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OLIVE HARPER'S IDEA

SHE DESCRIBES THE NIDEST GOWN OF THE SEASON.

It Does Element Affair, But Pays to Drop a Tear Over the Man Who Pays For It. The Warmest Outdoor Wraps Described. A Gold Chain to Hold the Muff.

[Special Correspondence.]

New York, Dec. 1[illegible]—Sometimes I wonder why women do [illegible] trying to pick out a new fashion of making them up, if they [illegible] dress but just as I begin to feel like that a beautiful Providence [illegible] something that is so new and so ex-

MODEL NOON DRESS.

cellent from one point of view or other that I forthwith feel my missionary spirit aroused anew and I set to work with a good heart to tell about it.

Today I dropped into a grand establishment where they wouldn't look at a piece of goods with a view to making a dress of it for less than $40 and they make you feel as if they were doing you a great honor and favor by doing it for that. Well, here I found what I call one of the nicest gowns of the season. It is graceful, useful and plain, while still very elegant. What more could one desire? This gown was cut quite ample around the bottom, and walking length. Around the bottom were three rows of brown fur. The material, I should have said, was the new colored diagonal cheviot, with part of the warp brown, and the intervening rows of mixture holding brown, red, gray, purple and green, all so mingled that it looked like a field of purple heather. The diagonal weave threw a shade above in brown only, making a choice and beautiful pattern dressy in itself.

The waist was cut perfectly plain, but had a wide, folded capelike bertha made of brown moire, lined with cherry satin, which showed in the folds. At the waist were two straight hemmed ruffles, gathered only sufficiently to set up a little full. The sleeves were medium large gigots. As a finishing touch, there was a narrow border of fur around the high collar. This dress was lined throughout with brown taffetas and had five narrow pinked ruffles set on the inside. The general style of this gown may be made a model for those who have a new one to make. Dressmaking is easier for the amateur today than it ever was before, and almost any one can follow this design closely and have a stylish gown with little trouble.

I am sure my sisters will all agree with me when I say that we shall need our warmest outdoor garments now. The jackets, the capes and the various short wraps are now insufficient, and the long wrap is a necessity. There are many styles of such garments. The ulster, the newmarket, the paletot and the regular cloaks and pelisses come under that heading. There are long fur pelisses for those who can afford them and other wraps lined with rabbit and squirrel skins, but really the most satisfactory garment is a long wrap warmly lined and trimmed with fur. For such garments black cloth, fine serge, alpaca cloth, whipcord, matelasse and woolen brocades are the handsomest, as they are all sufficiently heavy and are good-wearing fabrics. They can be trimmed to suit the wearer.

One handsome winter wrap shown yesterday was of rich, fine whipcord and was cut somewhat in the circular shape, and set upon a round yoke, to which

OLD WEATHER WRAPS.

was sewed a gathered deep ruffle of the same, lined with black satin. The collar set high and was notched, and all around the neck and down the front was a band of bear fur. There were two revers, inverted and reaching the bottom, leaving place for the hands to be put out. The whole was lined with quilted black satin.

Another was made in the same shape, with the exception that the fronts reached under to the sides, leaving the outside hanging over like sleeves.

A pretty caprice is now to have a stout gold chain around the neck which clasps inside the muff to hold it in place. The chain should not be too large, but rather fine. It gives a decidedly bright look to a somber outfit.

OLIVE HARPER.

RUBBER IN BRAZIL.

Letter From the Mighty Forests of the Amazon Valley.

[Special Correspondence.]

Para, Dec. 10.—The interesting Brazilian port, situated on an estuary of the [illegible] of the old mouth of the mighty Amazon, is a queer conglomeration of [illegible] and hovels—mostly hovels. It is [illegible] noteworthy as the distributing center of caoutchouc, the raw material of rubber. From this port goes two-[illegible] of the world's supply, or about 20,000,000 pounds annually. Fortunately for the manufacturing interests [illegible] dependent on this trade, the seat of the Brazilian civil war is 1,500 miles south of [illegible] and so it is not likely to affect the caoutchouc interests, as it has done the coffee trade. The caoutchouc business, which makes Para what it is, is in the hands of a few people, who constitute a sort of syndicate, and the top strippers [illegible] fortunes very rapidly. There is a good deal in the caoutchouc industry [illegible] sketching in its salient points.

