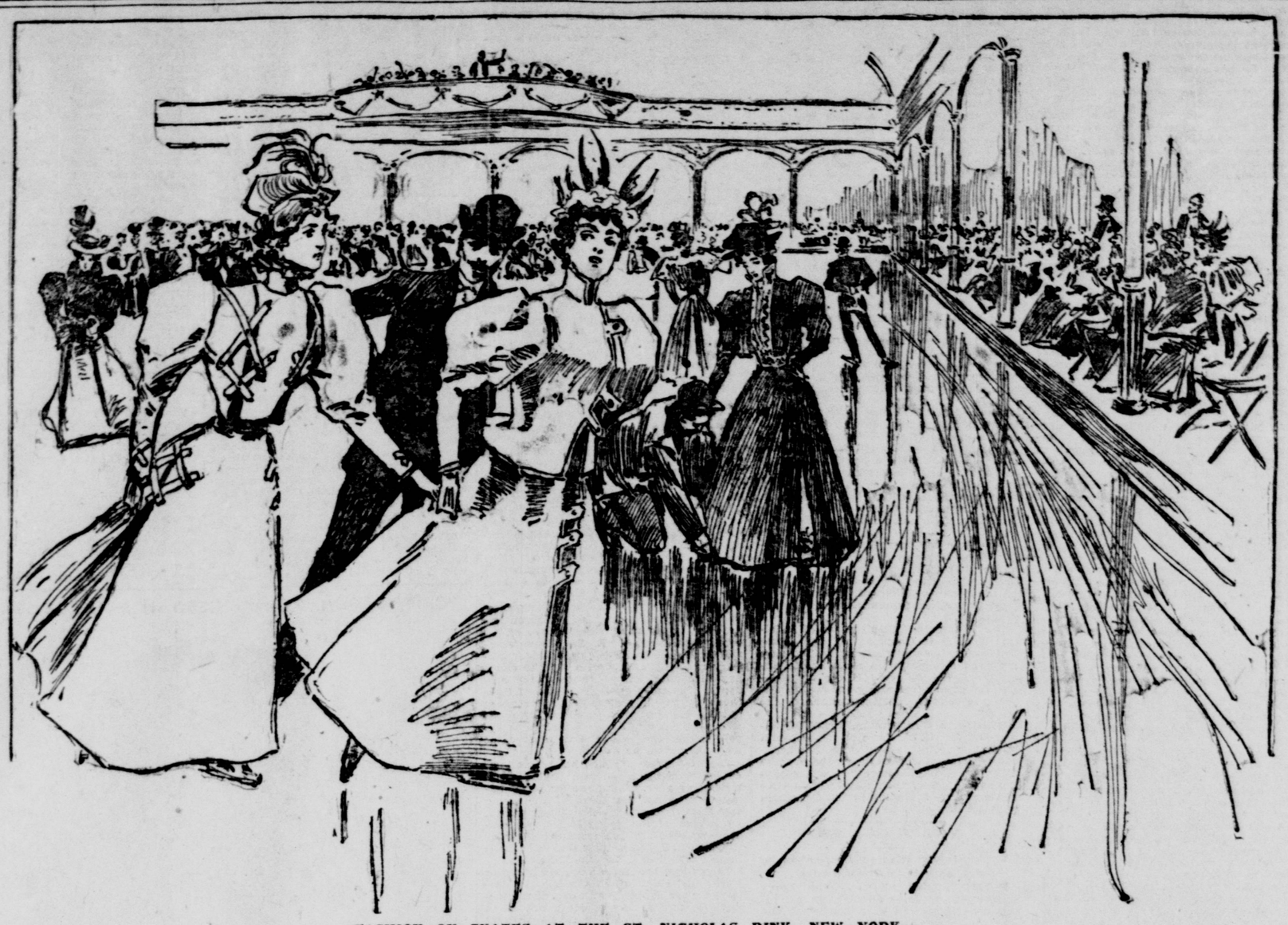
SPORTS FOR WINTER.

WOMAN GOES SKIMMING OVER THE ICE OF A FASHIONABLE RINK.

Rosy-cheeked Swells at Lenox—Skating Parties Supersede Theater Parties—Jaunty Jackets and Soft Furs—A New Evening Hood—All Suggested by the Pastimes Suitable for the Season of Ice and Snow.



FASHION ON SKATES AT THE ST. NICHOLAS RINK, NEW YORK.

