PARIS PRESS WOMEN

THE SENSATIONAL SEVERINE AND THE MAX LEBAUDY SCANDAL.

Blackmailing Is a Fine Art with French Newspapers—Journalists Now Behind the Bars.

Emma Bullet's Paris Letter in Brooklyn Eagle.

Women journalists, that is, women contributing to important daily papers in Paris and proclaimed to have any merit, are few. Mme. Adam very seldom, at present, writes articles for papers, for she gives her whole attention to the Nouvelle Revue. Etincelle, the Baroness Double, had only a name among the women, among society, who smiled upon her to have their names cited in her articles, which amounted to high-sounding words, and in which there was a deplorable scarcity of ideas. She never counted. Outside of the women journalists who earn their daily bread with the description of fashions and of the doings of le monde there is only Severine.

For years I have had it in mind to introduce you to Severine. Severine is one of the figureheads of turbulent journalism. For the last three or four years she has been so popular that she contributed at the same time to all the important papers of Paris, and now she becomes doubly interesting that she is thought to be implicated in the Lebaudy inquest, and is numbered in that gigantic sweep of journalists arrested for having entered into a campaign either to have the unfortunate Max Lebaudy, the conscript, twenty times millionaire, liberated or retained in the army.

It is not to be supposed that any American woman correspondent has any personal or amicable acquaintance with Severine, or in general with any that pretend to do any journalistic work. There cannot be any fraternity whatever with that class of women and the American woman whose morality and integrity demand her to stand aloof from all those who are not impeccable in conduct. Severine is the Georges Sand of journalism. She never hesitates, when in search of documents, to do what Georges Sand did when she went in search of sensations. Severine is more exclusive than was Georges Sand, but we cannot attribute the fact to her sense of the moral and the pure, only to the fact that her writing differs from that of Georges Sand in so far that she wants documents and Georges Sand required experienced sensations. That class of French writers begin and continue their career on the principle that the end justifies the means, and it will seem natural for a people that have regard to the moral fitness of things to suppose that those of their kind are obliged to know them, because it is their business to know, but they do not come into immediate contact with them.

SEVERINE AND THE RED NUN.

During the first years of Severine's notoriety journalists willingly made a comparison between her and Louise Michel. Except that one and the other seem to have exclusively taken up the scheme of the alleviation of the poor and the condemning of the rich, there is not one point of comparison possible between them, either physically, morally or intellectually. Physically, Severine is a fine looking woman; that is, she acts and adorns herself as if she were convinced she were. She was born a brunette, but the various portraits exhibited latterly in the salons testify to her hair having turned miraculously a Titian blonde. She is very vain of her personal appearance, and the portraits alluded to also indicate that she does not clearly understand the English aesthetic manner of dressing or that she desires to combine it with her own French idea and make out of it a more ridiculous thing than it is. A celebrated French journalist thus describes her appearance: "In her circle she is pronounced elegant; she is only eccentric. Her chief desire being to attract attention, her accoutrements can only be called elegant in the faubourgs of Belleville and Charonne."

Morally, Louise Michel is a saint and Severine is not, and, furthermore, does not want to be. The whole of Severine's career lies in things written; the good she has done was through articles written in a sumptuous study surrounded with precious bric-a-brac and all the luxuries of Paris life. Louise Michel's intelligence leads her to do good in acts, to set an example to the rich, who pity the poor, amid affluence. She would think she was sinning against her deepest feelings, against her mission if she possessed one earthly object she could not share with the creatures to whom she devotes her life. In a word, Louise Michel does good for charity's sake, and Severine because her heart prompts her to think of the poor, and that at the same time it helps her to make her daily bread, profusely buttered, and reach popularity and notoriety.

The secret of Severine's success lies in the fact that she writes differently from the men, and the subjects which she writes upon the men avoid. Frenchmen are willing that women should write provided they do it from impulses of the heart, upon emotional subjects, and provided they write badly. Purely intellectual subjects lie exclusively in their domain, and that domain is closed with a lock that is not allowed to be picked by the women. There is a sentinel at the door which drives them all away, and that sentinel is called ridicule. Severine writes on politics and other manly subjects, but her style differs from that of the men to such a degree that they tolerate her, while forbidding themselves from ever reading what she writes, and while shrugging their shoulders they wonder at this fin de siecle taste so perverted as to take cognizance of Severine's articles.

HER FANTASTIC STYLE.

Severine may be said to have invented a style which amused and deceived readers a certain length of time. But now, when not looking at the signature, they begin an article, read a few lines, they go no further and exclaim, "Oh, that's Severine. All right," and pass on to reading some other column of the paper. What is Severine's style? It is difficult to describe it. Its greatest defect is that it is forced and unnatural, abounding in exclamations, slang, cries of the heart, which oftentimes are admirable, but to the critical are always empty. In hacked, short sentences she will appeal to her readers for help and money, and give a most woeful description of the misery and poverty of a family. She reminds you of a visitor who comes to eloquently plead the cause of the deserving, and who, if she had the true sentiment of help and self-sacrifice, would have saved herself the trouble of coming to you and herself helped the poor she is pleading for with her own well-filled coffers. She has also adopted the plan of mentioning the names of the donors at the end of her articles and the sums given. She knows human nature and admirably plays upon the strings of the heart of the unsophisticated. Will you have a sample of her catching articles? In answer upon the articles that were written in opposition to the one in which she charged Max Lebaudy with laziness, unwillingness to serve in the army and the desire to buy off his liberation, she wrote last summer: "Oh, the power of gold; there is a double peril for the one who attacks it, that of seeming to want to have a bit of the cake or of being angry at not having been able to cut the smallest slice of it. And, beside, aside from cake, there is the daily bread that one risks in telling the truth; the claws of gold may playfully break it or crush it. But what does it matter? I am a girl of a strong race who feared no evil except the falling of the heavens, and I delight in a little danger when it is run for justice and for truth. I will, therefore, continue to bring to light M. Lebaudy's case."

