



My Sketch—Hair-Dressing Pretty Shoes Housewifely House-Linen.

My sketch shows you that we are gradually leaving off our furs, both as wraps and trimmings, but it is well to see the bitter winds of March well past before we quite say farewell to them. I therefore give you a new model of a spring jacket in blue-black cloth. The long vest or waistcoat is of velvet, and framing it in are long ornaments of black passementerie, which end in fringes, as you see, on each side. The back is made plain, and fits quite tightly to the figure, except for the two under pleats, which are necessary to give the required amplitude to the basque of the jacket. Now, if you wish still to make this a little more wintry it will cost very little to add a flat piece of fur inside the Medici collar, the ends being allowed to continue down the front to the hem of the coat, like a fur trimming. With similar pieces of fur added as cuffs to each sleeve, it at once becomes a thorough winter wrap for cold days. Of course these additions would be made removable, to take off and on, according to the state of the weather. It is always well to remember these little arrangements, for they often be-



come real economies. Now, please look at the hat, which is one of the three-cornered Louis XV. shapes, and made of felt to wear with this jacket. It is bordered with black feather trimming, and if desired a little smarter, a narrow gold cord may be added round the brim, about three-quar-

ters of an inch away from the extreme edge. I give also a design for a simple, little bonnet that is useful for every-day wear, and rather brighter and more spring-like than the heavy-looking felt ones of the past two months. It is made of velvet, with bows of velvet ribbon in any colour you find useful to wear with the rest of your costume. Apricot, capucine, a peachy mauve, or pale green, are all colours that will go with almost any dark tint. There is not much to be said just yet about what we are to wear, but the latest news from Paris states that cloth of a light make will be as much in favour for early spring dresses as it has been in its thicker qualities for those of the past winter. All the jackets, and most of the short mantles now making for March wear are composed of it, and very pretty they are. For dresses also, there is nothing more becoming, for it has such a way of falling into beautiful round full folds.

Hair-dressing I am glad to say, is becoming a little more reasonable. We have no longer the helmet-shaped arrangement of hair, with which some people used to cover their heads, and it is only those young girls who are endowed with a super-abundant chevelure who are compelled to pile it up in exaggerated looking masses on the top of the head. Women are learning to appreciate the beauty of a shapely head, and thus nothing is done to interfere more than can be helped with its natural symmetry. The hair is still pressed into large waves and drawn to the back of the head, where it is clubbed into a small chignon, from which a few light curls may escape, if desired, to break its uniformity. Wreaths are beginning to be worn, or a circlet of balls of gold or tortoise-shell laid lightly round the hair, which is



no longer allowed to cover the top but on the crown of the head, as in the accompanying illustration. Young girls wear some of the same ribbon that trims their dresses knotted like a Scotch snood round the head, and when flowers are added they are only of the very smallest, simplest kinds, such as snowdrops, hyacinth, lily of the valley, mimosa, white heather or forget-me-nots. Aigrettes of diamonds are either combined with little sprays of flowers, or tiny tips of ostrich feather, and these are the principal coiffure for young married ladies, but in no instance is the hair or its ornament allowed to increase the size of the head.

Pretty shoes are far more frequent nowadays than they used to be. I can remember the time when nothing but black or white were considered correct, and now all colours, including gold and silver, are permissible. I hear that the newest shapes that are being made in Paris are to be either quite high upon the front of the foot as in King Charles II's time, or cut down very low, so as to make the fore part of the foot look very short, like those we see in the pantomimes on a harlequin. In all cases our evening shoes must match our dresses in material and colour, but I do not hear of very large bows or rosettes being worn just yet—merely buckles for the high shoes, and a diamond solitaire button for the low ones.

