

FOR THE LADIES.

THE NEWEST RIDING-HABIT.

The newest riding-habit is very short, the skirts not being visible from the opposite side of the horse. It is pleasant to add, also, that the stove-pipe hat is not at all arbitrary for equestrienne costumes. There is a tendency toward more ease and comfort in habits. The laced-up, tied-up effect is happily going out, and one great objection to this exercise is removed.

THE FRENCH PREMIER'S AMERICAN WIFE.

Mme. Ribot, the wife of the new French Premier, is a native of Chicago and a daughter of the late Isaac H. Burch of New York City, whose wife was a niece of Erasmus Corning. She accompanied her father to Paris in 1864 and has resided there ever since. Her first husband was M. Armand de Mongeot, a lawyer. He died and about fifteen years ago she became Mme. Ribot. M. Ribot was at that time prominent in French affairs and considered one of the coming men of the new Republic. He visited this country in 1888 to settle the estate of his late father-in-law. Mme. Ribot is said to be a very attractive woman. She speaks several languages fluently and is well versed in French history and politics.—[St. Louis Republic.]

FASHION NOTES.

Empire and Directoire styles are on the increase. Fine broadcloth is used for expensive capes. Velvet is used on even the coarsest cloth. Gauntlet cuffs are on all varieties of sleeves. If velvet is used to face the cuff almost to the back no buttons are employed. Ulsters, newmarkets, and circulars are very fashionable, and a great many fur-lined circulars are also shown. Blue and old rose are gradually taking the place of the gold and white combination for household decoration. Some of the rich-looking repped wools are very much like the old-style Empress cloth. The French women are now using red for gowns, bonnets, and even hosiery, shoes, and gloves.

CHATELAINES.

Beautiful oxidized chateaines are being made. They are seen occasionally with street dress, but are worn more effectively at home. Abroad several objects dangling and grinding each other like chain harness serve a little too much to draw attention. There is not sufficient reason for them to excite them. But at home small articles at hand are a convenience, keys, scissors, &c. As the accompanying of an artistic negligee the chateaine is charming. Very pretty ones have the chain links elaborated into faces. I have seen very rich ones set with carbuncles that has been given by the daughter of the late Emperor of Brazil to an American actress.—[New York World.]

HER GRANDMOTHER'S ASTRAKHAN.

A correspondent writes: I know a girl whose rich grandmother died and left her nothing at all but an old astrakhan coat, and the grandmother was not so very big, either. The girl got her winter rig out of that old coat. It was a horrid old thing, but where it wasn't worn it was nice. She worried a jacket for herself from it, but it wouldn't fasten all the way, so she pretended she didn't mean it to, and put in a vest. She made the vest out of an old red velvet party waist, and trimmed it around with black braid. Then she had no skirt, so she spent her wee bit of money for dark green cloth and a lot more braid. She put the braid up and down on the cloth and faced the collar of her jacket with dark green. Then she was as fine as you can imagine, and all it cost her was just the dollar a yard for the cloth and the braid at a bargain.

UNIQUE PROPOSAL OF A GERMAN WOMAN.

Frau Helene Lange, according to the Berlin papers, has come forward with a somewhat startling proposal. This is nothing more or less than the demand for one year's service for girls. She suggests that just as German youths are compelled to spend at least one year in barracks, so their sisters should be compelled to spend a year in kindergarten, creches, people's kitchens, hospitals, factory girls' or servants' homes, to which they should give their services. Of course these institutions must be greatly multiplied to give work to all. As youths may choose their garrison and troop, so the girls may be allowed to choose their branch of service. Certificates could be granted at the end of the year as to work and conduct. Those who desired to stay, and showed the necessary talent, could be promoted and allowed to direct the one-year recruits. Frau Lange considers that this year of service would form and strengthen the character of girls as no family, school, or social life could.—[London Queen.]

FABRICS FOR EVENING WEAR.