However one may criticise Severine, intellectually speaking, it cannot be said that she has no talent. A woman who has been able to stand for years as a notability in papers, who has made long contracts to write for almost all of them in Paris, a woman whose influence is sought by every one cannot be without merit. She is daring and enterprising. She has often undertaken campaigns to preach for a cause which was in opposition to her political and spiritual creeds. I use the word spiritual in the widest sense, for Severine at one time will appeal to the Almighty and affirm that she believes in Christ and the Bible, and at another will totally disapprove of those whose loyalty and faith are unquestionable. She will be a radical one day, a Socialist another, a heathen when she finds it adapted to her erratic convictions and a skeptic when that state of the soul will help her with a day's theme.

A MERE PRETENDER.

Even in doing good she is more daring than charitable. People will send her money for needs which she has caused to seem urgent, when she was unable to persuade herself that they were urgent. Danton has said that only the audacious succeed, and Severine has succeeded. The final paragraph of this letter, giving a few salient points of her life, will be the best proof of her spirit of enterprise. What will Severine be doing next was for several years the question of those who took any interest in her writings and doings. She, a few years ago, made up her mind that she would go to Rome to interview the Pope. Severine interviewing the Pope was one of those jokes at which even this blased fin de siecle was amused. She went to Rome and obtained an interview. She naturally treated the conference with great importance, but the only important thing in it was the audience itself, for even Severine's fertile imagination could not, out of it, invent anything that the Pope said to her that would warrant the necessity of going to Rome for. I have no doubt that Severine has now forgotten all the words that passed between her and the Pope, but she gained her end. She interviewed the Pope.

Many think that Severine is not as incorruptible as she wishes people to think her. Her great and intimate friend, who, it is known, most magnanimously aided her in getting up her articles, and who refused repeatedly to put his name next to hers, has been arrested as being implicated in this tangled Max Lebaudy affair and guilty of having for a bribe taken an engagement that Severine will stop her writing against Lebaudy's liberation. In fact, some months ago Severine suddenly let poor Max alone and allowed her pen to run on less compromising subjects. A search warrant has been issued, and the authorities have taken possession of all the documents which they deemed compromising. But, naturally, nothing will be found, for, if her secretary ever contained anything which would prove her acceptance of a bribe, she has had ample time to have it put in a safer place or have it destroyed, for too many inquisitions have been made daily in the houses and offices of journalists for her not to have thought that her turn might come, and make it impossible for them to find anything that could implicate her. This Max Lebaudy case is the Panama of journalists. Dozens have been arrested, sent to prison upon being examined and their homes ransacked for proofs of their culpability. The great wonder of it all is how they permit papers to remain when they can be destroyed with great facility. One would imagine that the guilty felt as secure as the innocent.

UNDER AN ANARCHIST.

Severine began her journalistic work under the direction of Valles, the socialistic writer, who founded the Cri du Peuple, one of the numerous papers which, like the rose of Malherbe, live only l'espace d'un matin. After the death of Valles, Severine took the direction of the paper and the tottering staff, not willing, probably, to be managed by a woman, retired to found the Voix du Peuple. Both the Cri and the Voix, receiving no financial response from the people, were obliged to go into bankruptcy. But Severine in the meantime had distinguished herself as the muse of socialism and as writer of articles in which there were catching delineations as well as exaggerated sentiment. Sometimes at present she defends an assassin who in court has been found guilty, but who, to her mind, is as innocent as a new born babe. At other times she will eloquently preach for abandoned women, and when that theme is exhausted she will ask for bread for starving families who in all likelihood have gold coins hidden in their woolen stockings. All at once you will be astounded to see Severine throw herself at the foot of the cross, that is, in spirit, pen in hand, with the firm intention to disavow all religious creeds, all precepts of the Bible on the morrow in an incendiary article on the nullity of religion. Her principle has been to ever keep herself before the public and to worship to-day what she burned yesterday.

Every morning upon opening the papers you now find new arrests of journalists for blackmail and bribery. It has been found that all the Parisian papers employed black sheep, who, using the influence of publicity, filled their purses with dishonest gold. Rosenthal, alias Jacques St. Cere, of the Figaro, is now in prison with a score of others from different papers who are supposed guilty of blackmail and bribery in the unfortunate Lebaudy affair. Jacques St. Cere is accused of asking $8,000 for liberating Max Lebaudy from military service, and to obtain that liberation through the influence of the Russian embassador, with whom he was on familiar terms. What have the Russians to do with Max Lebaudy? It is no longer the French who rule in France; it is the Russians. I suppose if St. Cere had obtained a word from the embassador the military authorities would have sent Lebaudy home forthwith, ill or not. It looks as if it were all fools' day all the year round in France.

HOW THEY BLACKMAIL.

It must be the system of conducting a paper that causes journalists to succumb to temptation as they do here. I am, perhaps, not sufficiently conversant with the foreign methods to judge, but it seems to me that such wholesale arrests of journalists cannot take place in any other country. To a great degree bribery and blackmailing must be the outgrowth of the French system of advertising. There is very little bona fide advertisement, as in America, for instance, in pages reserved for that branch of publicity; but there is much of it slipped in a treacherous way in the pages reserved for information, for literature, and so composed as to deceive the reader. The French have passed muster in that art. Oftentimes it will be almost impossible to detect the deception, for the article will be full of interesting, instructive items, and oftentimes not even any names are mentioned. I remember some years ago an important paper failed to mention a play given by a young writer on the day after its first performance, and a couple of days after a most fulsome article appeared on the first page of the paper so composed that no one could think but that the writer, who had signed his full name, was enchanted with the merits of the play. The mother of the author afterward showed me the receipted bill that that article had cost. A bill of 1,500 francs. "And did all of that go to the paper?" I asked. "No; men who have influence with the public, who write in an amusing manner and are sure to be read by every reader of the paper get half of the cost of such articles and the paper the other half."