Caoutchouc is found in the milky juice of many trees, but the most reliable is from the rainforest of Brazil and Central America. The valleys of the Amazon streams here are marked by an overgrowth of leafy and swarm with countless varieties of animal and vegetable life. The traveler cuts his way through a gorgeous tangle of shrub and creeper, flaming cactus garlanded with [illegible] blossoms, to the more open [illegible] of the settlement or caoutchouc forests, often spreading for miles not far from the river banks. The India rubber trees thrive best where the alluvial flats are annually submerged by the floods. These the camps of the "seringueiros," or rubber collectors, are found.

The low thatched hovels are made safe from the freshets by raising the floors about 10 feet on wooden piles. Here the small proprietor lives with his native helpers, or mojos, with nothing to do in the wet season except to chatter with the [illegible] and fight countless insect pests, the most venomous in the world, his sole pleasure being the everlasting cigarette. To the more remote riverine tracts the mojos, or half civilized Indians, on whom the industry is dependent, cannot be persuaded to go. The wild savages of the far interior are not only cruel, but cannibal in their habits, and the richest rubber section of Brazil is still virgin for this reason.

With the coming of the dry season the "seringueiro" at once begins his attack on the caoutchouc giants, which frequently stand more than 100 feet in height. The workman chops a hole in the trunk and connects a bamboo conduit with a white cup which trickles into clay pitchers. The collector transfers the cup to the common receptacle of a huge turtle shell. Now begins the smoking process, which operates something like the action of tannin on hides. A bottomless earthen jar, with a long, nar-

THE NATIVE'S HUT.

row neck for a chimney, is set on a fire of dry palm nuts. No other fuel will do, for the fumes have a peculiar value, coagulating the milky sap into a substance like yellow cream.

The mojo workman pours the sap over the blade of a sort of wooden spade and twirls this swiftly in the fumes till it becomes solid and attains a peculiar color. So he adds layer upon layer till the rubber form grows to the needed thickness, when it is cut away from the sides and suspended in the sunlight. The effect is to make the substance evenly brown and solid throughout. A common shape of the product in the Para market is the bottle prepared by pouring the caoutchouc sap over an earthen mold with an open neck. These rubber bottles are often ornamented while the rubber is yet soft by the rude native artists with outlines of birds, beasts, plants, human creatures and even landscapes.

Some of the mojo women are exceedingly beautiful, brown Venuses, who would stagger the piety of a St. Anthony. An interesting romance had its beginning at one of the principal rubber stations on the Madeira a few years ago. The younger son of an English baronet, abroad seeking his fortune, had connected himself with a leading rubber firm in Para, and had occasion to visit the caoutchouc districts. He became infatuated with the daughter of a mojo laborer, who had a superb face and figure, as beautiful and soulless as a jaguar. He took her with him down to Para, and thence to England, and it was afterward asserted that one of the divine padres had actually pronounced the blessing of holy church over them. Be that as it may, the death of the elder brother in the hunting field left the cadet the heir, and he, too, soon paid the debt to nature. So the brown skinned baby of a savage mother became possible successor to one of the best estates and titleages in Devonshire, could the fact of the marriage be established.

The woman fell in with a Portuguese adventurer in London. He pushed the claims of the child to the baronetcy when the old man died, and there was a bitter fight in the English law courts, based on a certificate of marriage which purported to have been signed by the Brazilian padre of the little settlement 800 miles away from the coast in the Amazonian forests. The suit ended in a defeat of the probable imposture, but it was a very narrow shave. Here was a story such as Miss Braddon might have wished for one of her novels, and a good many such queer social entanglements are talked about in the gossip of the Para rubber market.

S. E. F. CUTLER.

UNCLE SAM, FLORIST.

A GLIMPSE OF THE BOTANICAL GARDEN IN WASHINGTON.

Finest Collection of Palms in the World. The Victoria Regia, a Lily Which Will Hold Up a Child—Plants Included Among Congressional Perquisites.

