FAIR WOMAN'S WORLD.

Things Great and Small that Engage Her Attention.

SOCIETY AND FASHION.

What is Going on in Those Important Domains.

WHIMS OF FAIR WOMEN.

Noted in New York or by New York Women Abroad.

Only the Rich Could Have the Fare—A Wrinkle in Apprentice Work in Millinery—A Luxurious Blond Beauty who is a Conspicuous Figure Even in Gotham—Women's Clubs a Plenty—Some Fifth Avenue Notes—Misadventures of American Girls with American Ways in Paris—Unprotected Daughters of Pilgrim Mothers.

Curious are the feminine sights in a very fashionable restaurant. I have observed a young fellow at a very small hour watching a bleached member of an opera chorus pick with effect at a bit of a bird and sip up a quart of champagne. In close proximity were high-bred girls, eating away most charmingly, and holding a fork to their lips much as they would a rose. But the food suffered an eclipse, all the same, and the indulgent fathers or privileged fiancés, unless they were absurdly wealthy, crushed a sigh when the bill for food, itemized on a little white check, fluttered down before them. But it is all very enjoyable. There are always so many lovely women and polite men, the cleanliness is so intense, the deliciousness of everything so tempting, that one is made reckless, especially if a still small voice within is asking for utterance. And by the plate-glass windows on Fifth avenue passes the most interesting panorama that New York affords. A man with a girl companion may sit in the delightful recess of one of these windows, and their regard for one another will increase with the fleeting moments. There is no place like it to warm the indifferent or the timid heart.

A friend from out of town who was here during the centennial celebration sent to me the other day to pay a bill for a dinner which he had signed for one evening when he was short of funds. The dinner was for four persons in a private room. It was not ordered beforehand, was not made a specialty of, and there was no extra service. Four persons ate and drank together, and the bill I paid was very near to $50. Up stairs there are banqueting halls where spreads may be laid, the sumptuousness of which cannot be excelled in the wide world, and I doubt if the caterers in any other country would dare to render such stupendous bills. You see, the place is run on the plan that only the rich deserve the fare.

Our fashionable women are now street sights in warm weather millinery. "How many of the dainty bonnets and splendid hats that made Fifth avenue a veritable flower show on Easter afternoon were made by fashionable milliners and in fashionable millinery shops?"

This question was put to a reporter last Monday by one of the clerks in a Broadway dry goods house.

"That would be rather difficult to answer. I suppose a great many ladies make their own headwear."

"Yes, but very few women could make some of the bonnets I saw yesterday, and yet they were not made in millinery shops. I suppose," continued the salesman, "that in almost every millinery shop in this city there is at least one girl, and in some cases several girls, who spend their evenings trimming hats and bonnets for their own personal customers. Let me give you a case in hand. My wife wanted an Easter bonnet. She wanted it to be fashionable, but not expensive. She had heard from a friend of a young woman who was one of the head trimmers in a Fifth avenue shop. She went to her and asked her to make the bonnet, and this is what it cost:

"The frame was made by the girl. My wife bought $3 worth of lace, tulle, and those fashionable green grasses. My wife already had a remnant of green velvet, and gave these articles to the milliner, who charged $1.50 for the frame and her labor. The bonnet is a beauty, and would have cost from $10 to $15 in any of the fashionable stores. Not only do milliners do this sort of outside work, but dressmakers as well. Hardly a day passes but some dressmaker's apprentice comes into this store and buys some article to be fashioned for some private customer. This adds greatly to their incomes, that are seldom extravagant, and gives them practice, but I don't believe their employers would approve of the custom."

At the theatres and in the Park a woman of blond beauty has been attracting much admiration throughout the season. She is the Baroness Blanc, and the very big and handsome young man who forms one of the large group ever about the fair creature is the husband, Monsieur le Baron. Folks used to doubt his right to the title, but that has been settled. He is a real Baron. At the play the Baroness is particularly conspicuous for her exquisite toilets, each one of which figures only upon a single occasion. She sits invariably in the front chair of the box, gazing interestedly at the performance while the curtain is up, and over the audience between the acts. A man of some sort is always whispering in her ear. She smiles occasionally, and taps him with her fan when he is especially clever. Her figure is slight and stylish, and her costumes are unexceptionable. On pleasant afternoons the Baroness drives a pair of chestnut cobs in a phaeton out over the Park. At her feet lies a huge mastiff. A groom perches behind her. Everybody turns to look at her, for her hair gleams in the sun, her hat is a wonder of gorgeous millinery, and she handles her reins and whip like a thoroughbred. She always urges her ponies to a spanking gait, and whirls by all the lumbering hacks and barouches on the road with a great showing of disdain and jingling harnesses.

In the theatres, the Park, and cafés the Baroness is ever brilliant to the eye. She cuts the greatest dash of any young woman in New York, and besides enjoying all the extravagant embellishments that go with daily and nightly entertainment, her establishment is noted for its luxury and prodigality. In her house in Fifth avenue the best of suppers, the best of wines, and the best of all good cheer find generous dispensation.