FASHIONABLE WOODS

CHANGES IN STYLE OF FURNITURE AND HOUSE FINISHINGS.

As Old Woods Gradually Become Scarce Cabinetmakers and Builders Look for New Varieties.

New York Evening Post.

The interior of a large furniture store to-day is a study in woods. In recent years nearly every kind of wood of any value has been experimented with by architects for interior finish of houses and by manufacturers of artistic furniture, with the result that we have a greater variety of highly polished woods than ever before. The latest addition to the long list in use is the beech, a wood that has always been considered too soft and liable to rot early, but when seasoned by modern methods, filled with some preservative and stained to suit the needs of the trade it is an excellent material for light furniture. Black birch and bird's-eye maple are the most effective and modern of furniture woods, and when highly polished they produce an effect obtainable in no other way. Architects are using the latter for interior finishing also, but the expense of the wood confines its use to the wealthy. One hundred years ago these woods were despised by the furniture makers. No one thought of making furniture of anything but good old New England oak, well seasoned and fashioned by skilled workmen. Specimens of this colonial work are prized to-day because of the well-seasoned wood used as well as for the good workmanship shown.

When the ships of the colonies brought mahogany from the countries south of them a craze for this rich wood ensued, and furniture made of solid mahogany was in great demand by the wealthy. Up to that time oak had prevailed exclusively as a furniture wood, but as mahogany became cheaper the demand for it increased, and it was employed almost as generally as oak for interior decoration. Following this came black walnut. The popularity of this wood for furniture is within common remembrance. The demand for it was so universal that the walnut groves and woods were threatened with destruction, but the furniture manufacturers, realizing that the supply would become exhausted, turned the public's attention towards cherry and created another fashion. Cherry produced an agreeable effect when polished, and many preferred it to the darker woods. It held its own in the market until the craze for light-wood furniture came into vogue. Then bird's-eye maple, birch and beech, light mahogany and gold and white enamel attracted the attention of the fashionable world, and these to-day reign supreme.

The architect has been no less changeable in his selection of woods for interior trimmings and finishing than the furniture manufacturer. Cherry and black walnut wainscoting and trimming had their vogue after oak and ash for many a year, and then came Georgia curly pine, followed more recently by cypress and California redwood. Cypress gives one of the best light-wood finishes for the interior of the house, and the California redwood is equally striking among the dark woods. Oak and ash hold their own even to-day, but newer woods must be substituted for them in time unless the supply is increased by genuine forest plantings.

IMPORTED WOODS.

The changes in the use of woods for building purposes are caused by the gradual destruction of one or two popular varieties as much as by the whims of fashion. When the supplies of a certain wood begin to show signs of exhaustion builders turn their attention to new kinds, which, through their efforts, are made popular and fashionable. For instance, ash and oak could not keep the builders and furniture manufacturers in wood for five years if no other woods were used for the same purpose. The change is also caused partly by the wonderful advances in transportation facilities, which enable us to utilize the woods of every country at a nominal extra expense. South America is annually shipping new woods into the United States for fancy and artistic work. Even China and Japan contribute their teakwood, bamboo and lacquer wood. But all of these fancy products of foreign countries enter into the wood supply question only in a small way. The main supply must come from this country and Canada, and the substitutions must be of woods that thrive naturally in our home forests.

The old lumbermen of Maine, with their rich forests of pine on every hand, used to despise the spruce trees, and overlooked them in securing their builders' supplies. But in recent years the spruce trees have been substituted for the pine to a large extent for building purposes, the old pine forests having been denuded almost to the point of extinction. More money is realized to-day from the spruce trees of the "Old Pine Tree State" than the pines ever yielded. The spruce trees are in demand both for building purposes and for paper making. The old builders had an idea that spruce would twist and warp so as to ruin the finest building, but little difficulty is experienced to-day in this respect, although twice as much spruce is used for framing as pine.

Likewise hemlock had little reputation in the colonies for building purposes, but good hemlock was considered one of the best kinds of woods for under floors, siding boards and even for framing. The early New England carpenters used hemlock where the boards had to be covered with water most of the time. It could resist the action of constant moisture better than pine, but the alternate action of the sun and water, heat, cold and moisture was supposed to rot it early. When the New England pine forests were destroyed lumbermen had to depend upon the Canadian supply or adopt spruce and hemlock for much of their building purposes. Later the almost inexhaustible supply of Southern pine came into use, but owing to the fine finish that most of this is capable of it is reserved more for indoor decoration where grain is valuable, while spruce and hemlock continue to be in demand for framing and siding.

STRONG WHITE OAK.

The New England house and barn buildings always had their white oak sills, and these hard sills are in existence to-day even when the buildings are crumbling to pieces. So important were the oak sills considered that the finest trees were selected for this purpose. To-day very few frame houses have anything better than spruce or whitewood sills. Whitewood is another cheap and effective material that comes from the South in large quantities and relieves the pressure on the spruce and hemlock supply. This wood comes more into open competition with North Carolina pine than any other, but the supply is said to be showing signs of exhaustion already, and it cannot long reduce the demand for spruce because of cheaper prices. Cypress of the South is entering into our buildings for interior finish, but the supply of this wood is not by any means large, and it is more expensive than either hemlock or spruce or pine. When ship building was an important industry in New England the famous old white oaks were used also for making ships' knees. These old knees, like the old white oak sills, are the last parts of the ships to fall to pieces. When the white oaks became scarce the hackmatack knees were substituted, and still later the cypress knees of the South. At present the majority of the large ships have steel and iron knees, but the few that are constructed of wood have cypress knees put in them. The white oak and hackmatack are now used comparatively seldom.

