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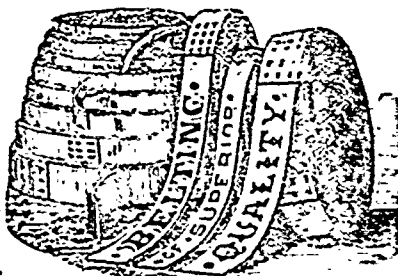
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## NEW YORK LETTER.

Dear Critic,—Miss Zerega's wedding, which took place on Wednesday was a most brilliant affair. The happy bridegroom was Sir Fredrick Frankland; thus does another American girl carry off a title! The ceremony took place at the Church of the Incarnation, Madison Avenue and Thirty fifth Street, and the reception afterwards was held at the bride's home number Thirty-eight West Forty-eighth Street. There were six ushers and four bridesmaids. The church was most beautifully decorated with flowering plants and ferns, and the chancel was one mass of flowers; the altar rail seemed all lilies of the valley. The bridal robe was both novel and exquisite in design; it and all her magnificent trousseau came from Paris. The dress was an admirable copy of an old Venetian portrait, and in richness of material, glimmer of gems and silver, a faithful reproduction of the most picturesque period of Italian dress. The bodice was made high at the throat, with a rolling Venetian collar of silver enriched with gems, elaborately trimmed with slashes of crepe de chine and finest point d'Aiguille. The very long sleeves were slashed at shoulder and elbow with crepe de chine, richly embroidered with brilliant pearls and silver, terminating in a pointed cuff, which fell over the hand. The skirt and demi-train of satin were trimmed with beautiful flounces of old family point lace, alternated with panels embroidered in an emblematic design of orange blossoms and lilies of the valley. From the shoulder fell a full court train of finest velvet, partly covered with an embroidered vine in brilliants, pearls and silver of orange blossoms and lilies of the valley, finished with a deep border of softest white fox fur. Don't you wish you could have seen it? Even from my poor description you can gather some idea of the magnificence of the costume. It will not again see the light until Lady Frankland is presented to Her Majesty next season. Miss Zerega was an only daughter, and every luxury was lavished upon her. All her underclothing was of fine lawn and embroidery, or china silk and lace. The newly-married pair will spend their honeymoon in Canada with relatives of the bridegroom. Two or three weeks will be passed at the home of the bride's mother before the final departure for England.

The first Patriarch's ball of the season was held last week at Delmonico's, and there has not been so brilliant and successful a one since these balls were instituted by Ward McAllister fifteen years ago. The guests began to arrive about eleven, and soon the ball room was gorgeous; flowers from above the earth and jewels from below decorating the beauty that, unadorned, would still have shone. As night faded into morning, Mr. McAllister made his bow to Mrs. Astor and conducted her to the banqueting room, the Duchess of Marlborough, on the arm of the Hon. William C. Whitney, came next, followed by Mrs. Whitney and the Duke of Marlborough, Mrs. S. Van Rensselaer Cruger and Cornelius Vanderbilt, Mrs. Parau Stevens and Chauncey Depew, and the others of this fashionable gathering.

The cotillion began at 1 30, the favors being pink and blue rosettes for the ladies, scarlet and yellow for the gentlemen.

All the shops are gay with Christmas gifts and decorations now. One large window of a tailor's shop up-town is full of presents to be distributed on Christmas morning among the boys whose parents have purchased goods at their establishment. Some beautiful and expensive toys were among the number. But the most charming advertisement of this kind that I have yet seen is in the window of the Harlem and Westchester Clothing Company Third Avenue and One Hundred and Twenty-fifth Street. A beautiful mouse-colored pony, harnessed with a smart brown harness to a very pretty dog-cart, stands in an enclosure just inside the window; and on Christmas morning the whole equipage is to be presented free to the boy who has made the nearest guess as to the correct number of beans in a large glass bowl that is also displayed in the window. The guessing is entirely free any boy not over fifteen years of age, and living north of Eighty-sixth St. being entitled to try his luck. The dear little patient pony looks so inviting as I pass him; would that I were a boy that I might make an effort to possess a real live pony,—to say nothing of all his appurtenances,—for which I need pay nothing.

Mrs. Robert B. Roosevelt is to give a most elaborate *the dansante* in January for her daughter. The mansion on Fifth Avenue, Number 57, will be lavishly decorated with flowers, and the orchestra and the collation will be all that the most fastidious could desire.

Among all the *debutantes* this season there is scarcely a blonde to be found. These are daughters of the gods, however, inasmuch as the majority of them are "divinely tall." Alas! for the poor young man who is rather a Zacheus than a Saul, for he will have to look up to his partners.

Referring to Sarah Bernhardt, of whom I spoke in a former letter, I hear that her snake in Cleopatra is causing her some trouble. He refuses to remain in quietness inside her dress until the fatal moment when she takes him out and puts him to her bare breast. One evening last week he wriggled forth from his hiding place and refused to be put back. He coiled himself round and round the fair actress' throat, and she was obliged to go on with her act with this weird necklace round her, holding tight by his tail to prevent his slipping altogether away. The snake attracts almost as much attention as the immortal Sarah herself, his movements being entirely unforeseen, and often not in accordance with the part he has been taught to play.

My next letter I will try to devote to the theatres, and also tell you something of the great Teachers' Fair, which is now being held, in which all New York is taking an interest.

Yours sincerely,

SOPHIE M. ALMON-HENSLEY.