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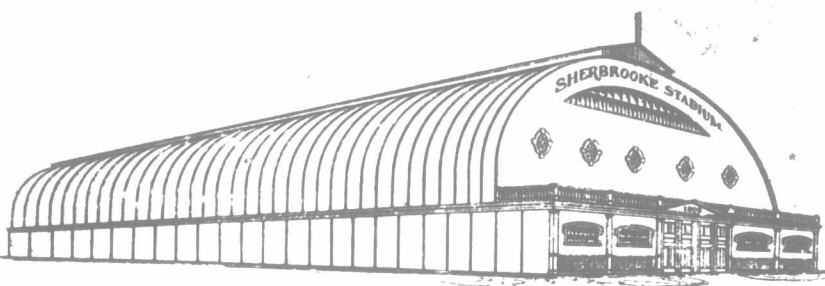
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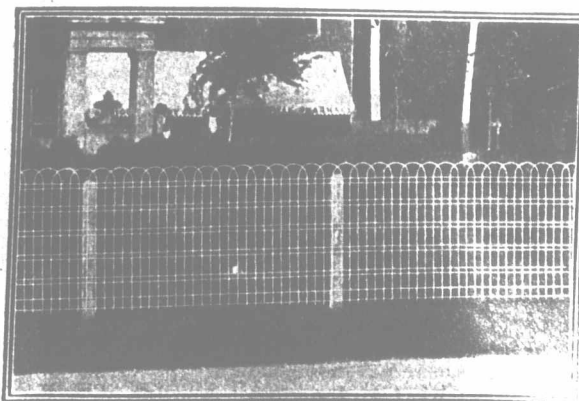
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## The Ingle Nook.

### A CHAT ABOUT THE FASHIONS.

If you have been in town lately, it must have occurred to you that half the women have gone clothes crazy. Weeks and weeks ago, to cite just one example, our house, which shelters a half-dozen females of all ages, was inundated with pique, and dimity, and net. Indeed, as early as the middle of February, Penelope—she's one of our "females"—came in from a favorite down-town store—hat awry, hair flying, and a generally rakish, through-the-mill appearance quite foreign to her. "I declare," she said, "the women down there are like ravens wolves! The new dimities were on sale this morning, and it was as much as your life was worth to get near the counter!" "And did you get what you wanted?" we chorussed. "Yes, I did—just the sweetest barred piece ever!" So we shrewdly guessed that our usually decorous Penelope had cast her propriety scruples aside, and done her share of the elbowing.

After all has been said, however, this habit of buying spring and summer things early has its advantages, which should not be overlooked, especially by country people. In March and early April, there is usually plenty of time for sewing, and it is surely a comfort to have things made before gardening and housecleaning come on.

Having decided upon beginning at once, the next question is what to buy. Sometimes, in going over the fashion books, one gets somewhat confused, there are so many beautiful things, and those paper ladies in floating robes, and trimmed cloaks, and "French-effect" hats, do look so enticingly lovely. However, if we country folk are wise, we will stop to consider. In the first place, it is absolutely necessary that these elaborate costumes, if they are "to look like anything at all," be made by first-class dressmakers, dressmakers who charge anywhere from \$12 to \$30 or more for making a gown, and they are by no means to be found in the country. Better, by far, the simplest gown well made than the most elaborate spoiled. . . . In the second, such costumes have been designed solely for society people, who can afford to have costumes to suit every occasion—simple ones for morning wear and for travelling, more elaborate for the afternoon, more elaborate still for the evening, or for functions extraordinary. Country people, as a rule, must choose designs that will suit various occasions, and so will do well to fix upon those in which the ruling note is simplicity. A simple gown, well made and quiet in coloring, is never in bad taste, and may be worn a long time without inviting comment; an elaborate one, worn here, there and everywhere, may often be out of place, and seldom fails to mark a woman out as invariably as does a striped stick a barber's shop.