The shingles used for the roofs of houses have also had their changes. The early colonists considered rift pine shingles the best material for covering their roofs, and these were used to the exclusion of all others until somebody demonstrated the superiority of the rift cedar shingles. Later the sawed cedar shingles from Maine and New Brunswick were used, entering into sharp competition with the sawed pine shingles of the West. There is also more or less demand for spruce and hemlock shingles, but the very best of shingles are the red cedar shingles from Oregon and Washington.

Lumbermen are looking more and more to the Northwest and Pacific coast States for their future supply of fine building material. The white pine trees of Maine and New Hampshire at one time furnished the finest masts and spars in the world, but to-day we have to go to the forests of Oregon to get the proper masts for our New York and New England shipyards. The extraordinary growth of trees in the Oregon forests keeps the country supplied with all the ship building timber required. The redwood of the Pacific coast is used more extensively for interior house finishing than ever before, while more fine shingles are cut in Oregon than in any other State.

In early colonial days the best pines were used for flooring. Many of the best houses contained floors with hardly an imperfection in them, so carefully were the pine boards used for this purpose selected. Spruce boards were substituted for pine when the supply began to give out, but builders doubted the utility of this change for many years. Hard pine flooring followed, generally rift sawed boards which would not splinter. Maple was first used in factories where the rolling of heavy trucks required solid wood. To-day the best flooring in use is maple lumber dressed and kiln dried, but maple trees are not very plentiful, and their growth must be increased or beech and birch must be substituted partly for them.

FASHION'S VAGARIES.

Some Gowns Which Show the Tendency of Spring Styles.

New York Ledger.

The separate waist appears to have lost none of its popularity, although efforts have been made to bring complete costumes into favor. For dresses of ceremony this has succeeded to an extent, especially for matrons and elderly ladies, but for the younger members of society the fancy waist holds its own.

Fancy silks are still among the favorite materials for these separate waists, although velvet and satin are frequently employed. There are, of course, new caprices in the making of the waists, but, as a rule, the foundation is plain and simple, but the novelty consisting in the drapery and arranging. A pretty and original design has the waist portion made of striped silk. This is gathered in at the shoulders and drawn down to the waist-line, where it is shirred in. The sleeves are made of wide bands of the silk, alternating with rows of insertion, under which is silk of a contrasting color. A soft belt and fancy collar are made of a combination of the lining material, insertion and the striped silk.

A stylish waist is of cross-striped material. The front and yoke are of solid embroidery, as are also the collar and deep cuffs. Over the shoulders are draped wide sections of the material, which form a jabot effect from the shoulders over the arms to the elbows. Another model has polka spotted silk, with yolk of shirred velvet and deep cuffs and corselet of the same.

A new waist has very small sleeves, small at the shoulders and the desired fullness is made up by the most enormous bows, the ribbon being about eight inches wide, and used in the most prodigal fashion, about three yards being required for each sleeve. Just what this shrinkage of the sleeves will end in no one seems able to predict intelligently, but small sleeves are not at all well received, and there is little reason to suppose that the contraction will be sudden or marked, at least for some time.

There is a fancy for a separate basque waist of heavier material following in the same line as the ordinary fancy silk waist. For example, a basque of heavy, handsome brocade in dark rich colors is ordered to wear with a skirt of black satin. A black satin basque is worn with a black velvet skirt, and there are numbers of fancy fabrics that are worked up by themselves or with velvet, lace, satin or ribbons of various colors and qualities.

House dresses made of a single material are liked by many young ladies for a change. A dress of red wool delaine is made up with yoke, collar and cuffs of black braiding. The waist is fitted perfectly plain, save at the front, where there is a shirring from the lower edge of the yoke to the bodice point; the collar is shirred, and a standing is of the braided material; the sleeves are very full and droop far over the elbows.

A dress of olive-green surah has a plain skirt, a blouse waist, folded belt and collar, full-topped sleeves with fitted cuffs, and an enormous cape-collar of crimped linen lawn edged with Vandyke embroidery.

Another house dress is of smooth serge. The skirt has an overlapping front, having the appearance of being buttoned on to the side sections with large buttons. The waist is a short basque, pointed in front and fitting smoothly just over the curve of the hips. The back is in a full ruffle, not over four inches long below the waist line. The waist and sleeves are elaborately trimmed with very narrow gimp, and a line of the same trimming extends entirely around the skirt and up the sides on either side of the buttons and buttonholes.

A dress modeled for an evening at home is made with a skirt of heavy brocade. The waist is of rich net lace over plain silk the color of the ground of the skirt. There are enormous sleeves of the brocade, and lace draperies in the old-fashioned peplum form fall over the top of the skirt. The front of the waist from collar to belt is filled in with a jabot of lace, and a brocade collar has points that turn out from either side, like the collars worn by men.

IN THE "SMART SET."

The Four Hundred Have "Unaffected" Slang of Their Own.

New York Tribune.

There is a sort of free-masonry among people belonging to what is known as the "smart set," and they have almost an "argot" of their own, with the shibboleths and passwords that happen to be in the fashion for the moment, and which, before they are ever perceived by outsiders, pass out of existence.

One of the chief and most marked characteristics of the day, one which up to a certain point is certainly desirable and commendable, is an entire want of affectation in the majority of this "set." It seems to be "the thing" just now to be quite genuine and natural, and it is considered bad form to be otherwise. Anglomania, which was rife a few years ago, seems to have disappeared entirely, and the men and women of the leisure class are to-day frankly and decidedly American. All this is, as has been said, commendable, the drawback being that this naturalness, if one may call it so, is apt to go too far among intimates and become a little too free and easy, while milady's "pretty oath by yea or nay" does not sound so well in modern language—for an up-to-date woman does not hesitate at "darn," or even stronger expressions evoked by an unsuccessful "drive" at golf, or some other circumstance equally trying.

