

TALK No. 1

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No. 880

The Evening Chit-Chat

By RUTH CAMERON

Saw the first of the winter ostrich girls the other day.

What's a winter ostrich girl? Why, just one of those silly little ladies who think to keep warm by burying the top of herself in warm furs and broad-shoulders away from the attack of the cold and leaving her poor little feet clad just as they are in July.

This specimen had a big cuddly shawl, fur that made you warm just to look at it, a fur toque and—yes, actually—fur lined gloves, while on her feet were a pair of high-heeled suede leather pumps and the finest of thin lisle stockings.

I just longed to tell that girl two things.

Firstly, that she was tempting Providence.

Secondly, that she looked absolutely silly.

At which she would doubtless have been very angry.

But it would have been just as true as the other all the same.

For some reason or other—the psychology of it is quite too deep for me—a great many young girls seem to think that it is smart and attractive looking to wear abominably thin clothes in winter.

I remember that in my school-girl days it used to be considered a sort of patent of nobility to wear the same clothes in winter as you did in summer, and that all the girls who dressed themselves with any regard to the seasons were looked down upon as "old fashioned."

And the smartest thing of all was to wear these low shoes and gossamer stockings all winter.

Personally I think it looks just the opposite from smart. I think a girl with such out of season footwear looks really poverty stricken, as if she could not afford any winter shoes and had to make her summer ones do. I feel like offering to buy a nice heavy pair of boots for her. How I'd like to try that sometime with some stylishly dressed "missie." Only I'm afraid I'd better have an ambulance at hand.

Everyone acknowledges that part of spoiled by being worn on the wrong occasion. No one can dislike the feeling and appearance of high shoes as compared with low shoes any more thoroughly than I do, but that doesn't make me blind to the fact that, short of the element of fitness by the winter season, low shoes are no longer pretty.

Let me ask some of the pump devotees something.

What's your favorite kind of fur? Let's say black lynx. It's mine, so I think of it first. Then, you regard a magnificent set of silky black lynx furs as something very much to be admired. Now, if next July you should see a woman coming down the street with a muslin gown and a handsome set of black lynx, would you call her a well-dressed woman?

Of course there are a lot of things that I might tell you that the doctors say about thin shoes, how much more ill-health they are the cause of than the much-tooted crests ever thought of being.

But that probably wouldn't interest you.

That argument would merely appeal to your common sense while this is aimed at your desire to look well.

So I rest my case on this.

Ruth Cameron

Fads and Fashions.

On evening costumes the short puff, band or draped sleeves are seldom seen since the peasant sleeve arrived and took us by storm.

High-cut skirts are sometimes finished with large cords as a girle, which are knotted on the left front and fall over the skirt.

Filigree and ancient Bohemian ornaments are now being worn, and the barbaric Russian designs occupy a conspicuous place in the jewel case.

A very exclusive and luxurious little handbag is of blue grosgrain satin leather, with a frame of imitation ivory and a lining of blue mair.

You make no mistake in using velvet pile fabrics, fur, braids, smaller hats, closer and shorter skirts, an Empire girle and the peasant waists.

Tulle bows for the neck with a smaller bow of beads in the centre are a slightly new variation of the Paychic bow so popular summer a year ago.

The princess slip of satin beneath transparent draperies has retired in favor of the circular skirt, which gives the close fit without a number of seams.

Coats and wraps of tweed, ratine and other rough and semi-fashionable fabrics have taken the fashionable world by storm for motoring and inclement wear.

Elbow-length sleeves are the rule in the new waists, but in many instances they are extended to three quarter length by the addition of a lace cuff which matches the yoke.

White cloth trimmed with skunk fur is being shown in coats for little girls. Black satin coats, heavily wadded, having cravets of ermine, are sold for the older children.

All the tails must be taken from your ermine. If you notice the very latest importations you will find that no black lines mar the smooth surface of an ermine stole or muff.

Fur appears on evening gowns of any color and material as white chiton, Persian ditto, beaded net, lace all-over satin, velvet, cloth, wool mixtures, volle, wool-back satin, crepes, etc.

Jabots for winter are longer, in most cases; stocks show the "straight cut" at the top and collars are all widths from the little turnover to the style which may be called a cape.

Collars are now arranged to raise the hat. The hair is piled on the top of the head in a bunch of tiny curls attached to a piece of net, which is planned over the coil of part of one's own hair.

