



THE LATEST PHASE OF PARISIAN LIFE: DINING BETWEEN THE ACTS.

The recent production of "Die Goetterdaemmerung" without "cuts" at the Paris Opera caused the management to make provision for their patrons to the extent of arranging that

they could dine in the theatre during the long interval between the first and second acts. The idea met with the immediate approval of fashionable Paris and became the rage. The hour's

interval has now been done away with, but the dining goes on, despite the fact that the performance begins at 7:30, with two entr'actes of ten minutes each, and is over by midnight. It

is now being asked in the English papers whether it cannot be made possible to dine at our own theatres.

—Illustrated London News.

CHEER FOR THE WINTER.

Conservatories and Window Gardens for the City Home.

Town houses are now recruiting their conservatories and grouping their window gardens preparatory to bringing some of the green and cheer of summer days into the home atmosphere when skies are cold and gray. Fads and fashions play a more important part in the making of a conservatory and window garden than the average person would believe. Orchids, for instance, are as much the necessary thing in conservatories of to-day as roses were in the long ago, and certain varieties of tropical ferns and palms are preferred above all others at the present time, and are likely to be until something new in the horticultural world comes forward to claim greater homage.

Only a few persons can afford to collect and cultivate rare and numerous varieties of orchids, because they require expert treatment, but a great many can enjoy the possession of some of the more hardy and popular orchids, such as the Cattleya and several North American varieties. Golden orchids and white and green ones are now the latest fad, but this fancy has not displaced the beautiful mauve colored blossoms.

In planning a winter garden indoors, whether upon a large or small scale, one should always select the plants with reference to the sort of heat and moisture intended for them. Some flowers and plants, such as geraniums, begonias, alyssum, araucaria pines, certain varieties of ferns, narcissus and a few bulbs, will stand a good deal of cold air and an amount of house dust that most other plants would not survive. In the same way dry, hot air calls for the selection of growing things that will thrive in it—and few do. The new violin rubber plant, the common rubber plant, araucaria pines and geraniums will endure hard usage and neglect in the way of providing moisture better than will plants used to decorate a house.

Among the fashionable and beautiful tropic palms now in great favor is the "coco de mer," or double coconut, about which many legends have existed. Inhabitants of the Seychelles Islands, in the Indian Ocean, greatly prize the double fruit, which they find floating on the water. For centuries, George V. Nash, of the Bronx Botanical Gardens, relates, the ancient people of those islands where this fruit was to be found insisted that it grew upon a tree which lived under the sea and which instantly disappeared if any one dived down to see it. Other heathen people were firm in the belief that the branches of this tree flourished above the water near the island of Java, and that a monstrous bird lived in the treetop and flew every night to the adjacent islands or to any ship which had the ill luck to stray that way. It killed and devoured tigers, elephants and such great beasts and had a special liking for sailors by way of dessert. It is told that sailors about the Indian Archipelago were careful to avoid this deadly spot.

The princes of Hindustan and the inhabitants of the Maldiv Islands believed the nuts to be a protection against poisons and to serve as an antidote to practically all ills. The sovereign of the Maldives, says Mr. Nash, charged

great sums for this fruit and punished with death anybody who owned fruit not purchased from him.

People who want the fruit of this palm have to wait a matter of twelve years for it to ma-

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SECRET SERVICE WORK.

Bureau in Washington Nerve Centre of Farreaching System.

The United States Secret Service, which is receiving a good deal of attention these days in Congress and in the newspapers, is frequently called the "least known branch of our government," and also at times "Uncle Sam's black cabinet." Its operations are at present restricted pretty closely to apprehending counterfeiters and the protection of the person of the Chief Magistrate. Until a somewhat recent date, however, Secret Service operatives were assigned to other duties, such as obtaining evidence in land fraud cases, exposing the "easton report leak" in the Department of Agriculture and in investigating charges against naval officers.