Together with speech and accent fashionable note-writing has greatly changed of late. The newest thing in chirography is round and vertical, and even inclined to be backhanded. This writing, executed with a quill and with spaces wide apart, seems to be the writing now in vogue, and it is curious to note how the handwriting of even the older women has altered lately, following the tendency of the day. As this handwriting is very legible, this, too, is a decided improvement.

It is also fashionable now to be rather enthusiastic, not to say gushing, to thank people profusely for an invitation, or to regret, "les larmes aux yeux" if obliged to refuse. Fashionable women call each other by their Christian names on very short acquaintance, and drop the "Mrs." with those who are in her set almost immediately; and even men are often called "Jack" or "Billy," as the case may be, by their wives' friends. In fact, all that is stilted and conventional is out of date, and everything is charmingly friendly and familiar within the "set," but decidedly stiff and arctic outside of it, for kindly courtesy to a stranger is not one of the characteristics of modern society.

A trial will convince you that Sweet Moments cigarettes are the best.

FOR WOMEN'S READING

MODIFYING EFFECT OF THE BICYCLE ON FEMININE APPAREL.

The New Woman Has Advantage Over the Old of Earning Her Living—A Study of Color—Odds and Ends.

There is no doubt that the bicycle has had a marked effect on costumes of all sorts and on the general wardrobe of the average woman, says the New York Ledger.

"I am going away next summer to have a good time," says the young girl, "and I am not going to be bothered with so many frills and furbelows and fancy dresses as I have always had to carry about with me. I am going to have just the swellest bicycle costume and a second-best for stormy days and off occasions, a sort of toilet understudy, as it were. I am going to have a skirt of black satin or silk and a traveling dress; then I want some pretty waists, and I suppose I absolutely must take an evening dress or two, but two is the limit. I like dancing very much better in an ordinary skirt, with a pretty waist, and a great many of us are of the same mind."

And this girl voiced the sentiments of a large number of American women. The skirt, the fancy waist and the bicycle costume fill a great many of the needs of existence. The black or dark skirt means a silk petticoat and no white draperies to worry about.

A tidal wave of sense about skirts seems to be rolling about us. We positively refused crinoline; we compromised on wide skirts, with hair cloth and paper stuffs. Now we are getting tired of these, and, while our skirts must have something to make them stand out, we are cutting them shorter for ordinary wear, and are the gainers by it.

This necessitates extra care as to foot gear, and some of the shoes for the coming season are works of art.

It is a shame to hide all these pretty shoes with trailing dresses; besides, the long skirts spoil the shoes by covering them with dust and dampness, which is fatal to fine leather.

There is another point which is less talked about, although actually the most important of all, and that is the sanitary effect of sweeping draperies. Women are beginning to learn that the dust of public streets is neither wholesome nor safe to take home,; therefore the slightly abbreviated skirt and handsome shoes.

There is already springing up a rivalry among women as to who shall be the best shod, that is, the most in accord with health and gracefulness, and all of this with an eye to the finest materials and the best workmanship. My lady's shoemaker is selected with quite as much care as her dressmaker, and, in view of the present tendency to exercise and indulge in out-of-door sports, his mission is quite as important as any of her other interests.

Smooth-surfaced goods are to supersede all of the crimpy and crapy stuffs that have been the rage for some time past. Of course, this change will not take place suddenly, but it is looming up in the not very distant future.

The new skirts are lined with fine percaline or silk, and a few of them have haircloth inner linings, but lighter skirts with the haircloth petticoats are preferred by ladies who have many costumes. A perfectly fitted haircloth petticoat with silk ruffles is thought to preserve the individuality of style that many women seem to cling to.

"I always know Miss A by the hang of her skirts," said one lady to another. And when Miss A's skirts were critically noticed the reason was evident. The hang and curves and lines were perfect.

An effort is being made to decrease the weight of skirts, and this is best done by fine and light linings, and the use of underskirts that give the spreading effect that is considered necessary to present styles.

Blondes and Brunettes.

New York Tribune.

A beautiful blonde is the most beautiful of women, but the world is very critical of her beauty and demands perfection of her. A blonde with a colorless skin is prone to appear faded out if she does not attire herself accordingly, and an indifferent or bad complexion is more fatal to the fair woman than to the one with dark hair. Most blondes look their best in soft, lacelike or gauzelike black, and a beautiful blonde is an angel in white. The girl with red hair finds her most fitting dress in cream, yellow or a salmon pink for evening wear, and any golden shade of brown or green for the day. She requires the yellow tinge in any color. If she is very pale there is a certain shade of dark red which is effective. She, too, can wear black; indeed, most young women with good complexions can wear black, but it rarely becomes older women, so why should conventionality condemn them to it? Many good-looking women past their youth feel that it is a fitting color, or even the only proper color, and make themselves unnecessarily old and plain.

The brunette regards yellow and red as her proper setting, but, after all, it depends very much on the colors in her face. Dark hair and eyes do not always mean a dark skin, and blue and pink often suit her very well. If a brunette has a fair or clear complexion she is as charming in black as is a blonde. It is a favorite color with Frenchwomen, and they are generally dark; but with them even a severe cloth street costume is softened by lace, tulle or feathers about the face. The brown-haired girl, with the half-and-half coloring, is really the most fortunate. She is lovely in pink, and, if her eyes are blue, can wear the same shade in a gown. The turquoise shade of blue suits her to perfection. It brings out the blue of the eyes and kills any yellow in the skin. It gives a youthful, pinkish shade to the face. With brown hair and eyes it forms a combination as much liked by artists as is red velvet worn by an auburn-haired woman. For a street gown a shade of brown that forms a complement to, rather than a match for, the brown in the hair, skin, or perhaps the eyes, is a fortunate shade. A brown veil makes her charming, while often a black one will throw cruel dark lines and shadows that do not exist in the face.