To wear with plain or embroidered linen collars or with fancy lace stocks there are many pretty jabot bows now offered. The Persian note is strong in these bows, being used as pipinet borders, etc.

Tapestry-covered hats, the tapestry in bold patterns of soft and old tints on a light ground, stretched tightly over the frame, come in wide picture

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shapes and close mushroom models. They are untrimmed.

The picturesque costumes of dull, harmonized tones, or those upon which the dark, metallic laces are used, are much enhanced by silver ornaments that do not clash with the colors of the metal trimmings.

Persian lamb and broadtail will be well in the forefront of fashionable pelts this winter. Half-length coats in these, with practicable collars for buttoning tight round the neck, will be among the most desired garments.

While white and also vivid and Persian linings are shown in many new transparent waists, the high-class trade is taking waists made up over linings the same color as the outside, both matching the color of the coat and skirt.

Bands of all widths and usually so designed that they may be taken apart, separated into motifs, are shown in the most exquisite colorings; the rich yet dull Oriental tones, dull silver and dull gold predominating, though all the modish colorings are represented.

"Mugwumps" and "Heelers."

About a Curious Term Used in the Recent American Elections.

American politics possess a language of their own, the meaning of which it is difficult for anyone living outside the United States to grasp.

Take, for example, the following sentence: "The machine made a slate, but the mugwumps broke it."

This only becomes understandable when it is explained that the "machine" is the party organization, that a "slate" is the official list of the candidates whom the party men are expected to vote for, and that by the term "mugwump" is meant an independent voter, one of the class we have here dub, "silent voters," or in other words, a man who thinks for himself, and whose vote, consequently, cannot be absolutely relied upon by any political party.

Some of the commoner American political terms are familiar by sight to most Englishmen, and yet it would puzzle nine out of ten people to say at-hand just what meaning attaches to them. For instance, there are "Tammany" and "boss," two words that are frequently used together.

Chief of the Delaware Indians, the Delaware Indians, and an early political club called itself after him. Then the club members built a meeting place, and christened it, quite naturally, Tammany Hall. It became the headquarters, first of the Democratic party in New York, and secondly, of a ring of "bosses" and "bosses," who, under the leadership of a certain Boss Tweed, plundered the city treasury of millions of dollars.

To-day the word "Tammany" is applied to the Democratic party leaders and the organization, only the leaders are not called leaders, but "bosses." This word is derived from the Dutch "baas," meaning "master." The whole of the United States is divided up for political purposes amongst the "bosses," for each "boss," it must be understood, has his own territory.

"Bosses" rule his district absolutely. All the voters belonging to his party are expected to vote as he tells them. If they do not they are "broke," that is to say, terrified into doing so.

His "heelers" and his "henchmen" are the chosen instruments for this purpose of the political "boss." They are "heelers" who frequent the local "pubs," ready to do any kind of dirty political work, and differ not much from one another, except that the "henchman" is supposed to be slightly superior in social status to the "heeler."

"Swallow-Tails" and "Short-Hairs." "Bosses," too, it should be mentioned, differ greatly from one another in their relative importance. The chief "boss" of a big State or in the "low" is called a "swallow-tail," and the lowest-class "boss" of all is known as a "short-hair."

It is the big "bosses" who organize the shady tricks that in America win or lose elections. "Pipe-laying" is one of these. This means to bring in a number of voters from one State or city into another, and even its origin to the fact that when the great Croton Aqueduct was being built in New York, thousands of American-Irish laborers were brought into that city from Philadelphia, nominally to lay the pipes, but in reality to vote for the Democratic voters.

Imported voters of this kind were accommodated in "wigwams," an Indian term for a lodge or tent. Hence by "wigwams" is meant any kind of makeshift wooden buildings erected at election times for party purposes.

"Gerrymandering" is an American political word. It means, of course, to divide up an electoral district in such a manner as to insure that the real views of the electors shall not be represented at the polls, and it is derived from one Elbridge Gerry, a former Governor of the State of Massachusetts, who invented the scheme.

Thus, supposing you have 900 voters in section A, all Democrats, and 900 voters in section B, only 500 of whom are Democrats, thus giving a balance against the Democrats, "gerrymandering" is to reform sections A and B, so that there shall be 900 voters in section A, all Democrats, and 1,200 voters in section B, of whom the majority, 700, are Democrats.—P. W.

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