Housewifely house-linen is one of the things that more than any other gives an air of refinement to the home. Many ladies spend—they would hardly like it called waste—a great number of hours in endless fancy work, marvels of crewel, ecclesiastical, and other embroideries, useful for very little but to while away that so-called enemy "Time." It is much to be regretted that they should not spend their handiwork on something more worthy the labour they bestow. I will therefore, to-day, chat about the decoration of house-linen, and show by what pretty artifices, elegance,

and beauty even, may be introduced into these prosaic necessities of life, adding, however, that whilst it is not necessary to decorate all one's ordinary house-linen, few will object to having their best sheets, pillow cases, toilet covers, &c., made as pretty as possible to enhance the appearance of the guest chamber. To begin with the sheets; the end that is "turned down" may be embellished with a wide hem, and hem stitched or sewn with an open work of drawn threads, then finished off with Coventry frilling two inches wide, gathered on with sufficient fullness to gauge when ironed. The hem-stitch that is prettiest for this kind of linen is done as follows: fold a hem nearly two inches wide, and tack it down very evenly, draw about ten threads just below the edge of this hem. Take a stitch under six of the perpendicular threads left by the drawing, putting the needle in again where you began, but bring it out instead through the hem, just beyond and above the top of the six threads. The hem-stitch must be repeated on the opposite end of the perpendicular threads as well; this may be done by either taking up the same six threads each time, or by taking alternately three threads of one set, and three of the next, giving the appearance of a sort of Vandyke pattern. An insertion of drawn threads, called "punto tirato" is made by drawing three threads, and leaving three both ways of the linen for as wide as required. With a fine linen thread, sew over each row of three threads, passing the needle at the back where they cross each other. After doing this both ways, button hole the two edges of the insertion. Pillow-cases to match are made with the hem-stitch or insertion on the other side, at the same distance from the edge as the wide hem of the sheet, and also with Coventry frilling. Counterpanes can be made extremely pretty of coarse or fine Saxony linen-canvas, in cream or white cheese straining cloth, or any of the many white or figured coloured materials deemed suitable, and adorned with German cross stitch, Russian or crewel embroidery of coloured cottons in a wide border, with crest, and arms, or monogram in the middle; if of cheese-straining cloth, insertions are easily worked in the stuff itself, or an *entre-deux* of torchon lace looks very nice let in with a wide border of the same lace to finish off the edge. These counterpanes being transparent, are never quite complete without a silk lining of pale blue, pink, maize yellow, or light green, which can be taken out when it is necessary to be sent to the wash. I should like to show you how to do toilet covers but I must leave it till a future letter.

The O'Shea Divorce Case and Home Rule.

It is impossible, however, to deny that the whole aspect and prospects of Home Rule have been completely changed by very recent events. The undefended divorce case in last November, in which Mr. Parnell was a respondent, for the first time completely dispelled the illusions which the great body of the English Nonconformists appear to have formed about the character of that very remarkable man, who has for many years governed the Home Rule movement with the most complete despotism, and on whom its course in the immediate future seemed mainly to depend. There is probably no other country in Europe in which such an explosion of feeling as took place on this occasion could have been produced by such a cause. It was evidently perfectly genuine and spontaneous, and it sprang from the most respectable of sentiments; but it is not, perhaps, surprising that it should have greatly bewildered foreign nations, and that it should have inspired some cool observers at home with melancholy reflections about the kind of influences by which modern politics can be swayed. When Mr. Gladstone, at the age of seventy-five, after more than fifty years of active political life, suddenly announced the complete reversal of the policy about Ireland which had heretofore been uniformly pursued by his party and by himself, the great body of the English Nonconformists blindly followed him. They were shaken by all the revelations of the special commission. They were prepared to place the government of their loyal fellow-countrymen in the hands of a man who had been convicted of a treasonable conspiracy; of aggravated duplicity; of a course of conduct directly productive of perhaps as large an amount of fraud, tyranny and outrage as any movement of the nineteenth century; it was only when he was proved guilty of a breach of the sacred commandment, which was totally unconnected with his public life, that the scales fell from their eyes, and they declared that they would abandon the Home Rule cause if he remained at its head.—W. E. H. LUCKY in *North American Review* for March.