"What, my dear, going out again?"

"And pray, why not, sir? There is a meeting of the Home Committee at the club. But never mind, if you will stay at home this afternoon I'll take you with me next Thursday, which is 'gentlemen's day' at the Blue Stocking."

If New York society has not yet reached this point, let no misogynist lay the flattering unction to his soul that such a point will not be reached, and very speedily, too. Women's clubs in this big town are increasing at the rate of half a dozen a year, and their scope covers every object that is known in feminine society. There is the social, literary, religious, musical, sewing, charitable, athletic, industrial, cooking, art, and the Directory man only knows what others. There are over fifty such clubs for women now established in New York. Some, like the Sorosis, are hale, hearty, and prosperous, while many of the others are struggling through a precarious and rather unhealthy babyhood, beset by many perils and weighted down by a bewildering host of juvenile tribulations, such as no real infant, outside of a museum, ever managed to survive.

The oldest woman's club in the world is the Sorosis. It has grown stronger year by year during the twenty-four years of its existence. Before Sorosis was established, the wildest dreams of the fair sex did not include a club for women. After it was born, others soon came to bear it company. To form a club for women was found to be a comparatively easy matter after all, and pluck, joined with money and social influence, were enthusiastically enlisted in support of the movement. Mrs. D. G. Croly and fourteen other clever and practical women, who had already made reputations in the fields usually given over exclusively to men, formed the club, partly as an experiment and partly to prove to the male journalists of New York that their sisters of the pen had spirit and ability and fine independence. Their success is a matter of history. Soon after Sorosis came her sister, the Boston Woman's Club, the second in the world. After that the brood increased with prodigious fruitfulness, and, were all of the progeny alive to-day, there would be more women's than men's clubs recorded on the back pages of the City Directory.

The Pot Luck Club is one of the best known of the social sisterhoods. It is designed to comfort and extol the virtues of those housekeepers who have received unkindly criticism from their lords and masters. At the Pot Luck meetings certain members contribute evidence of their skill for the edification of their sisters, and woe be it to the luckless husband whose sneers have not been borne out by the judgment of this somewhat captious jury. There are both male and female Pot Luckers, and both sides of the controversies receive impartial consideration. But happily Pot Luckers as a rule have kindly dispositions, and disputes are rare. Among the best known members are Jennie June, Richard Henry Stoddard, the poet; Ella Wheeler Wilcox, Joaquin Miller, Edmund Clarence Stedman, Mrs. John Bigelow, and Montague Marks. The meetings are delightful treats, and the outsider who is fortunate enough to be favored with an invitation has a different idea of Pot Luck than he ever had before.

"Mrs. John Sherwood's Club" is the name commonly given to the Causerie de Lundi. It would be difficult to classify this fashionable organization any more aptly. Mrs. Sherwood is the President, and the club discusses the same sort of topics that Mrs. Sherwood has been kind enough to discuss in the public press for those many years back. Women and women's doings are talked about discursively, etiquette and rules for deportment are laid down didactically, and the great world of society is saved regularly once a fortnight, or oftener when the club meets more frequently.

The Athletic Club, which is composed of stalwart, healthy, and wealthy young women from Murray Hill, Staten Island, and other fashionable localities, is an outgrowth of the Recreation Club. The latter organization has no permanent quarters. It meets once a month for business in the drawing room of one of the members, and again on every Wednesday morning for recreation. The members take their recreation in walking, Central Park, Harlem, Washington Heights, and even New Jersey are tramped over, laughed over, and chatted over by the prettiest, freshest-faced, strongest-limbed lot of young amazons that the town of the Knickerbockers has ever seen. The Athletic Club grows from the organization, and, like all afterthoughts, is much more pretentious than its predecessor. It is building a club house, with a handsomely appointed gymnasium, and all the belongings of the gymnast's craft. There the members will race and wrestle, swing on long-ringed ropes suspended from the ceiling, "skin the cat" on the horizontal bar, broaden their shoulders between the parallels, raise great lumps on their arms in the dumb bell department, and polish off their circus course of training by having a round with soft gloves and the sand bag, and a scientific bout with the foils and the fencing master. The modish young woman of the next generation will not only be a club woman, but she will be able to settle her disputes much in the same way that clubmen do theirs when the provocation and the occasion require.

Besides these there are art and minor literary clubs in great number. The history of many of these is too well known to need even a passing mention. Among the best known charitable and industrial clubs are the Kindly, Mizpah, and Emma Lazarus. Each of these does a noble and benevolent work. This partial list would be grossly incomplete were some of the many eccentric clubs left unmentioned. There is Hereditary, Clio, Meridian, Science of Life, Spiritualist, Germ of Reason, Struggle for Truth, Socialist, Communist, Sociologic, and the Woman's True Friend. Queer names? Yes, and queer objects they have, too. If men may have their Lambs, Thirteens, and Growlers, why not women their Germs of Reason and Struggle for Truth?

