

NEWS FOR THE FAIR SEX.

ITEMS OF INTEREST ON NUMEROUS FEMININE TOPICS.

Dotted Veils—Cost of Royal Gowns—Easy Way to Freshen a Bodice—More Blads Than Ever on Hats—Etc., Etc.

DOTTED VEILS.

Paradoxes are in fashion—a woman pays \$7 for a dotted veil and \$70 to her oculist to correct astigmatism. An oculist once said that every dot in a woman's veil was worth \$5 to the gentlemen of his profession. The eye is being constantly strained to avoid these obstacles in its way, and, of course, it is weakened and tortured. Think of a woman paying \$1.50 for something that will, in time, destroy her eyesight just as sure as fate. I leave it to you if she's not a paragon of a ninny? But women do these things in spite of everything—except when the overworked eyes begin to pain, and then they're glad enough to do most anything for quick relief.

COST OF ROYAL GOWNS.

Royalty, with one or two notorious exceptions, is singularly economical in dress. Thus, the German Empress, who obtains her best robes in Vienna, pays from \$20 upwards. The Empress of Austria rarely goes beyond \$10. Queen Victoria is also economically disposed, and has never paid a really extravagant price at any time. The young Queen of Holland usually gives \$5 for a dress in Paris, but never more than \$75. Considering the number of gala costumes which royal ladies have to wear, their moderation is wonderful. The German Emperor is said to be the most extravagant man in Europe for clothing, and the Prince of Wales, while the best dressed, to be the most economical.

EASY WAY TO FRESHEN A BODICE.

An easy and pretty way to freshen a black, white or colored silk or satin bodice is to cover it with an overdrawing in blouse style of net, lisse or chiffon, the shade of the bodice or of a contrasting color. As there are neither darts nor side seams, this light drapery is easily adjusted, and to freshen the waist, one can now purchase in any of the fancy dry goods houses crimped or accordion-plaited textiles of various airy weaves—by the yard, and with dainty ruffles to match—in black, white, cream, ecrú and fancy tints. Bows of satin ribbon on the shoulders, with straps of the ribbon carried from the bows to the belt, both front and back, would serve to keep the fulness of the chiffon in place, and thus give a slender look to the figure.

MORE BIRDS THAN EVER ON HATS.

Never in the history of hats have they been so adorned with birds as they are this season. Mrs. Lemon, secretary of the English society for the protection of birds, reported recently to the New York Audubon society the result of one bird auction she attended in London last April. These are the figures: Algrette plumes, 11,352 ounces, representing 20,000 herons; peacock feathers, 215,051 bundles, numbering one hundred feathers to the bundle; paradise birds, 2,362; parrots, 228,280; humming birds, 116,490; kingfishers, 48,750; owls and hawks, 7,163. That represents the slaughter of more than half a million of birds. Mrs. Lemon added: "That same kind of sale is taking place month by month at many other auctions for I have only described one out of dozens and dozens of dozens."—New York Sun.

LONDON CLUB WOMEN.

A club of a decidedly novel character is about to open its doors to the business women of London. Hon. Coralie Glyn, who is the founder of the new institution, observing how unutterably uncomfortable Sunday in London is to a large class of women engaged in business during the week, resolved to establish a club that should afford them facilities for rest and recreation, and enable them to enjoy pleasant social intercourse on their only day of leisure. She was enabled to secure excellent accommodation at the College for Men and Women. Subscription to the Camelot Club, as the organization is named, is \$1.25 per year. Candidates for election to the Camelot must be women over the age of sixteen, and must either be proposed and seconded by two members or furnish satisfactory references. The rooms of the club include a large drawing room, a dining room, a tea room and a "silence" room. The project has received widespread support, and among those who are in warm sympathy with the club are the Countess of Stafford, the Dowager Lady Rosmead, the Hon. Mrs. Pelham and Canon Shuttleworth.—Pall Mall Gazette.

STUDY OF GRAPHOLOGY.

Graphology is the little accomplishment that the girls are equipping themselves with, now that palmistry has run its race and is no longer talked about. To make a tedious visit seem less long, or as a spur to a fascinating conversation, it comes in very well. In fact, it was a clever woman that said she always kept some accomplishment up her sleeve with which to amuse the people that could not amuse her.