Choosing a veil takes much care and some time. If a woman finds a veil that becomes her she is wise if she secures many yards of it. Generally speaking, a veil should match either the hat or the gown, but there are many women who wisely wear a brown veil because it suits the general tone of their own coloring. Many women find that they appear better, their eyes are brighter and color clearer without any face covering; but a veil is necessary to keep the hair tidy. A veil is a detriment when it loses its freshness, and for this reason cheap veils are a temptation. The French woman's cleverness in regard to dressing is never more apparent than in the care she exercises in choosing the accessories of her toilet, and her veil is of paramount importance. It is often of black net, but most carefully selected and adjusted, and the black veil is the most difficult of all to choose. An unbecoming veil, no matter how expensive the chenille dots may be, is best discarded.

Wouldn't Earn Money.

New York Evening Sun.

"Generally speaking, men object to the 'new woman,'" remarked a temperate-minded woman the other day. "There is one phase of the question, however, that should, I think, appeal particularly to them. The 'new woman,' if she be unmarried, is rarely a drag or drain upon her male relatives. Instead of relying upon them to 'keep' her, she is more than willing to support herself; the 'shoes of dependence' are obnoxious to her. In olden times, and particularly in the South, this was not so. It was considered 'beneath the dignity of a lady' to turn wage-earner, no matter how needy her circumstances might be. So long as she had a male relative he was bound to support her. I can call to mind a South Carolina family, people of distinction and at one time of great wealth, who, upon the death of their father, found themselves without money. The family consisted of a mother, six daughters and two sons. As soon as their penniless condition became known there was much weeping and wailing, but as for any of the women going to work it was not even so much as dreamed of. Turn drudges and wage-earners? Do things for money instead of for pleasure pure and simple? It was not to be thought of. They were ladies and it was the duty of the gentlemen of the family to support them. The two brothers were accordingly obliged to toil night and day in order to provide for the large family dependent upon them. The women pottered about the house, cooked dainty messes and did fancy work; in fine, performed the thankless task of 'keeping up appearances.' The brothers were meanwhile kept pretty busy. They had neither the time nor means to gratify their own inclinations or ambitions. They met women whom they loved and might have married had not the stern necessity of providing for their mother and sisters kept them from doing so. The brothers are now old men, aged beyond years, and still hard at work supporting 'the family.' The women are old, too. They have not married, although that was, of course, to their minds, the one 'way out of it.' They still potter about the house, cook dainty messes and do fancy work. But how much better it would have been if those women, when misfortune came, had but bravely struck out for themselves. Aside from the individual benefit, think how it would have spared the sacrifice of those two brothers. And that is a phase of the 'new woman' that should, I think, appeal directly to men."

Correct Breathing.

Philadelphia Record.

It has been discovered that the double chin can be banished by correct breathing. The woman with a short neck must hold her head high, even stretching her neck until conscious of the tension of the cords. She should also practice dropping her head and letting it roll listlessly about. This will give a graceful poise to the head, and the exercise of muscles will help consume the extra amount of fat. Lung exercises in breathing are the best exercises for excessive stoutness. The best time for this is before dressing in the morning and after undressing at night. Five or ten minutes exercise every day will reduce the flesh in a wonderfully short time. Stand erect, with the head and chin well up, and rise upon the toe at each inspiration, holding the breath a moment, then expelling it forcibly, coming down upon the heels at the same time.

Another good breathing exercise is to draw in a full, deep breath. Retain the breath while counting fifteen and then slowly expel it. Sometimes stout women move the arms gracefully, but the body has an utter lack of liberty and free motion or suppleness. Drawing her corsets tighter never did make a stout woman less stout in appearance. The first care is not to lace too tightly; the second is to banish all idea of being stout from your mind, and let the muscles have as free play as possible. All women can learn to use their bodies gracefully, even if there is a predisposition to stoutness. Stout women are acknowledged to be the lightest dancers, and there is no reason why they should not be graceful in pose and motion. If a woman draws her breath freely from the bottom of her lungs she diminishes the effect of her size immediately by doing away with that ready-to-burst look that is generally associated with stoutness. That is the look that must be avoided, even if the waist measures an inch or so more and the bust and shoulders gain a little.

The Art of Ripping.

New York Times.

The art of ripping, or "unpicking," as our English cousins call it, is one not always sufficiently esteemed. The least skillful person in the sewing room is usually intrusted with the task, and while, for ordinary work, her carelessness may not prove harmful, it is fairly criminal, according to a dressmaker, to put valuable fabrics in such untutored hands. "Scissors," says this same authority, "should rarely be used in the ripping process, a sharp-pointed knife doing much better and safer service. All threads should be taken out carefully; not drawn into a knot and left to carry a defacing imprint beyond the pressing board. Bias seams, when needed to be taken out, should not be pulled apart, insuring an often hopeless stretching, but held easily as the stitches are loosened. All hooks and eyes, buttons and metal clasps should be taken off if the garment is intended for the dyer, a forethought which that tradesman testifies is not often observed. Laces need very delicate unpicking when, as in the case of costly pieces, they are arranged and rearranged as dress garnitures. I have fairly cried out in protest to see a customer jerk away at a lovely bit of duchesse or point applique in her haste to demonstrate an idea for its redraping. I do not tell them so, but it shows the parvenu, not the gentlewoman, to be thus reckless with a work of art. A chief requirement of a well-trained maid is skill in taking apart; the care and nicety in the process of some French 'treasures' would be a revelation to many other maids—and mistresses."

Sewing in Schools.

New York Evening Post.