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"Winter is coming, oh, ho! ho! ho! Winter is coming with ice and snow!" sing the little children in the schools, but, to speak in the vernacular, that doesn't cut any ice with the society woman who wants to skate. For whether winter comes or not, the woman who can afford it, or rather whose escort can afford it, is always sure of a frozen pathway, especially prepared for her benefit, where she can set her feet a-flying after one another in a never-ending race round and round the course.

Fancy skating is an accomplishment which is by no means confined to the regime of the professional. Mrs. John Jacob Astor, Mrs. Ogden Mills, Miss Virginia Fair and Miss Julia Grant are as proud of their "figure eights" and their waltz steps on skates as is Carmencita of her Spanish contortions.

It is not to be expected that society will be athletic all summer and then settle down to inaction for the rest of the year. The muscles, which have been trained to work, will clamor for something to do, and as there isn't much of anything useful in the line of manual labor that a society woman can do without risking her social position, she must find an outlet for her surplus energy in some form of pleasure-giving exercise.

Bicycling is out of the question, on account of the ice and snow, bowling and billiards are all very well, but they grow monotonous for lack of fresh, bracing air.

The folks who stay at Lenox until after the Christmas holidays are acquiring the rosy cheeks and brilliant eyes by this healthful exercise which will last them the rest of the winter. Outdoor exercise in winter has the advantage of summer sports in that it does not involve the dreaded sunburn, which, however much it may be affected in midsummer, is wholly incompatible with decollete opera and ball gowns.

There are plenty of private lakes and ponds in the country, where the daughters of wealth may pursue health on flying wings of steel, but the city girl is close behind her in the race, even though she takes her exercise within four walls and underneath electric stars, with no moon to lend romance to the situation.

The artificial ice rink has many advantages over nature's handiwork, the chief of which is the fact that it is independent of the elements. Thaws and heavy snows do not interfere with the manufactured article in the least, and one can make plans which are as sure to be carried out as any tea, or ball, or dinner.

Skating parties are the popular social diversion, and bid fair to replace the theater party, which would be a very sensible turn of affairs. For if there is any social function which is in all its aspects decidedly unsocial, it is the theater party—unless of course it is given in a box, and there are objections to this. People go in twos and threes and take their seats just as if it wasn't a theater party, and then everybody feels guilty and uncomfortable because it is impossible to talk to more than two neighboring members of the party throughout the entire evening, and yet as it is a theater party, this seems to be shockingly bad manners. This detracts from the enjoyment of the performance as well as the society of the two neighbors. A theater party in a box is a different matter, for there one has an opportunity to display one's pretty clothes, but even here one encounters the difficulty of arranging seats impartially.

At a skating party, however, there is as much opportunity for getting around to all the members as at an ordinary dance, and if one doesn't happen to fancy one's neighbor, it is very easy to take another position.

At the big rink which belongs to the St. Nicholas Skating Club, of New York, there is every opportunity for social enjoyment, and being brilliantly lighted, it offers an incentive for the display of handsome skating costumes.

Since the place is heated as well as lighted, there is not the same necessity for furs and heavy wraps as if one were blueing the noses and purpling the cheeks in Jack Frost's own unvitiated atmosphere. Nevertheless fur and ice have so long been associated in the minds of those who skate that they will not soon be separated, and besides, such a good opportunity to display one's newly purchased muff and boa is not to be disregarded. There are new fashions and jackets as well as furs to display, and for ideas in this particular line there is no better place to visit than the fashionable skating rinks.

The jacket is preferable to the cape, as it is more trim, and offers less resistance to the breeze than a cape. Tight-fitting coats are worn by many of the skaters, but the loose empire jacket is more graceful and allows of more freedom of movement than the other.

Suits with coats to match are great favorites with skaters. A gray tweed has the left side of the skirt trimmed with tabs and buttons, an arrangement which is repeated in the jacket that buttons up diagonally with the same sort of tabs. One tab at the shoulder fastens at the very edge of the sleeve. The jacket is box-shaped in front, but fits in at the waist in the back. The high collar is a fair sample of the kind that comes on all the new coats. It stands up close around the face, leaving no room for the cold breezes to circulate around one's neck, and very effectually protecting the wearer against the elements. The hat worn with this suit was a small toque trimmed high in front with birds.

A dress which was worn without a wrap was made with a pleated Eton that hung loose at the bottom and disclosed a waistcoat of embroidered trimming.

The hat was a Tam o'Shanter shape trimmed with waving paradise plumes.