The study of grapho is not too intense and quickly engages the attention of all. It is also an accomplishment that, aided by a keen observation, is easily acquired. On the subject there are a number of good authorities, and a little practice after reading them carefully will soon enable one to detect the prominent traits of character by the handwriting.

The artistic temperament and literary ability are readily seen. Ardor,

vehemence, pertinacity, the talents, candor and recklessness all write themselves out floutingly. In fact, the cardinal virtues and faults often display themselves in the handwriting when we, alas, imagine that we have schooled them to keep in the background.

After looking into the art it is of interest to note how differently we glance at the writings of our friends than formerly. On reading a note that has the a's and o's left open at the top we smile and say, a good-natured babbling; if the writing slants downward toward the right we shake our heads and think a melancholy disposition. A certain way of crossing the t's flatly means stubbornness, while an upward flourish denotes imagination.

Graphology cannot be used as a means of fortune telling, but in the majority of cases it is a good guide to knowing the temperament of the writer.

Not long ago a young hostess made use of this fad to amuse the guests at a luncheon she was giving. The answers to her invitations she sent to an expert in the art of graphology, and laid his delineation of each character by the side of the guest's plate. They were artistically arranged in the form of menus. When the last course was on the table they were read in turn, and the result was no end of fun and merriment.

This would hardly be possible at a formal luncheon, where all are putting forth their best traits in their best clothes, for sometimes rather disagreeable characteristics are bluntly commented upon. At the above-mentioned function it did not matter, as the women were all intimate friends, and when one of the number unhesitatingly read out "egregiously selfish" there was a shout of laughter, and she was reminded of how she used to eat up the greater part of the chocolate cake in school days.

One of the best amateurs in graphology says that he falls most often in discerning the talent for music, and that when criticized for this omission he is in the habit of replying, "I believe I said witchcraft was prominent; that governs all."—Chicago Record.

THE COMING SHIRT WAIST.

However much the bodice of formal wear may vary, whatever changes in their styles the season may bring forth, the shirt waist will remain and will show only variations from familiar styles.

So far as can be foretold, the blouse, or poached model, will not take high rank. The essential characteristic of the skirt waist is its trim, natty appearance, and nothing tends to that effect so successfully as the snug pattern drawn down at waist line; whatever millinery against the result can safely be counted only by whim and to have no permanent hold. The models that have so far appeared indicate a decided preference for the double-pointed yoke and use of detachable collars and cuffs, but give evidence of a choice between the closing at the center and that at the side.

Stripes, plaids and diagonals promise to hold their place and both polka dots and small checks are among the designs shown. In addition, great popularity is predicted for large-figured designs, so that great variety will be found and both quiet and pronounced tastes appear to have been borne in mind.

Sleeves show little change. Having surrendered their claim to size and having become reduced to the regulation shirt style little further remains to be done, and the cotton and linen stuffs will be cut closely after the manner of the silk and cashmere, the straight cuff being so far preferred, whether it be stitched to the sleeve or detached and buttoned into place.

UNIVERSALITY OF THE WEDDING RING.

While the use of the wedding or betrothal ring is common to almost every country, each land possesses its own variation in the method of bestowal or the importance attached to it. In Japan the girl receives the ring in evidence that the union is binding. In Malabar the old custom was to seat both bride and bridegroom on a dais, while a relative washed the feet of the bridegroom with milk and put a silver ring on the great toe of his right foot. A gold ring and a necklace were then given to the bridegroom, and flowers were bestowed upon the bride. In Armenia, after all business preliminaries are settled between the families of the bride and bridegroom, the bridegroom's mother, accompanied by a priest and two matrons, visits the bride and gives her a ring in token of espousal, and with this ring the couple are finally married. The regular ritual of the Greek Church ordains that a solemn betrothal should precede the actual marriage, in which ceremony a gold and silver ring are blessed by the priest, the gold ring being afterward given to the man and the silver to the woman. The epousal service finished, the rings are placed on the right hands, and then exchanged, that no inferiority be attributed to the woman, and also as an indication that property is to be held.—New York Tribune.

FASHION NOTES.

White suede gloves are the thing for afternoon and evening wear, and white suede slippers are worn for dancing.