Mothers who wish to teach their little daughters needlework thoroughly and systematically will perhaps like to know something of the modern school methods for doing the work, which make it both interesting and easy, as they proceed in a scientific and carefully thought out fashion, step by step from the simple to the more difficult. In one training school the first lessons are given on material known as railroad canvas, and on it the little pupils are taught to take the even length stitch in which just as many threads are taken up as are left; the basting stitch, which makes an even line as a mark or guide for other stitches; then the even back stitch, overhand stitch and hemming. When this much can be done with accuracy and neatness, the pupils next work on a linen canvas that is finer and softer than the first, and, though like it, it is woven in squares that are easily seen and that make a guide for the stitches, the stitches already learned are repeated on this, and, in addition, hemstitching, catstitching, buttonhole stitching and feather stitching are taught. These pretty stitches taken with gay thread on ecru canvas make an all-over design, and when completed it is made into a pretty bag, of which the child is justly proud. Neat, simple cutting is done, the first object being a gingham work-bag shaped like a parallelogram. After that comes the darning of stockings and linen, and a little more advanced cutting. A very large doll is used as the model in learning to cut and fit clothes for little children. Patching comes quite late in the course.

Summer Dresses.

Harper's Bazar.

Among the wash dresses in preparation for summer two features are prominent—one is the belted basque, giving a short frill all around below the belt; the other is bishop sleeves, full and straight, gathered into wristbands. A turned-over collar, edged with embroidery, is on most such basques. When a yoke is added it is a matter of taste whether it be in front or in the back, in the fashion of shirt-waists. Round, full waists, gathered to a yoke of embroidery, are considered more dressy by many, and are being made with elbow sleeves. Others have bands of insertion of heavy white embroidery arranged like the box pleats of Norfolk jackets. The skirts of these dresses are five yards wide, with all the breadths gored in a measure at the top, those in the front being left fuller than those of last season, and all shirred in two or three rows around below the belt. They are hemmed widely and may be trimmed with insertions down each seam or in two rows above the hem, as one pleases. When made by home dress-makers the sleeves are not lined, but those sold ready made are apt to have an objectionable lining of sleazy cambric or lawn, and the same is true of the skirt. If a foundation skirt is preferred it should be of a good fabric, deeply faced with the material of the dress.

From Various Sources.

Every season fashion selects some particular color as a special favorite, though rivals may run it very closely. She has now declared for blue, and this is to rival green and brown. Spring textiles will show many pretty shades, also color mixtures, in which blue will predominate.

The doom of the abnormal dress sleeve is sealed. All gowns now brought from Paris by returned exporters and tourists show the bodice finished with a close-fitting sleeve, completed at the top by a larger divided puff, a Vandyke point, Hungarian cap, or tucked or gimp-trimmed chatelaine drapery falling to the elbow.

Fashionable modistes are gradually reducing the circumference of the over-wide nine-gored skirts. Models of this great width, however deftly arranged or well hung, looking nothing less than overdone and wobbly. There were too many yards of superfluous floaty goods to look either graceful or stylish, and they could not be flattened or folded to produce that effect.

A short woman who always manages to look gracefully tall does so by having her dress waists made short with the belts inside set high. The length which belongs to an unusually long waist, which if its claims were considered would divide her height in a very ugly fashion, is added to the skirt, which is never guilty of furbelows, but always shows a long unbroken line.

There is scarcely any ache to which children are subject so hard to bear as earache. Almost instantaneous relief may be obtained by making a funnel of writing paper, saturating a small piece of cotton batting in chloroform and dropping it in the funnel. Put the small end of the funnel into the ear, and, placing the mouth close to the other, blow into it. The fumes of the chloroform will quickly relieve the pain, and if the head is kept covered the patient will soon be at ease.

There is a general tendency to discard all stiff interlinings in the gowns for next season, employing the crinoline, haircloth, moreen or other lining fabric for an entirely separate undersk[illegible] Some new silk skirts fashioned by hig[illegible]ss modistes carry out this idea, being f[illegible]ith real haircloth or moreen, and trimm[illegible]ound the bottom with piped silk frills a[illegible]t three inches wide.

Less expensive skirts are also made of moreen or haircloth alone, some fashioned with a closely fitted yoke, with gores on the front and sides, a ruffle of the goods at the hem, and four box-plaited flounces at the back.

At a fashionable luncheon recently the table decorations were pussy willows and pale green ribbons; wide satin ribbon was used, the long loops being wired to make them stand up. In the center of the table a round mat was made of ferns and a full bow laid upon them. Branches of pussy willows were stuck thickly among the loops of ribbon. Candelabra with white candles and pale green shades trimmed with a fringe of maidenhair ferns were used. Beside each plate lay a small bunch of pussy willows tied together, fagot like, with green satin ribbon, and the guest's name in gold lettering was upon the short end of the ribbon which lay upon the table.

Fiji island petticoats are the latest caprice the lady's outfitter is foisting on fashionable women, says the Washington Post. It quite surpasses the bustle, and is the really comme il faut affair for even medium-sized women. The slender woman would be naught but a flagstaff without one. That isn't the true trade name for the apparatus, but it is the most descriptive term for it. In pictures of the South Sea island chiefs are usually shown wearing what looks like champagne straw cases arranged around their waists. That is precisely what the Fiji island petticoat is on a modern scale. It is a fore and aft, starboard and port bustle. Crinoline is laid in double box plaits to give the desired bouffant effect, and the skirt is not more than fourteen inches long. In fact it reaches just below the hips. And it isn't the worst eccentricity in that line fashion is said to have in store for us.

THOUGHTLESSNESS.

No Excuse for an Offense Committed by Many Rude People.

Baltimore Sun.