There is a charming display of dainty shot and striped silks, satins, and French moires for evening wear. These last-mentioned fabrics are much more pliable than the familiar moires, for they are much lighter in texture. Some of the striped silks are very wide and brilliantly broadened with Pompadour bouquets; others show not more than a pencil line, but in two or three different colors. For day dresses, to combine with cashmere, cloth, or fine camel's hair, these stripes are in rich colors of dahlia, olive, and gold, "eminence" purple, cerise, and fawn green, etc.; or there is a black ground with a succession of multicolored stripes upon it, relieved here and there with a velvet stripe. For evening, these silks show grounds in rosy mauve, silver gray, rose pink, etc., striped with white, cream, or pale cerise. A favorite trimming for these silks consists of narrow milliner's folds of velvet dotted with beads. This trimming is also effectively arranged on the bodice, which has very full Empire sleeves of the velvet. These evening dresses thus far shown, and being of velvet and very full, rather short and moderately high on the shoulders, they have a style at once novel and picturesque.—[New York Post.]

NEW IDEAS FOR FAIRS.

A novel form of entertainment which does not require elaborate preparations is a clipping party. Ropes are stretched from end to end of a room, each line having a price fixed upon it. All the contributions are wrapped so as to conceal their contents and suspended by strings from the lines at a height which will bring them within easy reach. The packages are arranged according to their value on the five, ten or twenty-five cent line. The young ladies who preside over the entertainment are provided with scissors, and the would-be purchasers are allowed to clip any parcel from the row by paying the required price. The oddity of the articles contributed and the ingenuity used in mysteriously concealing the contents of the packages will add greatly to the amusement of the evening.

VALUABLE INSECTS.

SCALES THAT ARE NOT ENTIRELY PERNICIOUS.

Vast Sums Paid for their Products—Cochineal, China Wax, Shellac and Other Valuable Articles Come from Them.

When it is considered that there are between 500 and 600 different named varieties of the scale-bug family or coccids, as it is known to entomologists, and that the list is continually being extended, it is not a matter for surprise that the ingenuity of man should have made some of them useful to him, or cause them to minister to his need or his luxury.

One of the earliest of the scale-bug family to be impressed into the service of man was that branch of it known as kermes, or to entomologists, as the coccus ilicis. This is found in abundance on a small species of evergreen oak, common in the south of France and many other parts of the world, and from the time of the Phoenicians has been held in high esteem on account of the beautiful blood red and scarlet dye manufactured from it. It was used for coloring the costly fabrics of the wealthy and favored classes, and was valued for its lasting qualities as well as for its beauty. In the earliest historical period it formed an important article of commerce, and found its way to Egypt, Arabia, Persia and Jerusalem. The red used in dyeing the mummy cases and the dye of the fabrics, which has retained its brilliancy for so many centuries, is supposed to have been the product of this scale insect.

The dye used for coloring the curtains of the tabernacle, mentioned in Exodus 26, was also derived from the same source. It was from this insect also that the Greeks and Romans produced their famous crimson and from the same lowly source were derived the imperishable reds of the Flemish and other famous tapestries. In short, previous to the discovery of America and the subsequent introduction cochineal, kermes was the material most universally used for producing the most brilliant reds and oranges then known.

The insect itself appeared like a little spherical shell fixed upon the bark. In color it is a brownish red. The gathering of the kermes crop at one time formed a most important part of the labor of a large portion of the French peasantry. The work was generally performed by women, who carefully removed the insects one at a time from the seat of lodgement with their finger-nails, and the gathering of about two pounds per day was considered a good work.

When gathered they were immersed in vinegar to kill the insects and preserve the color. After which they were dried and were then ready for the market. Another scale insect used formerly very much and still to some extent for the same purpose is commonly known as the scarlet grain of Poland, or cocu polonicus. This is found attached to the roots of a perennial plant known as knawel, which was extensively cultivated for the purpose, and from this some large quantities were collected. It is still very extensively used by the Turks and Armenians for dyeing wool, silk and hair, as well as for staining the nails of the ladies' fingers.

Remote as were Europe and America before the discovery by Columbus, the requirements of men had led the people of both hemispheres into the same channel. In Mexico, ages before it was known to Europe, a scalebug produced the most valued of dyestuffs. In so high esteem was it held that its ownership formed one of the prerogatives of royalty, and large districts were put under tribute to supply a certain amount each year for the use of the Montezumas. This was the insect now known as the cochineal.