One of the most tasteful costumes on the ice the other night was worn by a little Boston lady who was one of a jolly skating party. The dress was a very dark green rough goods that suggested the summer crepons, but was much heavier. The skirt was plain, and the waist had an Eton jacket which opened over a yellow front veiled with cream lace. The belt and collar were made of yellow silk. Over this dress she wore a brown cloth coat, which looked as if it had come direct from Paris, but she told me in confidence that her dressmaker made it. She had purchased the cloth to harmonize with some narrow mink fur which she "had in the house," and had had it made in the pleated box fashion that is seen on so many of the imported coats. "You know, I can wear this style because I am so slight," she added. The mink fur had been used to edge the fronts of the coat and the collar, cuffs and pocket flaps.

Her hat was just a little, plain, brown turban that turned up a little more over the left eyebrow than anywhere else, and right there was one of those feather pompons that looks like a small cherry twig with its leaves turned up to the light. The feathers were white, edged with black, and beside them was a small black and white aigrette. The edge of the turban was bound with mink to bring it into harmony with the jacket.

The Boston lady's jacket hung loose in box pleats from the neck, a style which differs slightly from that which is called "Empire," and which is made with a yoke and is not pleated in the back. The latter are very stylish and very dressy, but as they are all imported they are also very expensive.

The green and brown costume which we have been discussing had a finishing touch which must not be forgotten. Around the neck was a box pleated ruff of taffeta ribbon with ends which could be tied in a bow or allowed to hang to the bottom of the jacket. Inside the ruche, and standing up around the face and hair, was a pleating of wide Chantilly lace—a dainty touch which relieved the somber tones of brown and green.

So much for the cold weather clothes, whose chief aim is to aid their wearers in the battle with the elements. In the realm of dainty nothings that one sees in the shops, an evening hood of white Brussels net is one of the newest and prettiest creations. The net is dotted and in shape the hood very much resembles the one worn by the fabled Red Riding Hood. It is gathered in around the neck with a skirt or cape that falls over the shoulders. Around the front the hood is wired to stand out away from the face, so as not to disarrange the hair. There is a border of white feather trimming around this wired edge, and at the top are loops of wide green taffeta ribbon, which also forms the ties under the chin. One of these hoods can be easily made by a damsel deft of hand, and will be found extremely useful to young women who attend many evening parties. They may be made of colored net, or indeed of any light, fleecy material in any shade.

To make last year's high crowned hat look more up to date, put in a wide velvet bandeau to tilt the hat up on the left side, and cover the crown with light colored velvet to match that on the bandeau.

The latest thing in corsets is made of snakeskin. Thus closer and closer does the serpent creep to the heart of his first and fairest victim.

ANNIE LAURIE WOODS.

The School Lunch Basket.

"What shall I provide for lunch for the children?" is now a question that troubles mothers, many mothers, careful mothers, that is, who have the welfare of their growing children at heart.

A good many get over the question by supplying the child with a few cents wherewith it may purchase what most suits its own taste, regardless of the wholesomeness or digestibility of the article. Nine out of every ten schoolgirls will choose pickles and munch them through the recreation hour regardless of injury to digestion or complexion.

Now that hygiene and everything pertaining to it receive so much attention the important question of children's luncheon should not be overlooked. This meal is partaken of at the very time when the child has most appetite, and for that reason should be supplied with something at once wholesome and nourishing. Every mother, though she may not think so, should personally superintend the putting up of her children's lunches and not leave them to a careless, indifferent servant. Don't scramble together a hodge-podge of the remnants of the breakfast, but have something nice and dainty to satisfy and tempt the growing child's appetite.

A nice cake, cheap, and at the same time not too rich, may be made from the following recipe: Two scant cups of soft sugar, four well-beaten eggs, a tablespoonful of butter, and three small cups of flour. The sugar and eggs are beaten very light, the butter melted and beaten in, then the flour and a little yeast powder added, with a dash of any flavor liked. Bake slowly until done, and you have a very pretty and good plain cake, which, if iced, will do to grace any tea table. Sandwiches should by all means find a place in the lunch basket. Make them of thinly sliced bread, with some appetizing filling; bits of nice cold meat cut very thin, sardines seasoned with a dash of lemon juice or even hard boiled eggs sliced. A very nice filling can be made from the yolks of eggs boiled hard, mashed fine and seasoned with a little salt, a grain of mustard, and mixed to a paste with a little good vinegar.

Jellies, jams and preserves are all wholesome and easily carried in the lunch basket, and with some crisp fresh crullers are entirely palatable.

Given a nice sandwich, a slice of fresh plain cake or a cruller or a bit of fruit, there is no question but what the capricious appetite of a child should be well satisfied. Given the ingredients to make a dainty meal, it should also be arranged properly, and for this purpose a basket is necessary.