Uncle Sam's botanical garden in Washington occupies a tract of between eight and nine acres of land almost in the shadow of the capitol.

If you are a newly elected member of congress and have not been initiated into the full scope of your perquisites, you will probably receive within a short time after your arrival a letter from some person you never knew and never heard of, asking just for an order on the superintendent for some choice ferns, palms or hanging baskets to be filled at their own expense. Perhaps the letter comes from some resident of Washington, for there are many here who apply on the outlook for new members of congress, especially those who do not bring their families with them, or it may come from one of your own constituents, who is well versed in all the congressional perquisites. Say it will not be long before you learn that there is a vast variety of things beside seeds and congressional reports, which only await your order informing the custodians where the articles may be sent.

Each member of congress is entitled to a certain amount from the botanical garden each year, the kind and the amount being of course subject to the rules of the superintendent. If a senator should send for one of the rare specimens of palms or cactuses, it is very doubtful about the request being honored. The last specimen of a rare plant world not be given up under any circumstances. The most of the orders sent in are for roses, geraniums and blooming plants, of which there is a great supply. If the representative or senator prefers to have his quota of plants sent to his greenhouse in his [illegible] city, he is furnished by the [illegible] to the home of representatives w[illegible] the shipping box, in which the [illegible] are securely packed and shipped [illegible] express to their proper destination.

Upon entering the botanical garden by the west gate you will notice on each side of the broad walk an endless variety of cactuses, in all of the varied conditions of growth and scrubbiness. Some seem to grow after ideas peculiarly their own, as if their chief charm lay in their strawny nakedness. Others are very pretty and would help wonderfully to adorn any conservatory or bay window. This avenue extends for about 100 feet, when the decorations of the avenue change, and you find yourself amid an avenue of palms.

You may have hurried by the great variety of cactuses, but you will certainly loiter along among the unique collection of palms gathered from every quarter of the globe where palms grow.

The largest of all the conservatories is the palmhouse, with its immense dome shaped roof. The building has to be a large one to accommodate some of the immense palms which it contains, many of which are 40 feet high. Here you will find palms from Mexico, Brazil, Central America, South America New Caledonia, Australia and the South Sea islands; palms with long trunks, palms with thin leaves, with broad leaves, with long names and with short names that you read and forget with an ease that is wonderful, so that the most you carry away with you is a memory that you have seen the largest variety of palms in the world.

In the large basin, 90 feet in diameter, is the Bartholdi fountain, which was purchased at the Centennial exposition of 1876 by the library committee for the Botanical garden. The fountain is of cast iron and cost $8,000. In the basin of the fountain grows the Victoria Regia, the largest species of water lily in the world. The lily is an annual, and as the season in Washington is too brief for the lily to reach its maturity, the seed has to be imported each year. The plant is a native of Brazil, and the seeds are imported in winter, for if they were kept dry during the length of time which would be required for transportation the seeds would be worthless. In August the Victoria Regia is in its full glory, and it is during this month that the amateur photographer delights himself by posing a small child upon one of the immense leaves. By this novel experiment we are better able to judge of the size of this giantess of the lily family.

Among the other wonders of the botanical garden is a large bed of elephant grass, which grows to the height of 18 or 20 feet. As a rapid growing plant this grass seems to be the first in its class, but during the winter season it dies down to the roots. When in blossom, the bed looks like a small section of the jungle transplanted to American soil.

The trees in the botanical garden have been selected more with a view to their adaptability to the soil and climate and to their worth as shade trees rather than to illustrate peculiar kinds or varieties of trees, and altogether the general effect of the tree planting has been very successful, in that the requisite amount of shade has been secured as well as a harmonious touch of general embellishment of the garden.—Boston Herald.

National Flowers.

The flower badges of nations are as follows: Athens, violet; Canada, sugar maple; Egypt, lotus; England, rose; France, fleur-de-luce (lily); Florence, giglio (lily); Germany, cornflower; Ireland, shamrock leaf; Italy, lily; Prussia, linden; Saxony, mignonette; Scotland, thistle; Spain, pomegranate; Wales, leek leaf.

