Here Tommy burst out laughing. "I never had any tail," he giggled.

Jack scratched his comb and thought for a moment. "I have it!" he cried.

"Rule 4.—Men and boys that have no claws, wings or tail should never climb trees."

"That meets your case, Tommy. Take my advice and don't," saying which he jumped to the floor and vanished.

Tommy rubbed his eyes.—St. Louis Post-Dispatch.

An Animal Story For Little Folks

The Bullfrog and the Crow

The bullfrog loved the Widow Crow. But wasn't fond of black.

And said: "I'll never marry you, For taste in dress you lack."

"If you were like the robin red Or like the jay bird blue, I'd say, 'My dear, come fly with me And be my sweetheart true.'"

"My dream is out!" he cried aloud. "I'll fly just like a blue jay!"

He found two palm trees and he climbed them to his feet straight.

A feather duster, too, he had. Upon his tail for stairway. Then climbed his high upon a roof. Not for an instant tarry.

He looked down and cried aloud. "Look out!" His heart then thumped. He jumped, sailed but an instant, then Upon the ground fell bumping.

"Alas, alas, my leg has snapped! My jaw, I think is broken. Run for a doctor, bring him quick! These were the cat words spoken."

The doctor came and Med him well. He says, "I'm feeling splendid. And mean to be a cat some day."

"Henry Lippincott is Pittsburg's patch."

Quite a Different Matter. "I think I may say I am in with some pride, that I have some fool of myself in my life."

"Are you sure of that?" asked companion incredulously. "Don't you think again?"

"Oh, well," was the reply, "moment of thought, but I can call several instances in which I have made a fool of myself."

"I thought his delivery rather slow though."

"That's natural. He began life as a messenger boy."—Denver News.

An Animal Story For Little Folks

A Catastrophe

A baby cat looked in the sky. And saw the birds there flying. Then whined this very sad refrain: "To fly I'm almost dying."

He climbed upon a fence and thought His brain grew tired, and dreamed. He dreamed of artificial wings. And loomed for scheming.

"My dream is out!" he cried aloud. "I'll fly just like a blue jay!"

He found two palm trees and he climbed them to his feet straight.

A feather duster, too, he had. Upon his tail for stairway. Then climbed his high upon a roof. Not for an instant tarry.

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