A good midday meal is essential to the well-being of child life, and the lunch basket should therefore be made a special care of the person most concerned in the children's welfare and health.

Fifty-Year-Old Bonnets.

Sarah Bernhardt's latest move is not likely to increase her popularity with people who consider themselves still in the prime of life. It is nothing more or less than a revival of the costumes of Louis Philippe, which she has effected by giving "La Dame aux Camelias" with the actors garbed in the fashion of the period at which the play was written. The Paris critics let the play pass unnoticed and devoted all their space to consideration of the costumes, and the women who had come to laugh at the antiquated and silly fashions of 1845 remained, not to pray, but to admire the dainty appearance of the actresses in their quaint gowns. From the stage to the street and the drawing room is but a short step in Paris, so that we may expect to see scoop bonnets and wide, stiffly starched skirts about us soon, and perhaps another onslaught of crinoline and hoops. But to revive a fashion that was within the memory of living men and women makes them feel as if they had become objects of antiquarian interest. It is worse than reading one's own obituary.

THE HOUSE AND HOME.

If you wish to have a wall papered which has previously been whitewashed, it must be well brushed over with vinegar or the paper will not stick.

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Salt is useful when mixed with vaseline to cleanse hands that have become grimy through household work. Rub the mixture well into the hands, and then wash thoroughly with ordinary soap.

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When the carpets are to be relaid for the winter, spread several thicknesses of newspapers over the floor. The room will be much warmer, and the carpet will wear twice as long as if laid on the bare floor boards.

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To mix mustard, first boil and cool the water. Put the mustard in a cup with a pinch of salt, and slowly mix with it enough boiled water to make it drop from the spoon without being watery. Stir and mix well, and rub down the lumps with the back of a spoon. Don't mix more than enough for daily use.

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So large has the chafing dish outfit become that some women now have in their dining room or the living room a pretty cupboard of oak to hold the dish, the bottle of alcohol, spoons and plates, the knives and forks and condiments. This makes it more easy to have impromptu supper than more easy to have an impromptu supper than if the necessary articles were scattered.

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Red hands are attributed to a variety of causes—cold feet, imperfect digestion, imperfect circulation, tight gloves and clothing, and too much or too little hot water. Ugly hands are not worth a moment's worry. Keep them nice, and have the sleeves loose and the cuff of soft stuff or lace reaching down to the knuckles.

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Wet Boots.

If leather boots, when wet, are filled with hay or paper directly they are taken off the feet, they will not stiffen or lose their shape. The hay quickly absorbs the damp. Wet boots should never, on any account, be placed near the fire. Paraffine will soften boots which have become stiff through wet and restore their suppleness. Varnish applied to the soles of boots will not only keep out the damp but will render them more durable. The soles should be covered with a coat of varnish and allowed to dry. This process should be repeated three times.

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Sachets.

Little sweetly perfumed sachets, or packets, as they are often called, are placed in handkerchief boxes and bureau drawers and among my lady's dainty clothing. If the little packets be put in wardrobes or drawers where woolens or flannels are to be kept, and filled with the following ingredients, the moth fly will shun them. Have the druggist pound to a powder an ounce each of cloves, nutmeg, cinnamon, caraway seed, mace and Tonquin beans, and mix with them six ounces of powdered orris root. This will be found an excellent perfume.

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Habit vs. Opinions.

If we look back upon the usual course of our feelings we shall find that we are more influenced by the frequent recurrence of objects than by their weight and importance, and that habit has more force in forming our characters than our opinions have. The mind naturally takes its tone and complexion from what it habitually contemplates.—Robert Hall.

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A Good Listener.

Don't let your eyes wander when a story is told you that taxes your patience, or endeavor to listen to some more amusing conversation around. Your "Yes" and "No" will be ejaculated inappropriately, and your intelligence put to a severe test. It has been written: "They are never alone that are accompanied with noble thoughts," but when you mix with the world and move in the world of society, above all things let these thoughts be "seated in the hearts of courtesy."

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Skates of Gold and Jewels.

Skates made of the most costly metals and ornamented with precious stones grow commoner in this country every year among the rich classes. In Russia skates are made of gold, except the blade. One of the diplomatic staff has a pair of skates worth £3,000. The empress of Austria has a pair said to have cost £10,000. The young queen of Holland has a pair which cost £5,000.

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The Footstool.