After the conquest of Mexico and the Spaniards under Cortez some of this dye was taken to Spain and there so much admired that he was instructed to procure it in as large quantity as possible. The demand grew from this until Humboldt estimated that the annual importation of this one scale insect into Europe amounted to 600,000 pounds, each pound composed of 70,000 insects. The money value of these was \$1,875,000. The dye of aniline dyes has reduced the demand for cochineal, but for the fiscal year ending June 30, 1890, the United States alone imported 292,931 pounds, valued at \$42,435.

The cultivation of the cochineal forms an important branch of industry in Mexico, where a large number of natives, called from their employment nopales, are employed in it. They plant their nopales, usually about an acre or an acre and a half in extent, on cleared ground, on the slopes of mountains or ravines two or three leagues distant from their villages. These are planted with a species of cactus known as the tuna de castilla, and the plants are in a condition to support the cochineal the third year. To stock his nopalery the proprietor purchases in the spring some branches of the cactus laden with the newly hatched insects. These are carefully housed until fall, when the females are placed in little nests made from a sort of flax taken from the petals of the palm tree. These nests are then distributed among the nopales, being fastened between the leaves and turned toward the sun. From these nests soon issue large numbers of young cochineals, for each female produces some thousands of them. These spread over the whole plant and attach themselves. In about four months the first crop of insects is ready to gather.

This is a proceeding that requires much care and is performed by the women, who sit or squat in front of each nopalery and carefully brush the insects from the leaves to which they adhere into a sheet spread on the ground to receive them. The insects are then plunged into hot water or put into a hot oven to destroy their life and they are then ready for the market.

Another important and valuable member of the otherwise despised family is the lac insect, or coccus lacca. This is a pigmy of its kind, being but one thirty-sixth of an inch in diameter. It is collected from various trees in India, where it is found in such abundance that were the demand ten times as great as it is, there would be no difficulty in supplying it. This substance is made use of in the country in the manufacture of beads, rings and other articles of female adornment. Mixed with sand it is formed into

to grindstones, and dissolved in water with the addition of lampblack or ivory black and a little borax it composes an ink not easily acted upon when dry by damp or water.

When unseparated from the twigs this substance is known as stick lac. Separated and reduced to powder, with the greater part of the coloring matter extracted by water, it becomes seed lac. Melted and formed into cakes it is lump lac, and strained and made into thin transparent sheets it is known as sheet lac. It is employed in the manufacture of sealing wax, very extensively used in varnishes, of which it forms one of the chief ingredients, and is the principal substance used in japanning tinware. A very brilliant and beautiful color is also extracted from it, used by artists under the name of lake. The United States in 1890 consumed of this scale insect 4,739,465 pounds, for which were paid \$302,745, and this formed but a very small portion of the annual consumption of the world of this one bug.

Another very useful and valuable scale-bug is found in China, the product of which, like that of cochineal in Mexico under the Montezumas, is the prerogative of royalty. This is the wax insect, from which immense quantities of the substance known as China wax is produced. There are but two varieties of trees upon which these flourish. Toward the beginning of winter small tumors form on these trees, which increase in size until they become as large as walnuts. These are the nests filled with the eggs that are to give birth to the young wax insects, which when hatched disperse themselves over the leaves and perforate the bark, under which they retire. Their product, which the Chinese call pe-la, or white wax, begins to appear about the middle of June. At first a few filaments, like fine soft wool, are seen springing from the bark around the body of the insect. These increase in quantity and density until the gathering time, which is before the first hoar frost in September. The wax is at once carried to court, where it is reserved for the use of the Emperor, the princes and the chief mandarins. An ounce of this added to a pound of oil forms a wax resembling bees-wax, except in color. It is employed in medicine, and Chinese orators when about to address an audience eat it to give them courage and assurance.—[San Francisco Chronicle.]

The World's Most Useful River.

