Of Interest to Women

AMERICAN GIRL'S FOOTWEAR.

There are no women of any country that dress the feet as prettily as American girls do. In fact, no women who have such pretty feet to dress.

Spanish women have tiny feet, but they are too short and broad for real beauty. And French women, by some mysterious process, always wear small shoes, no matter what size foot they have.

But the foot of the American girl, which is as famous as her wit and beauty, is always small enough to exactly suit her slender, thoroughbred build, is exquisitely modeled, rarely (nowadays) pinched, and dressed with the utmost taste, appropriately for every occasion.

It was this side of the Atlantic that women started the fad for the stout mannish cut of shoe for street and country sports, and it took the American girl to first refuse to play tennis in French heels.

This does not mean that English girls have not worn big calf skin shoes always a lot, and frequently inappropriately. Every one knows the British girl's propensity—just the reverse of the French—for wearing shoes that make her feet look large even if they chance to be small. But their stout boots are coarse in texture and common in cut; while though the American girl uses for heavy wear heavy boots, they are of the smartest cut, the most flexible material, and while never tight always fitted to perfection, comfortable over the joint and snug up under the instep.

For a while she did make it a little bit of a fad to accentuate the mannishness of her boots, her soles were uselessly wide and thick, but even then carefully fitted and most swagger in cut and finish. But this season her street boots are just heavy enough for protection, no useless weight, and as perfect in make as her dancing slipper.

Her outdoor shoes, high and low, are of a calfskin, softly dressed, or of dongola kid, or a dull-finish leather. For nice street wear, shoes are a little more pointed at the toe and with Cuban heels, of patent or enameled leather.

For home wear, for afternoon receptions, for evening, shoes may this year match the costume, and for dancing they must. White and pink and yellow suede or dull kid for dancing slippers, or lace over satin, or painted satin are best form.

With many varieties of brown costumes, bronze shoes are extremely good style, and so are brown suede, always with stockings to exactly match.

Of course you can be very well dressed by adhering to patent leather for all day-time dress occasions, but for evening a black or bronze slipper would be inartistic dressing; and white, though it can be worn with tinted frocks, is only best style with white.

But quite as important as shoes to match gowns are the stockings to match shoes, and there has never been a season when such an infinite variety of colored stockings were to be seen in the shops.

Browns in every possible shade of onion-skin, mahogany and docque de roche tones; blues and purples; reds, light and dark and in all strawberry, pond lily and watermelon tints, and yellows, pale and oranges.

And newest of all, shaded stockings, white at the hem and deep-toned at the toe, and every shade of one color in between; not a bit good taste, but nevertheless with some popularity.

The open-work stocking that was entirely crowded out by the gauze-mesh stocking last year, is coming in again this winter, the open-work showing elaborate lace designs and frequently inset with lace.

It is still smart, though eccentric, to have a monogram on the left instep. And just at this season of outdoor sports college girls and school girls frequently embroider the flag of their brother's college on the instep of a silk stocking. Or a sweetheart's initials in his college colors adorn a silk instep.

And all this colored silk embroidery on stockings, and also the craze for colored hosiery, brings up the tormenting question of laundering without losing color or lustre. The ordinary process of boiling and rubbing means ruined hosiery of the delicate sort.

Indeed so heavy can the loss be from careless washing of fine stockings, that a great many girls do up their own, just as they do their laces and table embroideries. Their plan is to use warm water made soft with borax and soapy with castile soap. First, they soak the stockings for half an hour in cold borax water, four teaspoonfuls to a pail of water. Then into a pail of water that has just boiled is shaved a quarter of a cake of soap with a tablespoonful of borax.

The stockings are rubbed a few minutes by hand, rinsed twice in cold water and let drip dry in the shade. Out of doors in the wind is best, but surely out of the sun. All of this means not each laundering. And it's worth the trouble if you want to follow the fad for pretty hosiery.

NO TITLE LIKE "MOTHER."

There is no title more beautiful than "mother;" the good woman glories in it, and fits herself to be worthy the name in every sense. Willingly she goes down into the valley of the shadow of death that she may rise almost glorified in her new honor.

Unfortunately, there are many erring, selfish mothers, as well as good ones—many who should never have been mothers. The woman who accepts the crown of motherhood should discharge her duties faithfully, even though they involve sacrifice. Reverence would be the natural possession of every child if the parents were worthy the respect of their children. Parents may feel that it does not matter whether their children respect them or not; that the achievement is not worth the effort which it costs them; but it matters to the children. Their own wellbeing demands that they reverence father and mother.