Not enough attention has been paid to the footstool. It is a very important article of furniture. It is as necessary to comfort as a chair. It relieves nerve tension and gives a restful feeling. Yet it is not all that it should be, or was not until a gentleman set the matter right. He has provided an elegant construction that, to use his own words, has a main cylindrical plush covered footrest, and an adjustable upholstered shelf, mounted on arms and adapted to be set at any variety of elevations that may be desired. It is so arranged that it can be adjusted with the feet. This footstool cannot be used for throwing in the settlement of domestic disagreements.

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To Beautify the Home.

Portieres add much to the beauty of an apartment, and should be selected with a view to harmonize with the whole effect of the room. The pretty denims of the best quality make lovely portieres, and a new material known as satin lambell, in two tones, is very popular for room draperies. Liberty velvets will always be beautiful for portieres, and a heavy Bedford cord material is also suitable.

No longer are tall, flowering plants used for decorating the table. Instead, there are low dishes tastefully arranged with choice flowers, and delicate trailing plants mingled with appropriate leaves and mosses. Another pretty way to arrange flowers for the table is to fill a low dish with small blocks of ice and sweet-smelling buds and blossoms.

The handsomest table linen is hemmed by hand, and is developed in pure white. The initials should be richly embroidered in white, and the bed linen should be hemstitched. The latter can be bought ready-made these days and of lovely quality. It should all be hemstitched, if the latest fashion is desired.

If you particularly admire an author, and wish to preserve your admiration, never make his personal acquaintance.

It is depressing to think that many disloyal husbands are conscious of having the very best of wives.

No man can be said to be defeated in any enterprise until he has acknowledged his defeat.

Household Hints.

Egg plants bought now may, if they are in perfect condition, be kept a month if wrapped in paper and put where it is cool and dark.

If your hall is narrow place a mirror opposite the parlor door. This helps out by reflection the very narrow space usually given to this part of the house.

Woodenware, such as chopping trays and molding boards, should never be dried by the fire, as, if exposed to heat while wet, they will warp and crack.

To brighten carpets, wipe them after sweeping with warm water which has had a few drops of ammonia poured in it. It will make them look fresh as new.

One teaspoonful of ammonia put in a cupful of water will clean gold or silver jewelry. A few drops under a diamond will clean it immediately, making it very brilliant.

A scorch mark, if not too heavy, may be removed by moistening with water and laying in the sun. Repeat the moistening two or three times and the mark will disappear.

Olives look very pretty when served on a small dish, garnished with glossy leaves and small red peppers. If used in the winter pickled peppers may be taken for the garnish.

Stale bread cut in slices, then laid together again, folded in a dampened napkin, slipped into a paper bag and laid in a hot oven for fifteen minutes will come out like fresh bread.

To clean windows, put one or two tablespoonfuls of ammonia into a bucket of warm water. After washing thoroughly rub with old newspapers and they will look beautifully bright.

Grease spots may be taken out with weak ammonia in water, and if very carefully applied will remove spots from paintings and chromos. Lay soft, white paper over and iron with a moderately hot iron.

In escaping from a fire creep or crawl along the floor of the room, with your face as near the floor as possible. As smoke ascends there is always a fresh current of air in which you can breathe with greater ease near the floor.

Equal parts of ammonia and turpentine will take the paint out of clothing, even if it has become hard and dry. Wet the spots often and wash out in soap suds. Wash hair brushes and combs in ammonia water, rinse and dry in the sun.

Skirts do not hang quite the same as last year, but it is possible to make last year's skirts over. Net or tulle covering put over the gowns can be modelled after the latest patterns, and the ruching can be made by any seamstress in the house. A well fitting waist can easily be covered with full folds of the net or chiffon. Berthas are used, though not so full as they were, particularly on the front of the waist, and on the sleeves they are caught up and turned over, using a bunch of flowers or a bow of ribbon.

Reflections of a Bachelor.

A wise man never tells a woman that she looks well in a veil.

There never was an intellectual woman who didn't envy some pretty one.

A man's opinions almost always have some little weight, except in his own family.

Love is like the toothache. It makes every other feeling seem as though it were not worth mentioning.

Girls always seem to think they have to buy a whole lot of fussy lace things to wear just because they are going to be married.

The woman who marries a man with an idea of devoting her whole life to reforming him, generally compromises on taking care of her own complexion.

VALUABLE RECIPES.

Post-Intelligencer Menu.

BREAKFAST.

Oranges, or grape fruit.
Rice, with cream and sugar.
Meat croquettes. Toast.
Buckwheat cakes. Sugar syrup.
Coffee.

LUNCHEON.