The Nile, probably, is the most wonderful river in the world. It has made Egypt possible by turning an arid wilderness into the richest land in the world. It has provided at the same time an admirable commercial highway, and made easy the transportation of building materials. The ancient Egyptians were thus enabled to utilize the granite of Assuan for the splendid structures of hundred-gated Thebes and of Memphis, and even for those of Tanis, on the Mediterranean coast. At a time when the people of the British Isles were clad in the skins of wild beasts, and offered human sacrifices upon the stone altars of the Druids, Egypt was the centre of a rich and refined civilization. Most of this development of Egypt was due to the Nile, which not only watered and fertilized the soil annually, but was and is one of the greatest and best natural highways in the world. From the beginning of winter to the end of spring—that is, while the Nile is navigable—the north wind blows steadily up stream with sufficient force to drive sailing boats against the current at a fair pace; while, on the other hand, the current is strong enough to carry a boat without sails down against the wind. This is except when it blows a gale. The why ancient Egypt did not need steam-power nor electric motors, or the immense commerce that covered the Nile, nor for the barges carrying building material for hundreds of miles.—[Harper's Young People.]

In China Clothes Make the Man.

The clothing of the Chinaman compared with our own, also shows many differences. The rank of the official is indicated by the number of var-colored buttons on the top of his official hat; and instead of epaulettes, gold braid, etc., his uniform shows upon the breast and back figures of birds and animals. The plume of the Mandarin's hat is not straight, but curved at the end like the tail of a bird. The wearing of bracelets is not confined to women, as men often ornament themselves the same way. Neither men nor women wear gloves, but their sleeves are so long that they often reach two feet beyond their hands, and serve as muffs in cold weather. They are also used as pockets, there being no regular pockets in their clothes. The beard of a Chinaman often indicates his age. Until forty years old, his face is smoothly shaven. Beyond that point he allows his mustache to grow, and when still older, his entire beard. Both men and women wear jackets and trousers. While we blacken our shoes, the Chinese paint the thick soles of their shoes white. Black is the color of mourning in the West, while white-grey-blue is the color in China. Women as well as men smoke, and both sexes make use of the fan. If one tears his coat, the tailor puts the patch on the outside.—[New York Tribune.]

A curious case has been decided by the Saxons Court of Appeals sitting at Dresden. At Krossen there is a toll bridge over the Mulde, and only foot passengers may cross free. A young man who rode across on his bicycle was charged the regular fee for a two-wheel vehicle, but paid under protest. Having occasion to return the same way he dismounted at the approach to the bridge and walked across, carrying his machine on his head. This time the toll-gatherer protested, but to no purpose. Suit was brought against the bicyclist in the local court to compel him to pay toll and costs, and a verdict for the defendant was rendered; an appeal was taken to the Supreme Court, which reversed the decision of the lower court and found for the plaintiff. Appeal was again taken, this time to the court of last resort, which decided that toll could be collected only for vehicles which came in actual contact with the bridge. Judgment reversed; verdict for the bicyclist.

SOMEWHAT STRANGE.

ACCIDENTS AND INCIDENTS OF EVERY DAY LIFE.

Queer Facts and Thrilling Adventures Which Show That Truth is Stranger Than Fiction.

A LARGO party of men, headed by Harry Gager of Seattle, enjoyed a big coyote drive on the sagebrush plains twenty miles southeast of Boise, Idaho. After an exciting chase thirty splendid specimens of the peculiar animal lay dead upon the frozen ground. At this season of the year the skin of the coyote is heavy and glossy, and of considerable commercial value. Gager and his party sought the animals for their warm coats, which they will have made into garments. The hunters were provided with a pack of fierce hounds and the party spread out over the plains to encircle a rocky butte much frequented by coyotes. The dogs made the frosty air re-echo with their deep notes. Within an hour after the commencement of the hunt twenty-one fine coyotes had been killed and skinned. The hounds were then sent into a growth of sagebrush in a little hollow in one of the abrupt slopes of the butte. The dogs cornered four big coyotes, and a battle royal followed. The coyotes fought like four-footed splendid hounds before they succumbed. Their skins were nearly torn from their bodies during the struggle, and were worthless. A few minutes later eight big coyotes were started out of another bunch of sagebrush. The cowardly animals darted across the plain and tried to conceal themselves in a large flock of sheep. They had no fight in them and did not offer to molest the sheep, upon which they usually prey. After much difficulty the coyotes were driven into the sagebrush again, and then the hounds quickly dispatched five of them.