As binding as this duty should be considered by parents, equally so is the one of providing in early life for their own old age. Parents should not, when the evening of life comes, be dependent on their children, thus interfering with the responsibilities those children must naturally have assumed. A mother has no moral right to interfere with the marriage of her daughter; it should be the duty and privilege of a mother to teach and fit her daughter for wife and motherhood.

A good mother cannot be forsaken in her old age, notwithstanding the numerous duties a daughter may assume; that daughter will always find time to cheer and solace the parent stem; the golden quality of mother love will beget love untold. To the aged mother or father, for whom the sands of life have nearly run, every thought of daughter and grandchild will be a solace. Every triumph, every woe of the absent child will be sympathized with by the parents who have proved themselves worthy. There are sure to be days when, with aching heart and tired brain, the child will give anything on earth to creep into the humble home and feel the embrace of those loving, aged arms. What a comfort to the parent who has been a worthy one will such actions be only the mother heart, tried and true, can tell!

No woman has the right to deprive her child of its rightful inheritance. Parents owe it to themselves and their children to make easy the downward path of life; they should also fit themselves to be companionable, sweet tempered and unselfish to those about them in the declining years of their lives.

The mother who has become selfish and irritable in her old age must surely have been amiss in her younger life, for trials and sorrow and suffering tend to make a good woman better; they are brothers to knowledge, because they educate and refine.

The mother who has become an invalid or is in poverty should not be deserted by son or daughter; yet some other means, rather than the sacrifice of a child's dearest hopes, should be devised for the maintenance and comfort of such a parent. Herein comes the blessing of making one's self sweet tempered and adaptable. A good mother is a blessing and a joy, one to be prized above all things else; her name should be breathed with reverence. A bad mother is a lasting disgrace to children and the community.

Some mothers will not live alone and refuse to have a son or daughter in-law in the house, or to live in the house of a son or daughter-in-law, lest their little failings become known—selfish, selfish to the core! To the good mother every head should be bowed; earth and heaven will do homage to her. For the selfish mother there is only a lonely old age.—A. F. M., in the New York Tribune.

IN WRITING A LETTER.

Do not write long business letters.

Do not write brief letters of friendship.

Avoid writing over the head of your correspondent.

Never use words with which you are not familiar.

Always use unruled paper of fine texture. Avoid a pronounced color.

Under no circumstances send half a sheet of paper, even for the briefest note.

Use only black ink.

Never write of another anything which you would not want him to see.

Do not write of personal or other important matters to strangers or ordinary acquaintances.

Do not fill your letters with lengthy excuses for your silence.

Do not offer advice unless you are asked for it, and should you have occasion to admonish your friend, let it be done gently and lovingly.

Do not send an important message on a postal card and never use them for notes of invitation.—The Inquirer.

LONDON'S BATHING WOMEN.

Who could guess that London's education committee employs bathing women among its numerous classes of workers? Yet such is the case. They are called in to superintend the washing of children in the schools for the mentally deficient. They are paid sixty cents for one and a half hours' work. In addition, however, they are called upon to wash the towels and tidy up the bathroom after use.

Mrs. Leland Stanford is now in the East in an endeavor to find a minister for Stanford University to succeed the Rev. Heber Newton, resigned.

Pretty Things to Wear

New York City.—Simple waists with waistcoat effects are among the newest features of fashion and exceedingly attractive. This one is made of

BOX PLEATED BLOUSE WAIST.

royal blue chiffon taffeta combined with ecru lace, but it is suited to all waistings and all simple dress materials as well as to both the entire gown and the odd waist. The sleeve extension, which form box pleats over the shoulders, make an especially noteworthy feature and are becoming to the generality of figures. When liked, the vest can be of velvet or other contrasting material so making still greater variety.

The waist is made with a fitted lining which can be used or omitted as preferred, and consists of the fronts, back, centre front and vest portions. The lining is closed at the centre front, the waist invisibly beneath the edge of the left front and the waistcoat at the centre. The sleeves are made in one piece, mounted over fitted linings, on which the deep cuffs are arranged and their extensions are arranged over the shoulder seams.

The quantity of material required for the medium size is four yards twenty-one, three and one-half yards twenty-seven or 1 and three-quarter yards forty-four inches wide, with three-quarter yards of all-over lace to make as illustrated.

Fashionable Coats.

If long, tight redingotes and basqued jackets are all the rage, the little, short, loose paletot has certainly not disappeared, for I see many editions of it among the new models, and I gladly hail its appearance, for it is so useful and convenient and looks just the thing to wear with a simple skirt for morning expeditions, shopping, etc. The new "Carricks" are cut in much the same shape and have capes that come over the shoulders, but without covering up the coat completely. They are fastened to the side seams and so do not interfere with the grace of the silhouette. Many Carricks are unlined, the big pelerine being sufficiently warm. These outer sleeves or capes are fastened with automatic buttons so that they can be taken off if desired.—Paris Fashions.