Cold meat. Chile sauce.
Baked sweet potatoes. Fried apples.
Pumpkin pie. Cocoa.

DINNER.

Cream of celery soup.
Boiled salmon. Hollandaise sauce.
Turkey with cranberries.
Mashed potatoes. Creamed turnips.
Scalloped tomatoes.
Apple and walnut salad.
Mince pie. Nuts. Raisins.
Coffee.

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Celery Soup.

One large bunch of celery, one pint of milk, one pint boiling water, one small onion cut fine, one large tablespoonful of flour, salt and pepper, a pinch of mace; boil the celery, cut up fine in the water, thirty-five minutes; let the milk and onion and mace come to a boil; skim them out; then strain the celery into the milk, thicken with the flour, and cook for ten minutes longer; salt and pepper to taste, and, just before serving, stir in one cup of cream or one raw egg well beaten in a little milk. Serve hot.

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Hollandaise Sauce.

Make a drawn butter sauce, remove from the fire, and add yolks of two raw eggs, juice of half lemon, one tablespoonful of chopped parsley and one teaspoonful of onion juice.

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Chestnut Stuffing for Turkey.

Cook one quart of blanched chestnuts in boiling stock till tender, press them through a ricer, season with four tablespoonfuls of butter, a generous teaspoonful of salt and a dash or two of pepper. Sweet herbs, onion juice, parsley or lemon juice may be added if desired. A pint of finely chopped chicken or veal or a pint of bread crumbs may also be added.

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Egg Dumplings.

One egg, one cup of milk, one heaping teaspoonful of baking powder, flour enough to make quite a thick batter; drop into hot gravy, cover over and cook about ten minutes. These are nice with stewed chicken or mutton stew.

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Apple and Walnut Salad.

Pare and slice thin and cut in small squares sufficient crisp, sour apples to make two cupfuls, add one cupful of walnut meats (these may be blanched or not, as you prefer); mix well together and pour over them a mayonnaise; place a lettuce leaf on each individual plate and a spoonful of the salad in the center of the leaf. With this salad serve cheese straws or a wafer with melted cheese on top.

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Tomato Sauce.

Melt three tablespoonfuls of butter and cook it in a tablespoonful of sliced onion and three spoonfuls of flour, and brown; then add one cup of strained tomato pulp, one of well seasoned brown stock, and salt and pepper to taste. Strain out the onion before serving.

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Suet Pudding.

To one teacup of suet minced down fine add four teacups of flour, half a pound of raisins, one teacupful of molasses, a teaspoonful of baking powder and a scant teacupful of milk, with a little salt and cinnamon to flavor. Boil for nearly three hours and serve with sauce. The baking powder should be mixed with the flour when dry.

FASHION ECHOES.

A durable material for traveling costumes is mohair, and it now comes in heavy weight for winter wear. The iridescent mohairs are very stylish. Blue and gray, black with cerise or green, or green with tan, make good, serviceable colors.

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There is a fancy for materials with black and colors of different kinds interwoven. These fabrics make stylish and becoming gowns.

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The colors most in fashion for evening gowns this winter are all the shades of yellow, from the pale yellow to deep orange, green of every conceivable tint, heliotrope from a pinkish mauve to the deep royal purple, and white from the clear to the cream.

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Elderdown robes for the bedroom are now trimmed with fur down the front and around the deep collar. Heretofore elderdown wrappers have had a satin binding around the collar and cuffs and that was the only trimming, but all the new ones shown this season are fur-trimmed. One very pretty robe was navy blue elderdown with a white polka dot. It was trimmed in white fur. Another dainty gown was of pale blue trimmed in mouffion, and still another was of pink elderdown trimmed in mink.

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In most of the new gowns there is fastened in the back below the waist an arrangement which is suspiciously like the old-time bustle. It is made of muslin trimmed with ruffles, and has curved flat steels which hold it out. This bustle is fastened to the lining of the gown by means of buttons, so that it may be laundered, for it must be quite stiffly starched to look well.

These small bustles are all very well if they grow no larger, but there is always a tendency also to increase the size as soon as they begin to be worn.

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Green is the favorite color of the winter. Entire gowns are made of green, or else it is used in combination with blue or brown. Grass green of taffeta silk, when combined with blue, makes a striking contrast, and is used for vest fronts worn with bolero jackets.

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Young girls are wearing blue more than any other color this winter, and gray furs are worn with blue street costumes. Gray furs are especially becoming to fresh young skins.

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Fur is worn on all kinds of house gowns, from the lounging robe to the ball dress. There are several inexpensive furs which make admirable dress trimmings.