What are the Fifth avenue pretentials doing? Perhaps you don't know even what a pretential is. Well, that is a new name for a New York imitation aristocrat. It is between seasons now, and social dullness reigns. The most notable commotion is for Martha Washington tea sets, and so determined is Mme. Elite to have a "replica" that orders are being made from magazine cuts. Mrs. Alexander Hamilton has a genuine colonial sugar basket, and reasonably enough declines to lend it, for once the silversmith had it in his possession the stock would flood the city, and the duplicates belittle the original. Still the demand maintains itself, and whoever can reproduce the basin, cream jug, or teapot can have his own price in exchange.

In the way of household whims is the Esquimaux corner. This quaintest of interior angles is made by hanging three rods in a corner so that, when strung with the animal rugs, the niche is completely furnished. There is a rug on the floor, and one or more on the seat of the chair, and when the portières are drawn back the effect is charming. This snuggery may be made in black bear, leopard skin, or white bear, but it is no trifle, for unless the rugs are genuine the house and everybody in it will be in a moulting condition. Mrs. Cornelius Vanderbilt, now abroad, has in her New York house one of these corner effects, after the Turkish, richly hung, and lit with a jewelled lantern. The wife of Dr. Harvey Dew also has one perfumed with Oriental incense of ravishing sweetness. Here the beautiful girl friends of the hostess, who come up from Alabama, Mississippi, and the Carolinas to visit are frequently seen, each with as many admirers as the snuggery will accommodate.

It has come to a point now when the height of elegant haste is shown in visiting card correspondence. Mrs. W. W. Astor, it is said, answered more than half her mail on calling cards, beginning the communication on the face of the card, and in the third person, and reaching a finish before the space on the back gives out. The idea is really not a bad one, for too many letters are sent and far too much written in them. Of course, small envelopes are used, and the message is stamped and sealed. Apropos of cards, do you know that New York's swellest ministers send out threeply bits of pasteboard announcing their coming? Indeed, yes; and as the announcement is timely, a "not at home" is construed into a dubious compliment.

The windows of John Jacob Astor's house on Fifth avenue look into those of a wine merchant's shop. There is an example of a peculiarity which I do not think could be found in any other American city. I never, in fact, saw any one besides a New Yorker who would live uncomplainingly next door to a livery stable or a meat market. One of each of these discordancies nestles with ruining effect within the embrace of some of Fifth avenue's most elegant dwelling houses. They are ramshackle, wooden affairs, and are only eclipsed in their decrepit vulgarity by a basement rumshop in the block opposite, the owner of which lives in a brownstone house close at hand. But trade in all forms, more usually in splendid form, is eating up our grand thoroughfare. One portion is already quite as mercantile in aspect as Broadway. It cannot be helped, for where the money is, there trade will surely go. Dressmakers and milliners will plant themselves where their emblazoned names shall confront the swell people who make their existence possible. The dressmaking business in Fifth avenue is tremendous, and is increasing yearly. A society woman has at least ten dresses in process of manufacture throughout the year. I know one lady who passes a portion of each day with her dressmaker, and during the past year she has had about seventy costumes completed for herself. This lady is an invalid who is able to go out but a little, but she has absorbed the idea sacred with her sex, that an endless wardrobe is the prime necessity of life. Her species is responsible for trade being on Fifth avenue.

As it is a custom of American girls to go about the streets here during the day without escorts, they are very apt to follow that habit when they go to Paris. Of course there are regular European travellers from this side who are acquainted with the various customs of all countries and adapt themselves accordingly, thereby escaping considerable embarrassment in their journeyings. But this is a special year, when fully three-quarters of the American visitors in Paris have never till now been outside their native States. They take their habits with them, and are constantly dropping into situations in the most innocent way that are often very unpleasant. It is an unescapable fact that the men of Paris have women who are without alone gazing in at shop windows in precisely two categories. They would not hesitate about approaching and speaking to any unattended young woman so employed whose appearance caught their fancy. Now, as Paris at this moment contains some of the fairest flowers of American loveliness, and as many of these are the freshest and most informed beauties of all that our country grows, the unpleasant incidents of the street that have occurred thus far in the season would fill a book of adventure. I knew of one most estimable girl from San Francisco, with a glorious face and a rather dashing style, who was strolling along alone one recent morning looking into the windows of the glove shops along the Rue de Castiglione. She had only been in town a day or two, and had hitherto gone about with her mother, who is her only travelling companion. A good-looking and well-dressed young fellow had been observing her for a long time without her being aware of it, and when she halted in her walk and looked about for a place to take her to her hotel, she was greatly surprised when this young man advanced with his hat raised, and asked in French if he could assist her in securing a conveyance. The young lady glanced quickly at him, and not understanding what he said, stammered in English that she could not speak French, and that she did not know who was addressing her. Immediately the young man blushed deeply, and became far more embarrassed than the girl. In the best of English he endeavored to beg her pardon, declaring that he had made a very grave mistake, that he was an American, and thought her a Parisienne. The girl really thought he had spoken to her under the impression that he knew her, and smiled upon him when he departed, relishing the humor of his mistake. She was not aware of the true merits of the thing until she happened to tell of it in the evening at the hotel, and received some well-worded advice from a friend present not to go out on the boulevards without her mother or a gentleman accompanying her.

