

SHOOTING THE HAT.

Cornelius Vanderbilt Taken at His Word by a Saucy Belle Who

PEPPERED HIS \$100 PANAMA.

A Little Girl Who Buried Her Treasures for Use Next Year.

PARASOL FLIRTATIONS THE LATEST

RECORDED IN THE DISPATCH.

LENEX, MASS., September 6. DETERMINED to make the most, and get the last of the summer's outing, a thousand wealthy idlers finish up the season in the Berkshire Hills. They gather here in the first week of September, coming from all the other and bigger resorts, but more especially from proud and pretentious Newport. On the day before one small and exclusive clique quitted Newport for Lenox they instituted a ceremony that is likely to become a jocular annual rite. They shot the summer hat. It has long been the custom in the New York Stock Exchange to batter all the hot weather hats worn into that financial mart on or after the 1st of September, and the small boys of the street, backed by such authority, have habitually cried, "Shoot the hat," to even the portliest of men who presume to cover their venerable heads with summer hats in autumn.

TAKEN AT HIS WORD. At Newport the method of taboo was more polite. The hat of Cornelius Vanderbilt was chosen for the occasion. It was a wide-brimmed Panama straw hat, of the



Considering a Proposal.

sort that rich and whimsical men sometimes pay as much as \$100 for and thereafter wear it for many a year, defiant of changing styles.

"O, why don't you shoot the hat?" inquired a saucy belle of the millionaire, as he lounged on the Casino veranda.

"I'll let you shoot it, if you want to," was the reply.

"Very well. Give it to me." Mr. Vanderbilt did not seem glad to be taken at his word, for the hat was a cherished one, but he handed it over without a word, and within an hour the girl had it placed on a secluded lawn, as a target, with a rifle. The hat was hit and missed until the fun of it was exhausted, and by that time it was perforated like the cover of a pepper-box. This occurred on September 2, and it was considered such a successful ceremony that no doubt it will be a September episode at Newport regularly hereafter.

The example was potent, and just about all the fashionable men who have come to Lenox from Newport are wearing brand new and glossy high silk hats. The ladies, too, are appearing in

EARLY AUTUMN TOILETS, which are much less showy and gauzy than those of the summer. The picture shows two toilets, masculine and feminine, considered about right for outdoors in the Berkshire Hills. What are the wearers doing in this particular instance? Well, looking into the bushes. What do they see there? Not much, probably, for their attention is



A Bold Proposition.

fixed upon matrimonial futurity. In plain English, the marriage question has been popped, and is under consideration. Mrs. Farn Stevens, an experienced observer, tells me that more matches were made among the Four Hundred at Lenox in September than everywhere else all the rest of the year round. Summer flirtations and intimacies at the more populous and livelier resorts are apt to culminate here, in the quietly sentimental atmosphere of the hills, in the formation of conjugal partnerships. Mrs. Stevens has spent a great deal of time in London, and she speaks of the success of American girls in foreign aristocratic society.

Of course there is a dashing of matrimonial hopes at Lenox as well as realization of them for the mass of human beings, especially if they are wealthy, is not always accomplished easily or satisfactorily. One pretty and relatively poor girl, for instance, is pretty well understood to have set her heart on marrying a certain rich young fellow. She devoted her summer to it, and had reason to suppose that she was

MAKING THE RIGHT IMPRESSION. Moreover, the father of the young man took a deep interest in her, and this was construed as a sanction of the probable union. The fact of his being a widower was not taken into account, and that proved to be a mistake. After the arrival of the trio in Lenox, one afternoon, the old man began to talk to the girl indefinitely about marriage. It was like the familiar comedy scene in the plays, where the heroine is misled as to whom the wooer is speaking of. The Lenox maiden didn't suspect, although the portly widower discreetly uncovered his almost hairless head, and addressed her with unusual formality, that it was he and not his son whom she could wed. But at

length he delivered himself of the question point blank: "Will you marry me?" She was dumfounded and resentful, but her placidity of countenance was undisturbed. "I was not expecting this," she said, truthfully enough; "I must decline your bold proposition."

Did she maliciously emphasize the word "bold"? There was no doubt of it. The



Burying Her Playthings.

widower clapped on his hat, and didn't lift it again upon bowing her adieu.

BUYING HER TREASURES.

Summer resorts are apt to be graveyards of buried hopes, anyhow, but the interments are not often so attractively made as that which I witnessed at Long Branch. In the party which was about to set out for Lenox was an eight-year-old girl, just big enough to be properly dressed in the most picturesque costume, and young enough to be unaffectedly childish. On the day before

quitting the seashore she was seen shoveling up a mound of sand on the beach. "What are you doing?" I inquired. "I am burying my playthings," she replied. "They won't be any use to me until I come back next summer, and so I am covering them up, so they will be safe till I want them again."

The girls who have made a summer pastime of flirtation may as well bury the season's sentiment, if it hasn't by this time brought a matrimonial engagement. The waves of a social winter may wash out the graves, as they will the sand heap which the little girl made, but there is no use in juggling worthless things away from a summer resort.

THE LATEST AND LATEST FAD of the closing season with the girls is the parasol flirtation. Several years ago a language of fans was invented by somebody, and it got into considerable use by roguish maidens. The use of a parasol for a similar sly purpose is a new whim at Lenox. Whence it was brought would be hard to discover, but it is here and a dozen of our most approved belles are demurely employing it. A code of signals includes a score or more of meanings. For example, to hold the parasol across the right shoulder and behind the neck, with its canopy spread, exactly as shown in the picture, is to be interpreted as saying: "I invite you." As to the particular thing to which she thus calls the fellow, circumstances must determine. It may be a chat on a veranda, or a walk through Parson's Meadow. Perhaps it might prove an invitation to matrimony, ultimately. These things are very subtle.

KAMERA.

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