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Black gowns of satin will be worn for evening during this season. They are embroidered in colors or trimmed in some of the iridescent jeweled trimmings. Black net a little coarser than Brussels net is worn for evening, made up over black satin. Black chiffon and mousseline de soie are made up over colors. They are trimmed with accordion pleating edged with narrow black velvet ribbon, or with gold or silver embroidery.

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There are many gauze trimmings for evening gowns with tiny spangles and jewels. Some are formed into flowers, with the design in spangles and the center in jewels. Jewels, whether real or imitation, are worn to an almost absurd degree. They are everywhere flashing on the hat, coat, gown, umbrella and even on the gloves. The mock jewels are so cleverly made that it is almost impossible to distinguish some of them from the real gems.

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Flower hats are to be in vogue all the winter, but are worn only for theater and dress occasions. The aster in all the different colors is one of the favorite flowers used, also the geranium. A very pretty hat was made of pink geraniums with the green leaves. In striking contrast to the flower hat are those made of fur. Toques made entirely of fur are considered very smart for street wear.

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There is a fashion for natural flowers as well as for gowns, hats or wraps. One season it is the violet, another year it will be a certain kind of rose or chrysanthemums. This year chrysanthemums are not so fashionable as they have been in past seasons. They are still the most effective flower to use in decoration, but not for wear. No flower can for any time supplant the violet in the affections of a woman. It has a certain refinement of its own which makes it appropriate for all occasions. Bouquets to be carried are of flowers as near the color of the gown as possible. They are tied with broad watered ribbon, satin ribbon being no longer considered the proper thing.

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Boutonnieres are growing larger. Very pretty ones are formed of three white carnations with a few violets in the center.

Lady Tennyson.

Mrs. Fields has added a chapter on Lady Tennyson to her "Authors and Friends" for the new edition of the book. Here is a bit from the volume:

"The social atmosphere of Farringford, which depended upon its mistress, was warm and simple. A pleasant company of neighbors and friends was gathered when 'Maud' was read aloud to us—a wide group, grateful and appreciative, and one to which he liked to read. After this the mists of time close over! I can recall her again in the gray dress and kerchief, following our footsteps to the door. I can see her graceful movement of the head as she waved her adieux; I can see the poet's dusky figure standing by her side, and that is all. Sometimes she lives confusedly to the world of imagination as the Abbes at Almesbury; and sometimes, as one who knew her has said, she was like the first of the three queens, 'the tallest of them all, and fairest,' who bore away the body of Arthur. She was no less than these, being a living inspiration at the heart of the poet's every-day life. It would seem to be upon another visit that we were talking in the drawing room about Browning. 'We should like to see him oftener,' she said; 'he is delightful company, but we cannot get him to come here; we are too quiet for him!' I found food for thought in this little speech when I remembered the fatuous talk at dinner tables where I had sometimes met Browning, and thought of Tennyson's great talk and the lofty serenity of his lady's presence."

CHATS BY THE WAY.

ETIQUETTE OF A LADY'S WRITING DESK.

Niceties Which Should Mark Correspondence, Especially Between Ladies—Good Taste in the Selection of Paper—The Big Sleeve Still and the Round Dinner Table—Hints for a Cotillion.

There are a number of points of "writing desk etiquette" which many women are careless about observing. In the first place, choose good, thick and unruled writing paper and use jet black ink. In writing a letter date it at the beginning on the righthand side; a note should be dated at the end on the lefthand side. Fold and address a letter neatly and put the stamp on straight in the righthand corner, and be sure you put as many stamps on as the weight requires. Use sealing wax if you can do so neatly, but avoid it if you cannot.

It is well to answer letters promptly, and one must never neglect to write to a hostess after making a visit at her house; this should be done at once upon your return home.

Always sign a letter with your full name. A letter addressed to a married lady should be with her husband's full name or initials. It is well to have one's address engraved at the top of one's note paper, but when you have not, do not neglect to write your address in the letter sent to a person who does not know it and from whom an answer is desired. Postal cards are very convenient for business communications and a supply should always be kept in a pigeonhole of one's desk. A woman's writing desk should contain besides different sizes of writing paper, pens, pencils, erasers, blotters, pen wiper and postage stamps. There are many novelties in sterling silver for the desk which are pretty and useful and make most desirable Christmas gifts.

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The round table is the shape most in favor now and is considered better style than the square table. Lace-trimmed dinner cloths are not considered in good taste, though they are permissible for luncheons. For a dinner, very fine damask is the best cloth to use.