A popular new underwear fabric is cotton, coated on the inside with a soft covering of pure silk. It is as warm as wool, and yet is more durable, less clumsy and will not shrink.

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For dress occasions in early spring

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Bayaderes are in high favor this season, and will be seen in the spring novelties and lightweight goods, such as mousselines, gauzes, satin and chiffon. Brocade and Jacquard weaves are held in popular memory rather than present favor.

The latest thing in hats is a toque of white broadtail trimmed with white feathers. The low, broad effect in arranging the trimming on all hats is the novelty in midwinter millinery. High, one sided decorations are out of date.

Yokes and guimpes of every shape, color and fabric are in fashion. Besides being a very dressy addition to the toilette, they are most useful in transforming a half-tone, rounding or pompadour bodice into one appropriate for any daytime dress occasion.

The demand for taffeta is unabated. The favorite shades are cardinal, ox-blood, and cherry, and they are a trifle more expensive than other colors. The National blues, violets and greens are also popular tints, and plaid taffeta is appearing.

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The belt craze is on the increase, and the most beautiful specimens are shown made of leather, silk, velvet and metal. Many of the latter have jewels set irregularly in the large links, and the enameled belts are things of real beauty. The buckles are also handsome.

What is known as ruffle braid is one of the newest trimmings. It is made of three or more rows of braid, graduated in width, connecting with silk-thread designs. It is used for finishing off blouses and skirts, and for forming farding collars. From three to five inches are the favorite widths.

Tucking is one of the latest fads in dressmaking. Silk waists are made tucked all over with the finest pin tucks sewed by hand. Some of the exclusive houses do not allow an inch of machine stitching in their work, the necessary seams being turned in and caught together with buttonhole stitch.

Crimped gauzes, giving the effect of fancifully drawn materials, will be much used for making evening gowns next season. Stamped gauzes are also seen, Indian and pompadour designs being the favorites. The newest mousseline de soie shows a peculiarly pretty gloss, looking almost like satin.

Crepes and alpaca will be used for next season's wear. Combinations of wool and mohair will be also in great evidence, and many effects will be new, epingles, cashmeres, traverse weaves, frises, chevilles and fente. Matalase in small check and serpentine designs promises to be especially popular.

Among the latest styles in ribbons are the colored failles and gros grains, satin-back velvet, with either violet or mode backs, and black double-faced satins, with raised flowers on one side. Otter, emerald, ruby and tawny brown lead in colors, and are much used for dress and blouse trimmings. Harlequin blacks and printed failles are also much in favor.

Evening clothes are never strikingly picturesque, the critics will say. True. But add to the regulation black broadcloth a big fur cap—very pig, very tall, very furry—a cross between the headgear of a drum major and that of a Klondike pioneer, and there is an attire striking and novel. That is what the aides of the Lord Mayor do, and it is rumored that "upper Irish circles" will follow the same style.

First Floating Dock.

In the time of Peter the Great, the captain of a British ship, finding that his vessel, in Cronstadt harbor, was in want of docking and that, owing to the absence of tide in the Baltic Sea, the then orthodox method was impracticable, obtained a hulk named the Camel, and completely removed the whole of her decks and internal work, cut off her end and fitted it with a gate. He then berthed his ship inside the hollow hull of the Camel, closed the gate and pumped the water from its interior. This, says a writer in Cassier's Magazine, is the very first instance on record of the use of a floating dock, and it was directly brought about by the absence of the hitherto essential tide.

Prickly Comfrey.

This plant belongs to the forage family and is a native of Asia. It is a coarse growing plant, producing enormous quantities of foliage if the ground is made rich enough. From time to time it has been brought to notice as a valuable forage plant. Cattle and horses may be starved to eating it, but at best it stands no comparison with corn fodder. It is propagated by division of the roots.—New England Homestead.

Substitute for Honey.

A substitute for honey has been introduced in Germany, and consists of sugar, water, minute amounts of mineral substances and free acid.

OUR YOUNG FOLKS.

SOME EVENINGS.

Some evenings, when my prayers are said,
And I am cuddled down in bed,
And papa is across the hall,
I just can't go to sleep at all.

So then he comes and stays, and he
Tells lots of funny things to me,
And maybe sings a song, and then
When I wake up it's light again,

THE TRAP-DOOR SPIDER.