"For years," said a steady New York churchgoer, "I had been sitting in the same pew and in the same seat, the end seat by the aisle. Usually the other places are occupied by members of my family, for we all attend church pretty regularly, but one Sunday recently when for one reason and another, they had all stayed at home, I sat in my pew alone. Seeing plenty of room there the usher brought me to sit with me a stranger. I was, of course, glad to welcome him. I did not get up and step out into the aisle so that he might pass by me, but I moved along to the other end of the pew and let him sit in my place. When I had seen him comfortably seated and handed him a hymn book, and had turned toward the pulpit again, I was surprised to find that everything in the church seemed new and strange to me. For a long time I had been accustomed to seeing the backs of the heads of those of my friends and neighbors who sit in front of me, and the sides of their faces, and they all seemed to look very different. I saw children who appeared from their demeanor to be regular attendants at church, but whom I had never noticed there before; they had been there of course, but my view of them had been cut off by the heads and shoulders of other persons. The preacher appeared to me in another light, and it seemed as though his sermon, coming as it did along a new angle, came with new power. Indeed, it was almost like visiting a new church. The fact is that we are all creatures of habit that we are apt to be surprised if we depart even a little way from the road we are accustomed to travel."

In a little village in Sussex, England, there is a veritable milky way of lilies, where thousands of white blossoms shed their perfume, and where women gardeners tend and pack and ship the fragrant product. Twenty-five years ago a single lily bulb was given to Mrs. Bates, a farmer's daughter, who tended the gift with the devotion women bestow on flowers, and when sixteen bulbs had resulted from the original one, and Mrs. Bates, finding that her children, as she called them, had outgrown the sunny window where they grew, she planted them in the corner of the garden. Ten years ago a daughter of Mrs. Bates, inspired by the enterprise of the time, sent some blossoms to the London market, and now, in association with her sisters, has made the Bates lilies famous for their beauty and perfection. The daughters are keen business women, interviewing their buyers at the 6 o'clock market, selling without the interference of agents to private customers, florists, and commission merchants. The average product is 600 dozens a week, which are packed by women in the gardens. Women are taking up floriculture to a considerable extent in England, and at the Horticultural College landscape and kitchen gardening are taught by lectures, demonstrations, and practical work. It is an interesting fact that applications are received at the college faster than women can be trained.

"True to death," says a St. Petersburg contemporary, "is a mild phrase in comparison with the expression, 'True to hard labor in the Ural mines.' And yet such heroism as the latter phrase describes can be found among Polish girls. A wedding was recently performed in Minak which illustrated this fact. The groom, Cesar Pozniak, was brought to church in heavy chains; the bride, Maria Kanoitcheva, a maid in one of the wealthiest houses of the city, came to church accompanied by her friends in carriages. Cesar Pozniak was an artisan of good behavior and appearance; but he was accused of murder and condemned to hard labor in the Ural mines for ten years. Maria was in love with him before the accusation took place, and would not leave him in his trials. Now that judgment was pronounced on him she consented to become his wife and to follow him to his place of destination. The prison authorities granted the convict permission to marry, and the wedding took place in the prison chapel. Maria believes in the innocence of her husband and hopes that he will be pardoned before he reaches the Ural mines."

A FEW days ago James R. Holt went for a quail hunt along the banks of the Sacramento river in California. Under a cover of brush he discovered a nice flock of birds, but when he raised his gun to have a shot they disappeared.

He felt satisfied that there were quite a number under a particular bush and he blazed away. The noisy fluttering which followed told him the result and he ran for his prize, and just as he was reaching out his hand to catch a wounded quail he was suddenly shocked to discover an enormous rattlesnake in the line of the bird. He approached the birds again with his gun cocked and ready for a sudden shot, and learned that the snake had killed the snake and six quail, although none of the birds or the serpent were in view. The snake had eight rattles and a button and was 34 feet in length.