Here at home we hear a great deal about the Pilgrim Fathers, but you just ought to go to Paris to learn all about the Pilgrim Mothers. Wherever you are, in a hotel, a pension, or in the house of one of the numerous American residents out on the Champs Elysée, you are confronted with the mother who has one or two daughters over here to finish their educations, while the father—an unknown quantity—remains in America to earn the wherewithal to render such a visit possible. The daughters are abroad to learn the languages and music, and the mother sits about like an ogre to see that they do not learn any less intellectual arts. These girls are prey for the men wherever they are discovered. "I know of one salon," a tourist in Paris writes to THE SUN, "where at least ten girls can be found each night with no protector beyond the ample mamma, who sits to one side with the hostess, while the girls go dancing about with a young clerk of one of the foreign legations, or a Lieutenant of the army, or, perhaps, a real live Minister of one of the powers. I stumbled in upon a scene last night at an American lady's house, which was especially instructive. I had wandered out to the conservatory at the rear of the house to smoke a cigarette. The violins were playing a sweet waltz in the drawing room, and, as I crossed a sort of courtyard leading to the conservatory, a couple danced by me, leaving behind them the sound of happy laughter and the fragrance of violets. I went on my way and sat down on a wicker chair beneath an azalea bush. From the other side of the bush I heard voices. At first I could not understand what was being said, so I felt entitled to linger. But soon the man's voice became more distinct, and I assure you that the speech of *Claude Melnotte*, word for word—that one in which the picture of the palace on the lake of Como is drawn, with the alabaster lamps, and the sweet songs of birds forever syllabling her name—was uttered in mellow accents. The speaker was an Italian expressing himself in English. After he had finished I heard a girl:

"Oh, Count, it sounds just like a play. That is a beautiful speech."

"Your eyes," was the reply, "would inspire poetry in even a duller man than I."

I moved away, five minutes later a well-known Italian Count, a roue and gambler of the hardest description, came out of the conservatory into the ballroom with a young New York girl, the daughter of a Pilgrim mother, leaning on his arm.

IN WOMEN'S POCKETS.

Revelations Concerning the Most Mysterious of All Receptacles.

A pretty and vivacious little woman piled her bundles on a seat in the waiting room of a Jersey ferry house, and then giving her skirts just the right shake with her body, and just the most artistic twist with one hand, sat down. Instantly she bounced up and exclaimed in a frightened voice:

"My purse has been stolen!"

"Nonsense," said her companion.

"Oh, yes, it has."

"But you have not looked."

"Looked!" exclaimed the young woman with the scared voice and face. "I guess I don't need to look. I've got on my new dress."

The other lady was perfectly satisfied with that explanation, and the woman in charge of the room was called in. After much discussion a male under official of the ferry company took part in the excitement.

"Why on earth don't you feel in your pocket?" he asked.

A singular expression settled upon the faces of the three women—an expression of mystery, blended with pity for the man.

"But why don't she feel in her pocket?" the blundering man persisted.

"She's got on a certain kind of dress, and doesn't need to," said the young woman's companion. "The idea!" she said after the man had gone. "How could I tell him that in a Directoire dress you always know what you have got in your pocket, because you sit on your pocket, and if you don't sit on a certain thing you know you haven't got it. How perfectly absurd men are!"

Put to return to the man. His face showed that he was resigned to the mystery of the "certain kind of dress," then it lighted up with a brand new idea. He turned to the companion of the girl who had lost her pocketbook, and he asked:

"Why don't you feel in your pocket? Perhaps she has laid it down somewhere, and you have picked it up, mechanically, you know."

"Lord, man," said the lady addressed. "Don't you see, I've got on a tailor-made dress. I have no pocket at all to put anything in. Excuse me, sir; but if, instead of standing and prying into the secrets of dressmaking and losing all this time, you would step out and seize the pickpocket before he gets away you would do us a great favor. He is probably out in the crowd now picking pockets."

The man went out and very wisely disappeared. The ladies waited for him.

"Did you have much in your pocketbook?" the woman of the waiting room asked of the one who lost that article.

"I had over $5," she replied. "I know I had my purse in the cross-town car, because—because I had to put up my foot to sit on so as not to let it so plainly. I was robbed between that car and this room."

"Five dollars!" exclaimed her companion. "Why, Lilian, how can you be so careless? I never had $5 in my purse in my life. I never keep anything but ferry tickets and cards and a pencil and small change in my purse. When I have bills I put them—well, I put them where no thief can ever get them, that is without doing murder."

"In your stocking?" inquired the little woman in charge of the room.

"My stocking!" the lady repeated, with evident amazement. "Of course not. Who on earth ever heard of anybody putting money in their stockings? No; when I want to keep anything like money very safe I put it where I keep my watch—right here," and she tapped the top of her corsage.