Many rude people who give great offense or pain to their fellows seek to excuse themselves on the ground that they were merely thoughtless; that they did not intend to do anything which would hurt their companions. And the world is so far indulgent that it generally accepts the apology, just as it credits other people with good intentions when their actual performance is bad. Thoughtlessness may be excusable in very young children, but it is not a tenable excuse for the wrong-doing of an adult. Nor should children, however young, be encouraged in making such a plea in avoidance. They should rather be admonished at all times to think of the effect of their words and actions and to so govern both that no injury should result therefrom. Thoughtlessness very often mars the effect of intended pleasantry. Men joke on serious subjects, not knowing perhaps the circumstances of listeners to whom their words may give offense. Or they exhibit their wit without judgment, and instead of contributing to the good humor of their companions wound one another with their sharp sayings. No one is under greater need of full command of his tongue or pen, or of thoughtful consideration of others than the humorist. His humor should always be kindly, even when directed in the form of satire against wrongs and abuses, and because of the danger of reaching some one to whom, at least for the moment, jokes upon serious subjects would be painful, he should avoid as much as possible light treatment of the sorrows of humanity. It would seem proper to give a special warning to the practical joker to make sure before perpetrating his joke that no offense would be given by it, but the advice would probably be wasted, for those who are capable of practical joking are never considerate. Their thoughtlessness is proverbial, and yet excuse is found for them even when death or lifetime injury results from their pranks. Observance of the golden rule may be relied upon to keep one from doing thoughtless injury to others. Men and women who have had sorrows are chastened thereby, and if of kindly disposition do not lose their cheerfulness, though they become thoughtful and considerate. But before one has tasted the bitterness of life or grown old in years he may by thought, and especially by introspective examination of himself, overcome the natural tendency to thoughtlessness and acquire a habit of consideration for others. He is thus put on his guard against saying or doing that which is liable to wound or give offense. He will not idly attack any man's religion or politics before a mixed company, if at all, nor will he indulge in generalizations of any kind that might hurt the feelings of individuals. Men cannot, of course, avoid saying some things that will wound, but when they do so it should be with deliberate, good purpose, not thoughtlessly. Truth and honesty very often require us to denounce a system or policy dear to the hearts of other people, or to expose in plain language the shortcomings of an individual, but this should be done frankly and with due consideration. It is idle talk or gossip that unnecessarily wounds or offends, and idle talk or gossip will be avoided by all considerate people.

A LEAP-YEAR INCIDENT.

It Occurred in New York, and the New Woman Was Present.

New York Tribune.

There was given on a recent evening at Black Lake, this State, a leap-year party, at which Miss Kittie Carr escorted Mr. Frank Lupton, as we learn from a Callicoon dispatch in a contemporary. The neighborhood of Black Lake is a wild region, infested with all sorts of cruel, ravenous and venomous beasts of prey. The bones of many an unfortunate traveler, polished to an unnatural whiteness by the fangs of these scourges of the forest, lie in windrows along the lonely highways. So it is not strange that while returning from the party Miss Carr heard the piercing cry of a wildcat. Oddly enough, she was unarmed. But, assuring the young man at her side that there was no danger, she drove rapidly home.

Arriving at the house, she got her father's rifle and announced to young Lupton her intention of going back after the cat. "B—b—but," he returned, "I am no h—hunter. Why should we m—m—molest the animal? He has as much right to life as any of us." "I shall go back and shoot that wildcat," answered Miss Carr. "G—g—good," replied Mr. Lupton. "S—shoot the b—beggar; that's what he n—needs. S—shoot him till he can't w—w—wiggle—I'll stay here and hold the h—horse." "Of course you will hold the horse—when we get there," said the young lady, and she stepped into the carriage and drove away into the forest, the awful and ominous silence broken only by the chattering of the teeth of the man by her side. Reaching the spot, Miss Carr first slipped a corner of the robe into the mouth of young Mr. Lupton, thus in a measure deadening the clatter, and then dropped out of the vehicle. All was silence, save for the wind making moan in the tops of the overhanging trees and the distant last cry of some belated traveler gone down before the spring of a denizen of the unknown glades. The fierce vibrations of the man's teeth, estimated at three thousand five hundred per minute, were fast wearing out the corner of the robe, when suddenly his cheek was fanned by the shock of the wildcat's cry, now close at hand. His jaw was paralyzed and forgot to move; the wind ceased to complain; the last gurgle of the distant traveler died away, and the silence could be felt. Then, again, nature shook with the wildcat's shriek; his glassy, baleful eyes were seen between two rocks; there was the sharp report of a rifle and the beast and the man fell forward, the one dead—the other in a faint. The horse dashed wildly down the road with the limp young Mr. Lupton hanging over the dashboard. But at the end of a mile he recovered consciousness, stopped the animal and drove bravely back. When about half way he met Miss Carr dragging the wildcat behind her by the tail. She threw it into the carriage, and again they drove home. The young man is still under the care of local physicians, suffering from shock, but Miss Carr has felt no inconvenience from the experience. "The wildcat," says the dispatch, in closing, "was the largest ever secured in Sullivan county, and Miss Carr will have the skin mounted and keep it as a memento."

This is practically the first leap-year occurrence involving the New Woman; we shall look for others with great interest.

Something He Didn't Get at Home.

San Francisco Post.

He was tall and thin, with a face that was puckered up till it looked like a last year's apple. The train boy sized him up right away as a dyspeptic and tried to sell him fruit and popcorn.

"I do my eating at home and in hotels," he growled, then he sat still and looked miserable.

"May be you'd like a morning paper," suggested the boy five minutes later.

"I have to pay for the papers at home and ain't going to buy 'em again." Then he again became a candidate for sympathy.

"Perhaps you would like a good book to read?" and the boy placed a pile on the seat beside the miserable man.

"Got a good library at home," he growled as he pushed them away.

"Yes, but you haven't anything like this at home, I'll bet. Don't let any one see it," and the boy opened the book at a nude illustration.

The passenger's eyes snapped and he actually smiled as he seized the book with both hands, and whispered:

"How much?"

"Two dollars."

He tore the corner of his pocket getting the money out, then he glanced cautiously all around and settled down to gloat over the naughty book. In a moment his glow dropped, his face lengthened, then wrinkled up, and again he looked miserable. He had paid $2 for one picture pasted in a New Testament.