In arranging floral decorations, low effects should be aimed at, so that the guests may easily see one another. It is no longer the vogue to put one or a cluster of flowers at each plate; the only flowers on the table are those in the center. The name cards are very simple this season. Many are decorated with the hostess' monogram or crest and the name of the guest is written in ink by the hostess.

Goblets are preferred to tumblers as they give a more artistic finish to the table. Forks are always placed at the left of the plate; the knives and soup spoon at the right. As butter is no longer the fashion at formal dinners, no butter spreader is required.

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What to do with the dress waist with its enormous sleeves was a perplexing question to many women a few months ago; they were such a tax on the closet room that something had to be substituted. Many women had boxes in their rooms which served a two-fold purpose for storing away their dress waists and as corner seats, window seats or divans. The boxes were covered with denim, chintz or any material desired. The material is tacked on with fancy-headed tacks. The tops of the boxes are covered with curled hair or cotton first, to make it soft, and then the cover is put on, sometimes with a little box plaited ruffle and sometimes perfectly plain. Such a box may be fashioned at home and is very inexpensive. It will be found quite as useful since the fall of the big sleeve as during its reign, for a dress waist always keeps fresher and in better shape if laid out flat instead of being hung up.

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The "Li Hung Chang figure" is one of the newest and quaintest figures for this season. Chinese parasols with ribbon knots for the gentlemen and fans with ribbon bows to match for the ladies are distributed by two ladies dressed in Chinese costume, who waltz slowly around the room. Color of ribbons are matched and dancing is begun. The holly berry wreath is another novelty. Wreaths may be made of laurel, or smilax, or anything green, and clusters of scarlet berries are fastened in them. These are for the ladies, and the men have a single cluster of the berries.

The flower figure is ever new, because it is so daintily pretty. A figure which provokes any amount of fun and laughter is the apron figure. Each man selects for himself an apron, which is tightly rolled and tied with a cord. The one who first unties his knot and puts his apron neatly on has his choice of partners. The knots must always be deftly tied. The aprons are in all sizes—long, short, full and scant, so that it is a most ludicrous sight, and provokes a great deal of mirth.

The two-step holds its own and is still the popular dance, but the Spanish waltz, Harvard caprice and La Czarina also find great favor.

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An enthusiastic young author has evidently fallen in love and writes this of "A Woman's Laugh":

"A woman has no natural grace more bewitching than a sweet laugh. It is like the sound of flutes on the water. It leaps from the heart in a clear, sparkling rill, and the heart that hears it feels as if bathed in the cool, exhilirating spring. How much we owe to that sweet laugh! It turns the prose of our life into poetry; it flings showers of sunshine over the darksome wood in which we are traveling; it touches with light our sleep, which is no more the image of death, but gemmed with dreams that are the shadows of immortality."

SMASHED THE CROCKERY.

An Elopement Results in a Smashing of China.

Unusual excitement attended the marriage in New York city the other day of Miss Virginia Rouss, daughter of Millionaire Rouss, and her cousin, David Lee.

The wedding was an elopement. Virginia is the only daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Rouss, who discouraged suitors coming to the handsome Fifth avenue home. Both parents hoped the girl would not marry, although Mrs. Rouss was willing, provided the man was wealthy and socially prominent. She adopted all sorts of schemes to dismiss any bold youth who sought to call on her pretty daughter. Some time ago David Lee, a cousin of Virginia, and descended from the Lees, of Virginia, came to New York, to work for his uncle, Mr. Rouss. Mr. Lee was taken into the Rouss home, where he remained until a week ago, when he declared his love for Virginia. This was a great shock to the parents, as they had never regarded him in the light of a suitor, as he was younger than their daughter and a cousin.

After he was sent away young Lee communicated with his sweetheart and the other morning she met him at a minister's house and they were married. Afterward they drove to Mr. Rouss' office. He forgave them, but said he didn't care to have the task of telling his wife. Finally a telegram was sent Virginia's mother, acquainting her with the marriage. Mrs. Rouss' rage took form in smashing valuable bric-a-brac and china, throwing furniture through the plate-glass windows and otherwise demoralizing her handsome home. The servants have not yet recovered from their fright. Mrs. Lee thinks her mother will in time forgive her.

Precaution in a Gas Lighted Room.

New York Sun.

Few persons know that an ordinary gas jet will consume as much oxygen as four human beings. It is, therefore, well to remember, when sitting long in a gas lighted room, to occasionally open a door or a window for a few moments and bring in some fresh air.