When these ladies went out the woman in charge of the waiting room talked about women's pockets.

"You know all about them," they said.

"Deary me, I should say I did," said she. "Half of my time is spent a-fussing with ladies' pockets. I've been told that a man, when he has his overcoat on, often has twenty-one pockets. If then twenty-one pockets gave men as much trouble as they give us with their one, all the men would be insane. The reason is a woman's one pocket holds more than a man's twenty. They're always coming in here and going behind that screen and dumping out their pockets to search for something they can't find.

"Sometimes they remind me of the magic fellows in the theatres which pull so many things out of a hat. Oftentimes you'll see a woman piling things on that table till you wouldn't believe she could get 'em all back again if her skirts were taken off and sewed at the bottom and the things were piled in. When I look at what is in a lady's pocket I can tell at once if she's married or single. Single girls' pockets are always full of letters, ribbons, candies, and those little colored pictures given out on the streets. Married women's pockets have everything in them—things they have picked up in going through their houses, bits of string, tacks, always two or more handkerchiefs, tradesmen's cards, scissors, samples of dress goods, buttons, spools of cotton—oh, I couldn't begin to tell you what all is in a married woman's pockets. I have seen the full of a peach basket and the weight of four pounds charged on a table by a married lady."

"The greatest surprise I ever had," said the woman, "was when a lady fainted here one day, and her husband said if I'd feel in her pocket I'd find a bottle of salts. While I was hunting for it I found she was a shoplifter, though she was wealthy and respectable. I found a lace fichu, with the price tag on it, and some lace handkerchiefs tied up in ribbon, just as they show them in the stores, and some silk stockings. There were other things that I have forgotten, not in her regular pocket, but in a kind of a big bagilke thing she had sewed in the front of her dress. Her husband was there, and he colored up and asked me to say nothing about it. 'My God!' says he, 'I thought all that was stopped long ago. You don't know what I have suffered,' says he.

"That lady was not robbed," continued the ferry woman. "Women have not been robbed on the streets now for nearly ten years. Ten years ago, when they began to carry their purses in their hands, the young thieves who did not know any better used to grab their purses and run, but even the foolishest of them got more sense long ago. Nobody snatches ladies' purses now, and this is so well understood that the most fashionable dressmakers do not put pockets in any of the new-style gowns unless pockets is specially ordered. Why don't the purses be stolen? Because there's nothing but loose change in them and sometimes not even that. There is one kind of pocketbook in which there is money; that's the kind that you see carried in the little reticules some ladies always carry. When a lady carries a reticule and keeps her purse in it, you may know she has got money in it. They do that way, because it is not every lady that will unbutton the front of her dress to take out her money in a store crowded with men, and as for them that carry it under their garters—well, they go into the private rooms here to get at their money. Land knows what they do in a store, or a horse car, or in the street. But, as I said, it is not many ladies that are troubled where to carry money, because they don't have it to trouble them."

While this loquacious matron of the ferry house was giving her tongue the license that it loved there came up to her a stately, richly dressed lady, whose face wore a look almost of anguish. Said she: "I've left my bag on the boat. What shall I do?" The matron told her to wait until the boat finished its next trip, when she would inquire whether the bag had been found by a deck hand or picked up and carried off.

"Did you have much in it?"

"My purse and handkerchiefs and—and a parcel," said the lady.

"Much in the purse?"

"No," said the lady; "my money is all right. It's in the front of my dress; but—well, it's too ridiculous, but I got up at 6 o'clock this morning and made myself four of the most delicious chicken sandwiches to eat where I'm going and where I can't get any lunch, and they are all I care for, but I care a great deal for them."

While this lady waited for news of her bag the reporter left her and the matron and went up town, determined to go to a stylish modiste and find out more about women's pockets.

"Oh, they're altogether too ridiculous," said the peachy cheeked dumpling of a girl who receives customers at the Fifth avenue temple of fashion at which a call was made. It was evident that the reporter had struck a congenial topic; the girl's big, bright eyes fairly sparkled.

"It's simply too ridiculous for anything," said she. "Last night I was at the theatre with a little party. In the middle of the first act I wanted my handkerchief. Do you happen to know where it was and where it is now, in this dress? If you was a woman you'd know that if I have a pocket at all my handkerchief must be just behind the bend of my knee. It was there last night, I'm sure, in the bottom of my pocket on nearly a yard of which I was sitting at the time. I wriggled and squirmed and twisted myself half out of shape, but, of course, I could not get it. I was with some pretty well posted New Yorkers, and they comprehended in an instant what was the matter with me. In the same instant I had five handkerchiefs in my lap—two from two gentlemen and three from that many ladies—all tossed at me in an instant. It was just too funny. Why, when I first put on this dress I had to get my sister to find something I wanted out of my pocket. How she did laugh! I couldn't even find the lounging of my pocket, although I twisted my wrist and my back in trying to get at it."