One of the most singular specimens of insect life is the trap-door spider of Jamaica. His burrow is lined with silk, and closed by a trap-door with a hinge. The door exactly fits the entrance to the burrow, and when closed, so precisely corresponds with the surrounding earth that it can hardly be distinguished, even when its position is known. It is a strange sight to see the earth open, a little lid raised, some hairy legs protrude, and gradually the whole form of the spider show itself. These spiders generally hunt for food by night, and in the daytime they are very chary of opening the door of their domicile, and if the trap be raised from the outside, they run to the spot, hitch the claws of their forefeet in the lining of the burrow, and so resist with all their might. The strength of the spider is wonderfully great in proportion to its size.

DR. CAT VISITS THE BIRD FAMILY.

Some one told a sly old cat that the birds in the bird-house were quite sick.

"I must see about this," said the cat.

"I will put on some spectacles and an overcoat, then I will take my medicine-chest and visit them," said the old cat. "Of course they will think I am a kind old doctor, so they will open their door. Then I will eat them."

"So the cat dressed himself and slyly crept up to the bird house.

As he reached the door, he called out: "I'll be right with you, so I have come with medicine to cure you."

"Thank you," said a bird, "we all know you are only the old cat dressed up. We are much more likely to get well without your medicine than with it. Good day, sir."

A BRAVE SOLDIER GIRL.

"Oh, if I were only a man!" exclaimed Ibecca Bates, a girl of fourteen, as she looked from the window of a lighthouse at Scituate, Mass., during the war of 1812, and saw a British war-ship anchor in the harbor.

"What could you do?" asked Sarah Winsor, a young visitor. "See what a lot of them the boats contain, and look at their guns!" and she pointed to five large boats, filled with soldiers in scarlet uniforms, who were coming to burn the vessels in the harbor and destroy the town.

"I don't care; I'd fight," said Rebecca. "I'd use father's old shotgun—anything. How still it is in the town! There is not a man to be seen."

"O, they are hiding till the soldiers get nearer, then we'll hear the shots and the drum."

"The drum!" exclaimed Rebecca, "how can they use it? It is here. Father brought it home last night to mend. See! they are going to burn father's sloop! Where is that drum? I've a mind to go down and beat it."

As flames began to rise from the sloop, the ardor of the girl increased. They found the drum and an old fire, and, slipping out of doors unnoticed by Mrs. Bates, soon stood behind a row of sand-bills.

"Ruh-a-dub-dub, ruh-a-dub-dub," went the drum, and "squeak, squeak, squeak," went the fire.

"The Americans in the town thought that help had come from Boston, and rushed into boats to attack the red-coats. The British paused in their work of destruction; and, when the fire began to play 'Yan kee Doodle,' they scrambled in on their boats and rowed in haste to the war-ship, which sailed swift y away.

THE BOY KING OF SPAIN.

What a long name for one boy to have! Just think of being called Alfonso Leon Fernando Maria Santiago Isidoro Fachesal Marcian R! Perhaps it is all right that he should have eight names, for he is one of the most interesting boys in the world. In six years more this little man of nearly twelve will mount the throne of Spain. When he was born, May 17, 1886, a royal salute of twenty-one guns boomed out from the palace, and then went the Spanish standard over the palace, the bells chimed, and the cannon roared. What a day that was! The great cameraman-major, the President of the Council, the Captain-General of Madrid, and the Commander of the Halberdiers, and all the lords and ladies, excitedly announced that a little king had arrived. This boy loves the sports of which other boys are so fond. His bicycle and his pet pony are his favorites. A boys' battalion was organized three years ago, and, of course, this little king became their leader. Their uniforms are very bright and pretty, and when they have their annual parade, march, drill, and charge with bayonets, the sight is very stirring.

The boy's mother sometimes calls him Alphonso—her own pet name for him. Once a minister to his majesty said: "How are you, Alphonso?" "The little king looked at him and said: 'To mamma I am Alphonso, but to you I am the king.'"

WHITE ELEPHANTS.