Blouse or Shirt Waist.

Waists that are simple in style yet a little more elaborate than the shirt waist fill many needs and are in great demand. This one is exceptionally attractive and is adapted both to the odd waist and to the entire gown as well as to a variety of materials. As illustrated, however, it is made of dark red chiffon taffeta stitched with corticelli silk and worn with a black tie and belt. The yoke adds largely to the effect and intensifies the broad shoulder line, but can, nevertheless, be omitted when a plainer waist is desired.

The waist consists of the fitted lining, which is optional, fronts and back, with the yoke and sleeves. The sleeves are made in one piece each and are laid in pleats both at the upper edge and above the cuff portions. The closing is made invisibly at the left of the front and the neck is finished with a regulation stock.

The quantity of material required for the medium size is five yards twenty-one inches wide, four yards twenty-seven inches wide, or two and three-quarter yards forty-four inches wide.

BLOUSE OR SHIRT WAIST.

A LATE DESIGN BY MAY MANTON.

With a Trio of Flounces.

Though ruchings on accordioned flounces are yet evidences of petticoat prettiness, a lovely novelty in brown shows three flounces, each hemmed top and bottom, each shirred three times, and each sewed to the one above.

Copper-Colored Marabout Feathers.

Lovely as possible is a pastel copper stole of marabout feathers, with a liberal sprinkling of ostrich. At the ends it is nearly white.

A Pretty Simple Gown.

One of the prettiest of the simpler gowns is gray lace combined with silver lace. The high bodice has a yoke and collar striped with silver, and the draped girdle is largely composed of the silver. The skirt is full and long, and has several lines of the silver above the hem.

Butterfly on a Shoe.

Quite the latest butterfly vogue is to wear a butterfly on the front of the evening slipper.

Orchard and Garden

The Cotswold Sheep.

Cotswold sheep have been bred pure for at least three centuries. The Cotswold of today is in many ways at variance with the old type and it is seldom now that we see a flock of pure bred Cotswold that cannot lay claim to the ideal type of a combined wool and mutton sheep. True, they are as large a breed as we have, but did you ever know of a market on which a prime Cotswold lamb would not bring the top figure?

Some very careful experiments have been made in recent years to test the different breeds for profitable feeding. The Cotswold always is right at the top. The now desirable export trade demands the heavy weights that Cotswolds make at two and three years. Cotswold rams have been used by the largest sheep company in the west chiefly for the last 15 years. New stud-breeding flocks are being founded all over the country to supply the demand for Cotswold rams that is increasing with each succeeding year.

As sheep of beauty and high character in their whole general appearance, it can be said that no other breed equals them, and for real sterling qualities as a wool and mutton producer, they are more than holding their own in this country.

Applying Manure.

Farmers will have their own views and practices how to apply the manure. Circumstances and conditions will make more or less difference. A farmer should study the matter carefully and by experimenting on his own land try to find the best methods.

Both methods of plowing manure under and surface applications are practiced, and each will have its advantages. Coarse, strawy manure should produce the best results by plowing under, as it is difficult incorporating it with the surface soil to any satisfactory degree by harrowing. Turned under it will be out of the way of cultivation, decay and furnish food for the roots of the plants as they extend downward.

It will also serve to lighten the soil and furnish vegetable matter which is of importance. The writer used to have an idea that surface manuring, at least on his own land, was altogether the best, but later developments rather indicate that plowing the manure under has its advantages, and is to be preferred.

Of course, soils, seasons and depth of plowing will have some influence or effect in the matter, and one should not be so decided in his opinions and practices that he will not be willing to make a change when indications point to an improvement in so doing.

Then, in conclusion, do all possible of the plowing in the fall, do it in the best manner, and carefully apply all of the manure available in the manner calculated to do the most good.—E. R. Towle, in The Massachusetts Ploughman.

Crib-Biting and Wind Sucking.