"But I am going to follow the fashion, and go without any pocket after this. In our business we find that the only possible place for a pocket is behind, under the back drapery of the skirt. You see, when a lady wears a dress it is pulled back against her person, so that there is no room for a pocket there. The only vacancy, or room, or space for a pocket is behind her, where the dress falls sheer and free from the hips. But even there it is bad, not merely because a lady has to almost unjoint herself to get into it, but because even behind the dress she puts into it will swell out her dress and break the artistic lines of it. We are putting no pockets in most of our dresses unless they are especially ordered by customers who will have them regardless of fashion. The others, who care for style, will have to carry the receptacles of various forms, which you see they use, to take the places of those barbarous old-fashioned catch-alls that have been worn so long, and which have so long prevented the highest art in dress."

LADIES FROM THE ORIENT.

The Life of Two Fair Creatures from Corea at the Legation in Washington.

WASHINGTON, May 15.—Washington society must always have something to lionize or exhibit or it yawns, complains of ennui, and wonders if life is worth living. For a long time the members of the Chinese Legation were the objects of its curious attention, but since the Coreans appeared upon the scene over a year ago this attention has been divided, resulting in a rivalry between the almond-eyed, lemon-hued foreigners that has made them blaze forth in their most gorgeous silken attire and unhesitatingly sacrifice sleep in pursuit of the bright bauble of fame as society men. The Chinese and Coreans are the only

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foreigners who wear their native costume, and are consequently conspicuous and much followed when they venture out on foot.

While there is a slight similarity between the Chinese and Corean apparel, the latter is more voluminous and abounds in oddities. The Coreans always wear their hats, in the house or out of it, at the table or in the the theatre. These hats are made of horsehair and are transparent, showing the braided top-knot of black hair through the crown. The brim varies in width according to the rank of the wearer, the widest decorations of rank embrace the social scale. The Coreans consider as a mark of beauty and a sign of wealth a large paunch. To produce the effect they wear some sort of an arrangement over their abdomens that make their garments swell out in truly Aldermanic fashion and impels the ubiquitous small boy to yell excitedly:

"Say, look at his nibs wid de bustle on in front!"

The Chinese haven't any women with them. They are great beaux, giving most elaborate entertainments at their legation, Stewart Castle. They also give frequent theatre and supper parties, and an annual ball that is always one of the most important and brilliant events of the season. All this rather puzzles the society women who want to make their acquaintance and enjoy their hospitality.

"How can we call or make and keep their acquaintance if there are no women to receive us?" they say.

The Coreans saw the situation, and with Oriental suateness decided to go them one better, so two of them sent for their wives. At first it was questioned if they would be allowed the freedom that the American women enjoy. If they had such freedom it would be a bold step and in direct opposition to their long-established customs, for in Corea the women are as carefully secluded as they are in Turkey. But the Coreans are progressive, and believe when in Rome in doing as the Romans. The men entered with zest into our life and amusements, and, accepting the situation, permitted their wives to do so also. They take them with them wherever they go, and are as attentive as lovers to them. Of amusements, they are fond of things that please the eye, spectacular plays, &c., and anything in the way of juggling or sleight-of-hand puzzles them immensely. They were delighted with Hermann's performance. They don't care for opera, and, of course, with their limited knowledge of English, cannot very well appreciate a drama. During the spring race meeting they went several times to see the races, and enjoyed them immensely. In their own country they have contests of speed, strength, and skill, so that they quickly comprehend the nature of the sport, and during the steeplechases they were most enthusiastic. Invitations fairly pour on them, and fond as they are of going out, they can respond to about one in ten, although they try to see everything that is going on.

There are now but three men in charge of the legation, the Minister having become ill and asked to be allowed to return home. It is not likely that he will come back. Another Minister will be appointed. There is another Corean here, not an attaché of the legation, who is a student at Columbia College, and who has had his hair cut short and has adopted the American dress. The two ladies here are the wives of Mr. Ye Wan Yung, the special attaché, and Mr. Ye Cha Yun, the Secretary of the legation. They all speak English a little, even the ladies, who have been here only a few months; and like all the children of the Orient they are extremely polite, gentle, and anxious to please. Speaking of the difficulty they had in learning our language and the attention they attracted, one of the men said:

"People are all very much alike. We all have two eyes and we see, two ears and we hear, one mouth and we eat; but our tongues no alike. Too bad. Too bad." And when he was asked how he would like it if everybody spoke Corean he beamed like the full moon.