Mixed Metaphor.

"Brethren," said an earnest exhorter to a body of religious workers, "brethren, remember that there is nothing which will kindle the fires of religion in the human heart like water from the fountains of life."—Springfield Republican.

THE DEATH [illegible]

[illegible]

—Walter [illegible] in New York Ledger.

Peter Cooper on Interest.

Peter Cooper was always a careful and prudent business man. He was always opposed to the methods of many merchants, who launched out in extravagant enterprises on borrowed money, for which they paid exorbitant rates of interest. Once while talking about a project with an acquaintance the latter said he would have to borrow the money for six months, paying interest at the rate of 3 per cent. "Why do you borrow for so short a time?" Mr. Cooper asked. "Because the bankers will not negotiate bills for longer." "Well, if you wish," said Mr. Cooper, "I will discount your note at that rate for three years." "Are you in earnest?" asked the would-be borrower. "Certainly I am. I will discount your note for $10,000 for three years at that rate. Will you do it?" "Of course I will," said the merchant. "Very well," said Mr. Cooper, "just sign this note for $10,000, payable in three years, and give me your check for $800, and the transaction is complete." "But where is the money for me?" asked the astonished merchant. "You don't get any money," was the reply. "Your interest for 36 months at 3 per cent per month amounts to 108 per cent, or $10,800. Therefore your check for $800 just makes us even." The force of this practical illustration of the folly of paying such an exorbitant price for the use of money was such that the merchant determined never to borrow at such ruinous rates, and he frequently used to say that nothing could have so fully convinced him as this rather humorous proposal by Mr. Cooper.—New York Post.

An Evening With Andrew Lang.

The spelling of the name of Miss Agnes Repplier and her singular felicity in epigram and phrase inevitably suggest her familiar name in Philadelphia, where she lives. This is the "repplier." Her dinner conversation in this respect is celebrated among her friends. Miss Repplier, as is well known, worships at one particular shrine, that of Andrew Lang. Last summer Miss Repplier was in England and had the anticipated good fortune to be asked to meet Andrew Lang at dinner. It would not have been human for Miss Repplier not to have made a mental toilet as she adorned her body to meet Mr. Lang. But a dinner, we are told, in England is a serious matter. Course after course passed unseasoned by joke, unvisited by epigram and without the grace of felicitous allusion. It at length came to an end. Nor did the conversation have any future. The great Andrew sat down on the floor and played for the rest of the evening with a kitten.—New York Sun.

Flagpoles.

With proper care a flagpole ought to last a great many years in spite of the frequent exposure to the elements. Of course the best preservative of wood is paint, and a man who has a flagstaff which has cost him a good sum of money should see that it is painted at least once every 12 months. Flagpoles generally rot at the bottom first, and then have to be taken down to prevent them from falling of their own weight. The usual length of a pole on top of a high building is from 50 to 75 feet. It is not difficult to get a pole in one piece 50 feet long, but when a man wants to add 25 feet to that he has to do it by means of splicing.—Boston Herald.

Graduated From Heidelberg.

The daughter of the late Professor Windscheid, the famous German authority on Roman law, has been graduated from the University of Heidelberg with the degree of Ph. D. Fraulein Windscheid is the first woman to be admitted to the old seat of learning with the privilege of taking her degree. She passed a brilliant examination. The university, it is said, will probably soon be opened to women.—Exchange.

J. Hippisley says that he has [illegible] upon the whole range of the [illegible] while remote from them by [illegible] of 200 miles, and [illegible] that the Himalayas [illegible] view from a distance of [illegible]

The "Cardiff Giant" [illegible] stone man [illegible] feet 7½ inches [illegible] 6 inches long [illegible] and a foot 13 [illegible]

Eleven million six hundred [illegible] twenty thousand families, with an average income of $968, pay 90 per cent of the taxes in the United States.

According to a decision [illegible] the British courts of [illegible] not legally be enf[illegible] given to a debtor on [illegible]

The first man to [illegible] aluminium to glass was [illegible] Gregor, a mechanical expert [illegible] nati.