A noted English veterinarian says that he couples these bad habits together because they often are inseparable, and says:

"Either may exist without the other, but one (crib-biting) may lead to and end in the establishment of the other. Crib-biting is habit contracted by idle horses who start by playing with the manger—licking or biting it. It may be copied from the habit of another horse, and therefore a crib-biter in a stable is undesirable, because it may teach other horses the habit. Just how and when it arises is a difficult question to answer. I remember one case in which the habit was contracted in only a few days. A horse may "crib" and not windsuck, in which state I hold the horse has a vice. When he wind-sucks, is he vicious or unsound? Mere cribbing does not diminish his usefulness. Wind-sucking may not interfere with the working capacity of a horse doing regular, constant work, but should anything occur to prevent his working—as, for instance, a lame leg or a sore back—he will soon diminish his capacity for work. Most horses require some resting place for their teeth or jaws before they wind-suck, but a few are able to do so with no fixed point to rest on. The evil of wind-sucking, I assume, is the distention of the stomach by swallowed air. This leads to gastric defect. I do not believe that the habit has, as a predisposing cause, a gastric affection, nor do I recognize any evidence that indigestion leads to wind-sucking. I consider it merely a bad habit—a vice leading to unsoundness."—Indiana Farmer.

Profit in Guineas.

One branch of the poultry business that is very much neglected, and that is guinea raising.

A flock of guineas are about the most profitable that can be kept if they can have the range of the farm. The common guinea is just as good as the albino or white variety, but when cooked the flesh is not so white. In the morning when let out of the poultry house they often stop no longer than to pick up a little of the grain given to the flock before they wander to the fields in search of weed seeds and bugs which they like better than anything that can be given them. They never become tame like hens. They will lay in the nests with the hens during the forepart of the season, but when ready to set they will steal off and hide their nests and hatch their eggs unless watched. Do not let them hatch their own eggs, as they are most careless mothers and a guinea hen that will raise two chicks out of 20 hatched will be doing pretty well. Hatch them under hens and let the hens raise them. They will develop a great affection for their foster mother, refusing to be weaned during the whole season and following her faithfully whenever she is out of the poultry house. When first hatched guineas are exceedingly wild and unless confined will wander off and perish, leaving the nest very frequently and within two or three hours after hatching. Guinea eggs do not sell well on the market because of the small size, but for house use they are as good as any and are produced in such abundance and at such little cost that any one can afford to keep a flock for the eggs. Besides being a cheerful bird, they are as good as a watch dog to tell when strangers are around. They detect a stranger as soon as he comes near and set up their shrill cries. They also serve to frighten off hawks as they are sure to raise a clamor if one comes in sight.—Mrs. Henry Koster before Dubuque County (Iowa) Farmers' Institute.

The Busy Bee.

If your hives are poorly sheltered, or full of cracks, the heat will pass out and the bees will have to consume just so much more honey for fuel.

If your bees have a good warm hive, a good queen and plenty of honey, very little care will be required from you until next swarming time arrives.

If any hives are gaping in the corners now will be a good time to renail them, and put on an additional coat of paint.

Do not try to keep your bees warm by closing up the entrances of the hives. Make the top as tight and warm as you please, but allow sufficient bottom ventilation.

To protect empty combs from the moth larvae, place them where they will get a good freezing during winter. Nearly all empty combs will be found to contain moth eggs in autumn. If the combs are kept in the cellar, or other moderately warm place, these eggs will hatch into larvae, and feed upon the honeycomb.

Look out for mice getting into beehives during winter. They play havoc with the combs.

Remember, it is just as important to take proper care of the honey, and put it on the market in a first class condition, as it is to use the best and most economical means of securing it. One of the essentials of proper care is keeping the honey in a very dry and warm place; especially is this true of comb honey, or extracted honey in open cans.

Honey taints very easily, and for this reason it is best to use as little smoke as possible when extracting.

After many experiments in melting honey, I have come to the conclusion that it cannot be done without imparting to it a waxy flavor.

When hunting wild bees, light a small fire and burn small pieces of old comb or beeswax, drawing the bees in this way. Then take a comb of honey and let the bees settle on it, and place it inside of a box. When your first bee gets filled, keep your eye on her. After circling several times, each circle being larger, she will start on a straight line from you—sometimes she will start for home when so far away that one needs good eyes to see her.

If the colony is close by, there will soon be others following the first bee. When you can see them leave the comb and go without circling, then get a direct line marked by something you will remember. Get some of the bees in the box and carry them to some other location where your observation will not be broken by trees, and let your bees down on the comb, watching them as before, till you secure a straight line from this point. Now, all you have to do, is to follow up this line until you come to where the other line crosses.—F. G. Herman, in The Farm Journal.

Pinning Off Onion Smart.

"I have been putting up preserves and pickles for thirty years," said a Brooklyn housewife of the old school, "and I discovered the other day that I am not too old to learn something new. I went to New Jersey to see my son's young wife, an Iowa girl. They were married last winter. She was putting up onions—a decidedly disagreeable task. But her eyes were not watery. She simply nodded and muttered something between closed teeth.