The ladies are little childish-looking creatures, not more than five feet high, if that; they have delicate, slender, fragile bodies and smooth, shiny, lemon-colored faces that are really very pretty after you get accustomed to the Asiatic style of beauty. Their hair is of midnight blackness, parted in the middle, smoothly combed, and fastened in a loop at the nape of the neck with massive gold pins, not like our hairpins with two legs, but just straight, simple pins with large ornamented heads. Their eyes have the moon-tilt, are black, of course, and very bright and expressive. Their lips are full and red, and they are exquisitely clean and dainty about their persons, and fond of the most delicate fabrics. Their gowns are of silk and are all made alike, with a full gathered skirt of some bright hue sewed to a little waist like that that little girls wear to their petticoats, and which reaches only a little below the armpits. Over this is worn a little silk jacket of a bright contrasting color, and not any longer than the skirt waist. The sleeves are large and long, but not uncomfortably so. The neck is faced with ribbon, generally two pieces, the one next the skin being white, and is fastened in surplice fashion with gold pins. No buttons are visible anywhere. Where the skirt is joined to the waist a ribbon about two inches wide is passed around the body and tied in front, the ends hanging straight about half way to the floor. Their headgear is simple, and has been in fashion for hundreds of years. It takes about two yards of watered silk ribbon to make it. This is passed around the head to look something like a Turkish fez without a top to it, and the surplus ribbon is fastened together in such a way as to hang flat down the back. A tassel is fastened to the top in front and allowed to dangle over the brow, and a handsome jade ornament is put on the streamer to keep it from waving.

They have the Eastern love for jewelry, and since they have been here have bought quite a little collection of diamonds, in rings, studs, pins, &c. Mrs. Ye Cha Yun is the delighted possessor of a watch, which she wears in the bosom of her little jacket. When she showed it I asked her to tell me the time. She turned her black eyes on me with a gleam of fun and said it was early. It was about twenty minutes of 5, but she had only learned the hours, and saw the hand was between 4 and 5. Corean ladies never wear a single ring, always two. Before marriage they only wear such rings as their parents give them, after marriage the rings their husbands give them. The rings are massive and of beautiful workmanship, and are at least half an inch wide and over a quarter of an inch thick. They have very pretty hands, small, carefully kept, and with slender, tapering fingers. Their ears are not pierced, and they don't wear earrings.

They enjoy their unwonted freedom greatly and take a childish delight in every new thing they see, but express no surprise at the unusual sights. Undoubtedly they would be surprised not to be surprised.

They study industriously, and will soon be able to converse in English. Just now they can't get much beyond "Yes," "No," and animated smiles, but they understand a great deal that is said. The minister in charge speaks English very well, and can get along by himself when he is out.

They take up all the new things that come along. They have the pigs-in-clover puzzle, and every one of them has driven the pigs into the pen. They are learning to play euchre now. They have a croquet ground behind the legation, and are quite skilful at the game, having played it in Corea, and they have a billiard room in the basement, and are fond of billiards, practising every day. The ladies participate in all these amusements, and are determined to have as much fun out of life as their fairer sisters of the accident.

The legation, at Thirteenth street and Iowa circle, is a handsome double house, bright and sunshiny inside, and well arranged for the entertainments that will probably be given there during the next season. In the basement is the billiard room, kitchen, &c. On the first floor are several parlors, the dining room, and offices. Above these are the sleeping apartments and study, and on the top floor the servants' quarters. The house has American furnishings, the Oriental love of color showing itself in the hangings, which are of orange China silk. Among the curious things they brought with them are the boxes, made of wood and silver, has a Greek pattern etched on it as a border. This pattern is very common on their oldest ware in Corea. Another curious box is of mottled-green soapstone cut out of a piece of solid stone. Another curious thing is a many-panelled screen embroidered by the ladies, and waiting at the palace. The embroidery is on a white ground, and represents a waterfall with cedar trees around it, whose gnarled roots are growing out of the rocks, and across the top there is a flight of butterflies. It resembles the work of the Japanese, who derived their ideas of art from the Coreans. All the handiwork of the Coreans is fine, and their manufactures evince patience, skill, and care. Their matting is much finer than the Chinese, and their gauzes are exquisite.

They have the soft, indolent nature, philosophical mind, and love for mythology and poetry peculiar to the Orient. Their flag, which floats in the breeze over their American domicile, has a white ground with a blue disk almost obscuring a red one in the centre, and has three blue bars in each corner. The blue represents heaven and the red the earth. Looking out over the sea it seemed to them as if heaven embraced the earth, and so they represented it on their flag.

Dr. H. V. Allen, who is their interpreter, and an ardent admirer and champion of everything Corean, has translated many of their legends and folk lore, in a little volume that will soon be published, to show to us some of the beautiful fancies they have. Dr. Allen is held in high esteem by the Coreans, among whom he lived for about four years. He went there from China to practise medicine, and shortly after he arrived a rebellion broke out, and a prince of the blood was badly wounded. Dr. Allen saved him, and in gratitude the Government gave him a hospital where he practised physic, and built up a great deal of business. He also was made a Mandarin, and received the rank of Minister, and the right to wear the silk robe of the Mandarins, which is a very great honor. He is a bachelor, and is a great favorite with the ladies, who are fond of his society. He is a good-looking man, and is very fond of his pipe, which he smokes in the most unobtrusive way, and he is a great favorite with the children, who are fond of his society. He is a good-looking man, and is very fond of his pipe, which he smokes in the most unobtrusive way, and he is a great favorite with the children, who are fond of his society.