Besides, simplicity seems to suit the country, its lack of artificiality, its usual atmosphere of genuineness and unity. In the rural districts, there is very little sense of caste built upon money values—no strata upon strata of society, the top one able to live in fine palaces and dress continually in purple and fine linen, the next forced to do with less, yet a little discontented in the process and aping with all its might, and so on down and down the social ladder. Of course, this sweeping assertion does not apply to everyone in the city—it would be very foolish to imagine that there are not many sweet, and sensible, and good people in the cities, who are contented to go their own way, and let others go theirs but we speak of the general tendency, a tendency which has brought about all too many bankruptcies, and introduced a discordant element into all too many homes. So the country, if it is wise, will drive far from it—the over-elaborateness which only brings worry and the putting of false values upon things, and will hold dear the simple life which so many of the best minds would give much to possess.

Last of all, by choosing simple styles, it is quite possible to do much of one's own dress-making. Many women, even in the cities, are trying this of late, and report results as quite satisfactory. Of course, it is impossible for a woman without the necessary training to make a good tailor-made suit, but, armed with a good new pattern, not a pattern of 2 years

ago—there is nothing to prevent her from making her blouses and separate skirts, and muslins, quite as well, perhaps even much better than the ordinary sewing girl. As regards patterns, I have talked with some women who have had much experience in sewing, and find that they unhesitatingly pronounce the New Idea patterns, which may be bought for ten cents each, as the most reliable of those which they have tried.

And now for a hasty sketch of what spring styles are to be. For suits—the suit which seems so invaluable in spring and fall, and on cool days throughout the summer—light-weight tweeds, Panama cloth, serge, Venetian cloth, broadcloth, and dark "invisible" plaids are all used. These suits may be very well made at home, if good patterns, in Eton or Norfolk (not tailor-made effect) styles are chosen. For the long, loose summer coat, which will be worn quite as much as last year, light-weight tweed, pongee and linen will be in most demand. Some of the new Eton and pony coats show half-fitted or loose backs, but as yet these look extremely ugly.

For summer dresses, fine, pliable materials seem to take the lead, shepherd's plaid, chiffon voile, foulard, cashmere, poplin, and rajah silk in the heavier materials, with dimity, Swiss, mull, Persian lawn, and finely-woven linen in wash materials. Even the gingham this year are semi-transparent and very pliable, while the fine, light-weight pique is a very different material from the old, stiff species, which was such a bugbear in the laundering. Some beautiful new checked dimities, resembling somewhat the old cross-barred muslin, are shown, all ready for making up into the prettiest white shirt-waist suits imaginable. Polka-dots are also in favor, while plain materials, perhaps embroidered by hand, will again be in much favor, thus giving girls who have plenty of time on their hands a chance to be handsomely gowned at comparatively little expense. One girl, whom I know, is embroidering herself a fine white linen gown. The waist is a simple shirt-waist, buttoned at the back, with plaits towards the shoulders, somewhat in Gibson effect, and an embroidered front, with insets of thick white net. The skirt is 15-gored, perfectly plain, with embroidery and insets of the net all round above the facing. The stamping cost her very little, and she is making the whole gown herself.

Skirts must still be very flat about the hips, and flare considerably from the knees down. The tendency is to make them longer, but Paris still decrees two inches from the ground for all walking dresses. Lining is not used at all, and when skirts have the upper portion plaited, the cloth beneath the stitched-down plaits is often cut out to give as flat an effect as possible.

Sleeves, so fashion decrees, must now be long or half-way below the elbow for all plain waists. For dressy wear, they will still be elbow length. When the hot weather comes, however, the chances will be that elbow-length will hold sway for all muslins, dimities, or other very sheer materials. Jumper waists promise to be very fashionable, and the style will be found invaluable in making over old gowns. They are simply sleeveless waists, cut very low in the neck, and worn with a guimpe and sleeves of white, or of a contrasting color. Sometimes caps of the same material as the waist are worn over the undersleeves.

### Leaking Pipes.

I noticed in Jan. 31st issue a short article, written by G. F. G., stating how to put pipes together to keep them from leaking. Well, this may be all right where the pipes run up straight, but this doesn't stop the flow, nor the bad smell. Here is a remedy which will stop the flow and lots of worry and work. Take the first or second pipe above the stove out, and take it to a tinsmith. Get him to cut a hole in the middle about three inches in diameter. Now get him to put a band around this pipe, five inches wide, with a hole in it same as in the pipe. Now use this as a damper, when you shut the stove damper, open the pipe damper. This will let the air in from the room, and stop the trouble at once. This was taken out of an American paper, and tried by different parties, and works No. 1.

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