For several months the Austrian sanitary authorities have guarded the frontier from the importation of Russian caviar, and presumably from the Elbe has also been shut out. Caviar, which consists of prepared eggs of the sturgeon, was placed under the ban on the ground that it was a medium for the transportation of the cholera germ. To test the matter the Austrian Minister of the Interior ordered a thorough investigation to be made at the hygienic laboratory in Vienna. There noted bacteriologists infected a quantity of caviar with bacilli from Tonquin and from Hamburg, as many as 153,399 being placed in the caviar. At the end of twenty-four hours there were but a hundred left, and at the end of forty-eight there were none at all. This experiment was repeated several times, with about the same result. Lovers of this delicacy—the caviar, not the bacilli—may therefore continue to eat it without fear. It is a cholera killer instead of a propagator.

A KENTUCKY Baptist minister says that some years ago a Baptist Church in that State tried a man for kissing his wife. The formulated charge was entered "Unbecoming levity." The gentleman accused had been from home several weeks on business, and on his return he met his wife at the meeting house, and in the presence of the congregation embraced her with a sounding smack on the lips. Some of the staid old deacons were so shocked at such levity in the house of God that the gentleman was arraigned on the above charge, and escaped dismissal from the church by agreeing to do his kissing at home in the future.

A CURIOUS story is told of the recent funeral of an old farmer of Maine, who, after spending his life in tilling a rocky farm and raising a numerous family, died and left his hard-earned property to two sons. The sons placed their father's remains in a rough coffin and started for the burying-ground, bearing it upon their shoulders. They took a short cut through the woods, and had not gone far when a deer crossed the path, and the sight stirred their sportive instincts, and depositing their coffin in the bushes, they ran back for their dogs and guns, and were soon on a glorious hunt. Other game turned up, the hunt was prolonged, and it was not till four days afterward that they remembered their father's corpse in the bushes and returned to bury it.

Two girls have lately had a strange experience in a country house, situated in Devonshire, England, at which they were visiting. They were given a room reported to be haunted by a woman with a bloody face. Just as they got into bed on the first night of their stay, a woman whose face was all gory rushed into the room. The girls were frightened into hysterics and the alarmed household found them shivering and screaming under the coverlets while a dead woman was a lady's maid who had broken a blood vessel while crossing the hall and ran into the girl's room for assistance, which their insensate fright prevented them giving.

The peasants of the Russian village of Jagodzianski, in Lithuania, wreaked their vengeance on a suspected horse thief recently by setting fire to his dwelling during the night, while he, his wife, mother, and family of five children were within, and burning the whole family to death. The peasants stood around the hut, and when the inmates rushed out they were thrust back into the burning house with pitchforks and scythes. One of the women was murdered outright in the attempt to force her back into the flames. The peasants gave themselves up to the Russian police, and will most probably be imprisoned for a year and then exiled to another part of the country.

A CASE was reported recently of an engineer being killed by his head striking against a sagged telegraph pole as he leaned from his cab window, and several instances are lately noted of brakemen being swept from the roof of cars by bridges. But perhaps the most singular accident of this kind occurred in Missouri. An engineer of an Iron Mountain train was leaning out of his cab window passing Williamsville when he was caught by the mail catcher, the iron pole and hook arrangement for catching the mails from moving trains, and pulled clean from his engine, through the window, falling beside the track as his train passed on. He was seriously injured.

HO-NE-A-RO, one of the chiefs of the Osages, the richest Indians in the country, recently exhibited himself to the wondering gaze of the people of Kansas City. He wore his first hat for the occasion, and a brand-new pair of blankets. The chief enjoyed himself hugely in the metropolis of the Kaw and showed his acquaintance with civilization by remarking that he saw more pretty women there in one day than in all his life elsewhere.

RECENTLY it was discovered that the wooden roof of a fine old church in Arundel, England, dating from 1390, was entirely honeycombed by some unknown insect. The beams were so friable as to be easily rubbed to pieces between the fingers, and the wonder was that the whole roof had not fallen to ruin in the attempt to remove it.

In St. Petersburg a coachman was killed by lightning while driving, and the footman sitting by his side was net injured. The lightning struck the coachman's head, destroyed his cap and tore his clothes, passed through his body and tore a hole through the cushions on which he was sitting. No damage was done to the carriage except breaking the glass, and the occupants were not injured.