THE NEW SPRING GOWN.

Some of the Gorgeous Costumes Seen in Broadway of an Afternoon.

The glorious spring sunshine that has kissed into bloom and beauty the banks of violets and beds of tulips in the parks has wooed into brilliancy the wonderful spring gown of the season, with all its blending of hues and shadings, its clinging folds and draperies, its fringes and sashes, its buckles and buttons, and rare old girdles and clasps. It is a symphony, a poem, and a picture all in one. It is a generous little gown, granting revelations of the human form divine by its close draperies, outlining softly every curve and gracious line of beauty, but it is also a merciless, exacting vesture, demanding of its wearers absolute perfection in form, emphasizing a fleshy woman's stoutness and caricaturing a thin woman's slenderness with equal avidity.

On Broadway, between the hours of 5 and 6, the spring gown is to be found in greatest profusion and variety. There has been a great deal said and written about a certain handsomely apparelled Queen from a land called Sheba, but she would have attracted very little attention had she walked down Broadway beside a girl seen there the other day in the gay procession, dressed in a gown of ecru cloth, with a golden warp that caught and reflected every sunbeam. There wasn't much cloth in the skirt, for evidently there was very little left after the sleeves were made. They were gathered and plaited and puffed and shirred from the shoulder to the waist, and finished there with a soft frost of lace. A broad silken sash with heavy knotted fringes caught the fullness of the quaintly shirred waist in the back; in front it was held in place by a girdle of solid gold woven of fine chains and crossing from one hip to the other. The fall of lace at the neck turned back from a full, handsome throat, white and blue-veined. The hat was only a cluster of mignonette falling against a shirring of black lace, tied with a full, broad bow of green. The beautiful face beneath was glowing with color and the delight that only youth and beauty know. Dark, splendid eyes shaded with heavy, languid lashes, and full, red lips shut in a proud curve beneath, all framed in a shadowy mass of dusky hair, as she swept on, with the sunbeams merrily playing hide and seek in the glistening gown.

A pale, proud Undine is floating along near her—the Undine who has found her soul, but guards its secrets well behind the firm, close-shut lips. Her dress is all of the grayest, faintest, dreamiest green, with its fringes swaying over a drift of white. A foam of lace falls at the throat, and against the gloves of pale green and the hat is a scarf of gauze held in place on the crown of yellow hair by heavy white water lilies with golden hearts. The face is lighted by dark, solemn eyes of gray, catching a little tint from the green about them. The floating end of the long gray-green scarf that falls from beneath the water lilies and is twisted once or twice about her neck brushes against the shoulders of a dimpled, sparkling little maiden who hasn't had any experiences to conceal, but wishes she had. She has a skin like the pinky white depths of a blush rose, eyes as velvet and soft and dark as the deepest hued pansies, and a wealth of wavy brown hair, and, because she is so exquisite and dainty in coloring, she has melted herself into the severest, straightest black Directoire coat with very mannish flaps and cuffs. It folds back in front in half a dozen sharp, aggressive revers from a full-shirred skirt and bodice all of black. Just at the curve of the waist a heavy chain of old silver binds its fulness, and when the black shirrings outline the childish white throat, a string of silver beads gleam. A big black hat, with a naughty rakish bend in the rim, shades the wide, questioning girlish eyes.

A tall, slender woman, with a lot of fair hair caught with gold pins fold on fold against her head, wears a coat of rich dark green brocaded silk. Every button is a fortune in itself, with its enamelled medallion set in a border of old silver. The coat turns back very smoothly, and reveals a long Louis XIV. waistcoat of rare old brocade, in whose trailing vines lurk every tint and hue that ever sunset shadings know, so blended and combined that its iridescence is dazzling. The skirt is scant to the verge of skimpiness, but the slender hips and lithe shapely limbs make some exquisite curves in their swift changing positions that quite reconcile one to the fashion.

A score of conventional dainty gowns with the long, straight panels, the high puffed sleeves, the broad revers and flaps, the enormous buttons, and all in shades of green or gray, old rose or ecru, flutter past, and then a plump little matron turns along with a rather striking gown of green. The skirt is of black lace gathered over green, and has long, straight tabs of green cloth at the side; the indispensable revers, the cuffs, all the edges are bordered with the most peculiar, gleaming, waving fringes. You cannot determine what its material is until she brushes close against you as she sweeps daintily around a little pool of water in the pavement, and you see that the shining strands are tiny cocks' plumes set in a band of moss-blue silk.

A tall, slim, angular girl has defiantly emphasized her somewhat ungainly proportions by a perfectly straight black skirt, scant and soft, and a vivid green waist, with immense sleeves, which the breeze puffs out into huge wings. There is nothing so green but that it grows dim in the brilliancy of that bodice. The grass in the parks grows pale with envy beside it, and the fresh green leaves on the trees shake nervously in its presence.

Another girl with heavy hips, wears an accordion skirt of dark brown, with a broad scarf of gorgeous pla