White elephants are not a distinct species but are simply albinos, which are found among animals, birds and

insects as well as among members of the human family. In India the white elephant is considered a sacred animal and is treated with the greatest reverence. When specimens are found in the woods and jungles they are captured with tender care and their possession is eagerly sought for by the sovereigns of the small kingdoms. White elephants have been the cause of many wars, as their possession is supposed to bestow greater benefits on their royal owners than either chests of gold or extended territory. One of the proudest titles of the King of Ava is "Lord of the White Elephant," and the King of Siam at Bangkok also counts his white elephants among his most precious possessions, as, according to Burmese superstition, they insure prosperity and good fortune to the nation. The death of one of these creatures is regarded as a national calamity, its funeral is conducted with great solemnity and the entire people mourn as for the loss of a dear relative. These elephants are kept under richly embroidered canopies, are fed with the most delicious fruits and members of the nobility seek for the honor of being custodian to the royal beast. When the elephant is taken to bathe in the river it goes escorted by a band of music and is followed by adoring crowds.

This singular reverence for an albino elephant has existed in Burma for centuries. An English traveler who visited that country 300 years ago describes the same treatment of this beast which may be seen at the present time.

Even the hairs of this creature are supposed to insure good fortune. In 1855 a foreign ambassador delivered some presents to the King of Siam who ordered many presents to be given in return. On the conclusion of the ceremony the king himself, with much solemnity, placed in the hands of the ambassador a small golden box, locked with a golden key, which he said was far more precious than all the other presents. The box, when opened, was found to contain a few hairs of a white elephant!

And, after all, this elephant is not white, but of a dull yellow color. It has white or reddish eyes and is a very ugly-looking beast. No greater proof could be found of the moral darkness and ignorance of the natives of certain portions of India than their superstitious veneration for this animal.

Tyranny in the Army.

Uncle Sam had better devote attention to the army and eliminate some of the snobbishness and exclusiveness that prevades our military system. Army officers as a class are of the opinion that the earth was made for their exclusive use and woe to the soldier who crosses their path either in the line of duty or unthinkingly. It has reached a point now where a superior officer in the Federal army is like the king—he can do no harm and no matter what his sins, he must be forgiven. Only a few weeks ago the country was scandalized from one end to the other by the trial of Capt. Lovering at Fort Sheridan for cruelty to a soldier in his command, but it was supposed that the incident was closed. However, it appears that the sore spot still exists. A day or two ago a sergeant who testified against the captain when called upon, was reduced to the ranks and now a private has been discharged for the same reason. What are we building up in our army system? Is it to be a species of prison life with the officers for keepers and the soldiers for prisoners? Has it come to pass where the private must sacrifice his rights as a free man to satisfy spite of his superior officer? If captains and majors and colonels and generals are to become despots over the men who are serving their country quite as well as they, then it is time that the army of the United States should either be abolished or subjected to more humane rules.—Springfield (Mass.) Union.

Trifles Affect People's Lives.

Benjamin Franklin testified that a little tattered volume of "Essays to Do Good," by Cotton Mather, read when he was a boy, influenced the whole course of his conduct, and that if he has been a successful citizen "the public owes all the advantages of it to that little book." Jeremy Bentham said that the single phrase, "the greatest good of the greatest number," caught in a glance a pamphlet, shaped the current of his thoughts and studies for life. The entire career of Charles Darwin was influenced by a book of travels which he read in early years.

On the other hand, it is fatally possible for any one, especially for any youth to read himself to death in a bad book in five minutes. The well-known minister, John Angell James, narrated that when he was at school a boy lent him an impure book. He only read a few minutes, but even during these few minutes the poison flowed fatally into his soul, and became to him a source of bitterness and anguish for all his after years. The thoughts, images and pictures thus glanced at haunted him all through life like evil spectres. Let no one indulge his evil curiosity under the notion that he is safe. "He that trusteth in his own heart is a fool."—The Independent.

Rather Remain Bald.

Two of our citizens, one bald-headed and the other red-headed, met in Mr. Wiley's barber shop the other evening, when the red-headed one said to him of no hair: "You weren't there it seems when they were giving out hair, were you?" Baldy replied: "Oh, yes, I was there all right, but they had nothing but red hair left, and I would go bald a thousand years before I would wear red hair."

"Next," shouted Mr. Wiley, just in time to prevent bloodshed.

PIGEONS AS MESSENGERS.

Advantages of Their Use for the Rapid Concentration of Naval Forces.