"'What in the world are you keeping that pin between your teeth for?' I asked.

"She removed it long enough to say: 'To keep the onions from hurting my eyes. I'll be through in a minute.'

"'Do you mean to say that will do it?' I asked incredulously.

"She nodded. The pin was in its place again. She kept it there for ten minutes while I watched her work, and her eyes were as dry as a walnut."—New York Press.

Horticultural Hints

SOME SWEET PEAS HINTS.

Any one may have sweet peas with their delicious fragrance, three to four weeks earlier, by sowing in the fall instead of spring. They are hardy and will stand quite a freeze after coming up. I prepared the ground by giving a light dressing with well rotted manure; spaded up and sowed in the usual manner. On the 2d of March, when the ground was thawing out I raised the board and was surprised to find the peas coming through the ground. Later we had two snow storms and several freezing nights, but it did not seem to hurt them.—D. DeVecmon, in The Epitomist.

STRAWBERRIES.

Where possible spring planting should be employed, as better fruit crops result than where plants are set in the fall, but where the summer heats destroys the plants fall planting is essential.

The soil should be in perfect condition and well mulched. Plants should be obtained from the nearest plant nursery and there should be no delay in putting them to the field. As soon as there has been a good rain the plants should be obtained, set with especial care and frequently hoed until they are established. If the soil becomes dry the plants must be watered or they will soon die. For fall planting, be sure to plant about twice the number of plants are used than when set in spring. Every effort must be put forth to obtain the most vigorous growth, as there is at most only ten or twelve weeks in which the plants can develop and strengthen their fruit buds.

THE PLUM AND ITS ENEMIES.

Those who have orchards of plums still prefer the jarring of the trees to all other methods for capturing of the curculio. Early in the morning the curculio insects are in a half torpid state, and a jarring of a tree causes them to drop quickly. A sheet is spread on the ground to catch the insects, and they are then burned or otherwise destroyed. It is a better method than spraying. In orchards of plums where hogs have the run of the enclosure and where the jarring is practiced but few curculio will be found after the first year. The few plums that fall punctured by the curculio which were not destroyed or which have done their work before, are eaten by the swine, which prevents the exit of the larvae; and in this way an orchard is almost immune in a few years. There are various devices for jarring the trees. Some drive in an iron plug, which is struck by a heavy mallet, others use a block of wood padded where it is attached to the tree, and this block is struck with a heavy mallet. Between jarring the trees and destroying fallen fruit before the larvae can escape, the pests can be so lessened as to insure a crop of fruit after it is set. Spraying the foliage and fruit when young, to kill fungi germs, is also to be recommended, or the crop may be lost through the fruit rotting.—Practical Farmer.

PANSIES AND SPRING BEDDING.

Numerous varieties of pansies are given from four or five types. The Odiers are marked by three in the catalogues, but they are all derived great velvety blotches; the Bugnots by five. Both are foreign strains, but thrive admirably in this country. The Odier pansy is finest, however, when given the protection of a cold frame in winter. Cassiers and Trimardeous are both superb, large flowered sorts, the latter rather flabby in appearance. The English pansies are rich, round, velvety beauties not very well adapted to this country. The bedding pansies are a mass of small, brightly colored flowers; they fairly bloom themselves to death.

It is time to choose between them, or to sow all of them, if you have room. Usually before the last flowers of last year's seedlings have faded there will be plenty of young pansy plants springing from self sown seed all over the bed.

An old cold frame that can be shaded in the day time is a capital place in which to sow pansies now. Lacking this, they can be sown in a box or pot in the window, on a corner of the porch or in a cool, sheltered nook almost anywhere in the garden. If an outdoor bed is chosen for the sowing, be careful that the soil is deeply dug, very rich and moderately porous with leaf mold and sand; also that the surface of the bed is raised enough to keep the water from standing on it in winter. Otherwise the little seedlings will need to be transplanted.

My own seedling pansies are always transplanted from the cool, sheltered nook that early fall or midsummer sowing presupposes, to a well prepared one that gets the sun and the shelter of buildings all winter. In other words, I do my transplanting in October instead of in the spring. From this sunny bed the plants are transferred after they have bloomed through April, May and June, to one having a northern exposure. Here they rest and give a few blooms during summer, blooming finely again in fall. When the fall rains begin the old root will send up strong new shoots that in a little while will be full of lovely flowers. The bedding pansies may be sown in quantity in spring for summer flowers.—Vick's Magazine.

The French provincial railroads are among the poorest in the world.