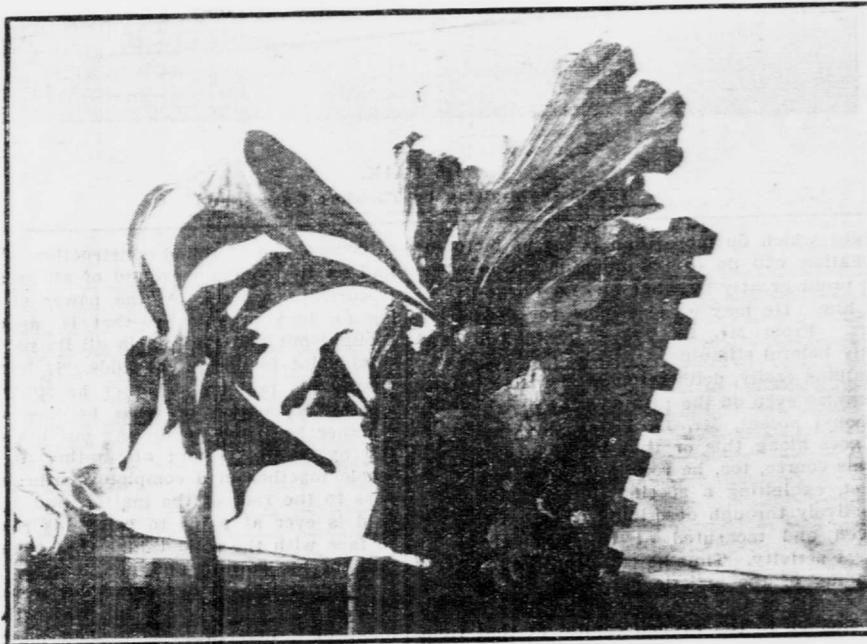
Because its primary purpose was the trailing of counterfeiters the Secret Service was made a branch of the United States Treasury Department, but while shadowing men suspected of counterfeiting the Secret Service has gathered much information of great value regarding Black Hand organizations and the operations of anarchists. Until Congress shut down on last year the Treasury Department also used the Secret Service to detect smuggling enterprises and other frauds on the customs service and to investigate robberies and irregularities of many kinds.

The headquarters of the Secret Service are in the Treasury Building at Washington. Here are the private offices of the chief of the service, John E. Wilkie, who receives a salary of \$4,000 a year, and the assistant chief, William Herman Moran, who receives \$3,000 a year. There is a clerical division, employing some half dozen men, and a large storeroom, where confiscated counterfeiting outfits, spurious coins and other contraband seized are deposited and allowed to accumulate until, at intervals of about a year, a committee is appointed to superintend the destruction of these unlawful articles.

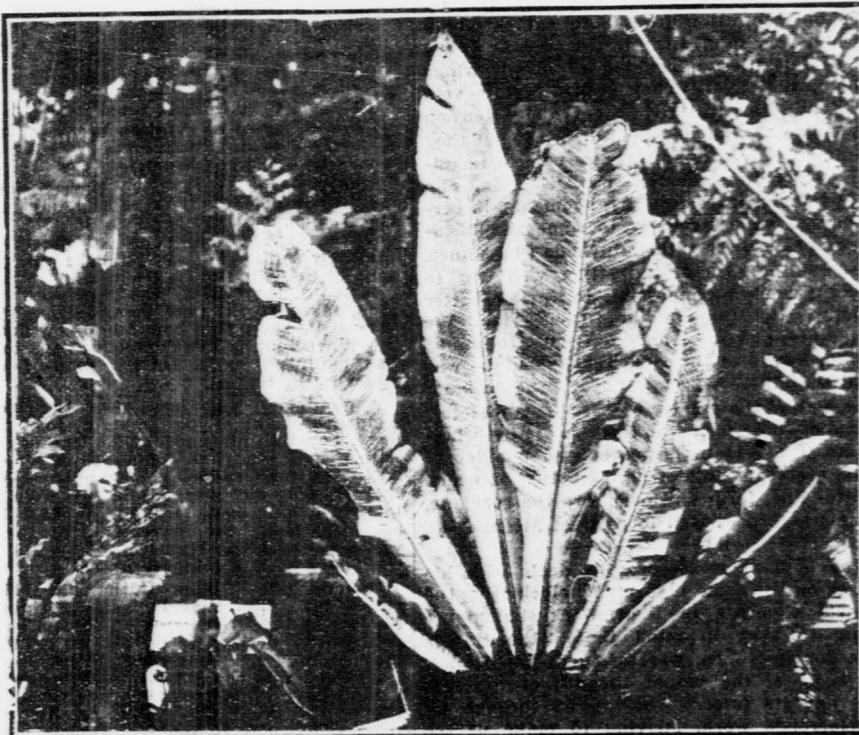
The bureau at Washington is essentially a nerve centre from which are directed operations in the twenty-five districts into which the country is divided on the Secret Service map. In each of these districts an operative is stationed, just as a patrolman is on duty on his beat. In addition to the men thus detailed to indicated geographical divisions there operate from the central office at Washington a number of trained detectives who may be sent to any place at any time.

It is this field service which makes it necessary for every Secret Service man to abandon all thought of fixed habitation, with social and family ties. He may be ordered from New York to Texas or from the mountains of Tennessee to San Francisco at an hour's notice, and it is impossible to predict in advance how long he will remain at any given place. True to his name and policy, the Secret Service aims to keep the public know just as little as possible regarding its personnel. No operative allows a photograph to be made, much less published, and he can help it, and he seldom acknowledges his identity. At headquarters there is a

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STAG-HORN FERN.
An air plant, good for decorative purposes.



GIANT TROPICAL FERN.
Popular because of its rich coloring.