The twenty-third volume of proceedings of the United States naval institute, just issued, has amongst its contents several ably written papers on subjects interesting to the navy. Lieut. E. W. Eberle contributes a paper on "Homing Pigeons as Messengers of the Fleet," in which he refers to the advantages and practical workings of a messenger pigeon service, and points out conditions under which it may be used with advantage to the fleet. In his paper Lieut. Eberle says:

"From its geographical surroundings Key West will become our important pigeon station on the Atlantic, and Port Townsend, which controls the straits of Fuca and the entrance to Puget sound, will be the most important on the Pacific. Port Townsend station can control the entire entrance to the western possessions of Great Britain, and his would prove of great value in the event of hostilities with that country."

"The rapid concentration of naval forces at the point of attack or the movement of forces to intercept the enemy is only made possible when we have a system by which we can communicate rapidly with the shore station from long distances at sea, and the messenger pigeon service is the only system by which we can obtain such communication. This service might be called, very appropriately, a 'sea telegraph' system, and although its messages cannot be dispatched with the speed and absolute certainty of the telegraph, yet he system has the advantage of forwarding its messages from any position within definite limits, and therefore it is not necessary to seek the telegraph station in order to send a message."

"In the event of hostilities, many more messages than those given in the above illustrations would be sent in order to insure the receipt of important information, and if only one of the many little messengers should arrive in time to enable our fleet to maneuver so as to engage the enemy before he could inflict appalling destruction of life and property upon some one of our seaports, then this service would prove itself most valuable to the government and well worth the small annual sum required to maintain its efficiency."

"It requires but one practical illustration to strike home and to open our eyes to the merits of this service. Let a single human life be saved from shipwreck in a time of peace, or let one maneuver of the enemy's fleet be frustrated in the midst of war by the timely arrival of one of these swift-winged, trusty little carriers with its urgent message, and all the country will applaud the result and will realize the value of a messenger pigeon service upon the seas."—Baltimore Sun.

Sermons on Billboards.

If the plans of the Universal Text Display Association of Michigan bear fruit the billboards and hoardings throughout the state will be covered with sermons and Bible extracts this year. A. E. Stanten, a Chicago traveling salesman, has already started the campaign for advertising religion.

He has good backing in Muskegon, Bay City and Niles, where societies called the Universal Text Display Association are already at work. The state president is the Rev. Joseph B. MacCarthy of Muskegon and the state treasurer is E. H. Stafford of Muskegon. Stanten claims that his observation of the results of extensive advertising suggested this movement.

Money is being raised for the work, and it is intended to secure an elaborate line of display advertising matter suitable for billboard use and to cover every board and dead wall obtainable in the state with short sermons printed in immense display type. Texts from the Bible and warning messages to passing sinners, and, in addition, lithographic illustrations of scenes from the Bible will be used.

Traveling sign painters will place more prominent sermons on signboards and buildings. In cities the street cars will be utilized, cards displayed in hotels, theaters, depots, etc. In short, it is proposed to force everyone to learn something of the Bible by having constant reminders put before them.

To Develop a Zebroid.

Since the domestication of the zebra it has been suggested that mixture with the horse would give a half-breed combining the qualities of the two animals, as the mule combines the horse and the ass. The new hybrid is announced by the Baron de Parana, the animal now being in the second half of the first year. The "zebroid," as it is called, is a male of a bay color, with zebra-like stripes, which are hidden on the body by the thick winter coat. The black mane resembles that of the zebra, the tail being like a mule's. The haunch is large and well rounded, the chest long and high, the eyes and nostrils are large, the lips and head small, the legs muscular but delicate and the hoofs small, black and hard. The creature is very lively but gentle.

California's Big Trees.

The largest tree in circumference now known to exist is "General Grant," Tulare County, Cal., given by United States surveyors at 109 feet in circumference. The tallest tree is the "Keystone," Calaveras County, 335 feet high. The Mariposa big tree is the only living tree through which a four-horse coach is driven daily. The tree is thirty feet in diameter. The "Old Sequoia" of Tuolumne Grove, measures forty-one feet in diameter six inches above the ground. The largest red-wood tree of which we find record grew on Eel River, Humboldt County, and was 427 feet long and seventy-seven feet in circumference at the stump. Where it broke, 274 feet from the stump, it was nine feet in diameter.