

Courier des Dames.

Our lady readers are invited to contribute to this department.

LADIES' DRESS.

Mr. W. B. Tegetmeyer, who we are told is an F. Z. S., delivered last month, in London, a lecture to ladies which created no small sensation. In the course of his remarks he said his observations would point chiefly to the evil effects which the present style of dress had upon the health. The greatest defect of modern dress considered with relation to health was certainly to be seen in the attire of ladies. Their dress was much more injurious than that worn by the other sex; and of all the evils of female dress there was not one that approached the outrageous fashion of constricting the waist and altering the form of the body. We had now become to look at this defect as almost natural, and our eyes were accustomed to the hideous deformity; but still it was less hideous in point of taste than it was destructive to health. Not long ago he was talking to a lady, whose weight was about 12 stone, and she told him that the size of her waist was 18 inches, thus compressing a waist which, at the most modest computation, should have been 25 inches to almost half of its natural girth. He had measured many of the villainous bands with which the female waist was bound, and found that they did not exceed 18 inches. Into this space, then, of 18 inches, the lungs, heart, liver, and stomach—four of the largest and most important organs of the body—were to be compressed. Amongst the evils which resulted from this practice were lateral curvature and deformity of the spine, unnatural breathing, partial stoppage of the heart's action, and consequent defective circulation, disease of the heart, and of the body generally. The fact was that woman had now become so obedient to the laws of fashion, and they laced themselves to such an extent, that they ceased to breathe through the inflation of the chest, but rather by the inelegant as well as unwholesome means of "pulling." The system of tight-lacing was attended with the greatest possible evil. It was a law of nature that when the action of the heart was repressed, the circulation of the blood was impeded and ultimately destroyed; none of the organs being properly nourished, disease of the whole body here and there took place. Women who inflated upon themselves the penance of tight-lacing, as a consequence suffered from cold feet and red noses. (Laughter.) If they could only bear that fact in mind, it might have a greater effect upon them than perhaps any consideration of health. The cold feet might not, perhaps, alarm them so much as the red noses; but nature, giving them warnings at either extremity, was not to be held responsible if such warnings were allowed to go unheeded. Nowadays, if a servant girl were asked to go upstairs, she could perhaps run for the first flight, or second; but there she was obliged to slacken speed and gasp the rest of her way upwards. This was by no means natural. Females were as well provided with the functions of health as males; indeed, it must be confessed that amongst the noble birds of prey the females were superior to the males in size, in courage, and in activity. As to the elegance of this form of waist, there was in all such cases an unnatural deformity; and it could only be pleasing because they had become used to it as one of the things dictated by fashion.

Another equally prevalent evil at the present time was the deformity induced in the feet by the modern style of boot; and the worst of such defects were now at their worst. It was impossible to imagine a more depraved form of foot-covering or one more injurious than the high-heeled boots now worn by many women. The five toes were crumpled up together, and a greater weight than was intended it should bear was thrown upon the ball of the great toe, rendering long-continued muscular exertion a thing impossible. Naturally, the result of such harvesting was a flourishing and ever-increasing crop of corns and bunions. What greater disgrace to civilization could there be than the fact that during the last great American war a little army of corn-cutters had to be sent with the Federal army to pick out the corns which the shoes furnished by the contractors brought upon the feet of the soldiers. Here, in England, ladies now-a-days wobbled about in high-heeled boots, so constructed that the entire weight of the body was thrown upon the ball of the foot, which was never intended to bear such a burden. He had never seen an undeformed human foot that had worn the modern shoes. Where no idea of fashion came into play the form of the foot was always considered, and the inner side of the boot or shoe was made perfectly straight. In illustration of the various injuries and deformities resulting from shoes and boots, the lecturer exhibited a collection of the foot coverings of both sexes, condemning in the strongest terms the high-heeled and narrow-toed varieties. In Japan, he went on to say, where these varieties were unknown, and where it was the custom for the groom to run by the side of his master's horse, it frequently happened that the horse got tired out before the groom.

Amongst other evils, especially in regard to female costume, was the deficiency of covering for the chest at assemblies, theatres, and other places, where there was more or less exposure to a sudden chill. This deficiency caused inflammation of the upper part of the lungs, and laid the foundation of consumption. Relative to the modern taste as regarded dress, he hardly knew what to say about it. Could anything be more hideous than the long trailing skirt which had to drag over the abominations of the

streets, the high-heeled shoes, or the "Grecian bend?" Was there a line of grace or beauty in the present fashion? Fashion, too, had endeavoured to conform the female countenance to a type of beauty recognized in Greece, namely, the type of the most unintellectual statues of Venus, where there was hardly any forehead to be seen. He used to think that the fashion was set by some celebrated belle or leader of society; but he had been informed by a person connected with fashionable publications that it was nothing of the sort, and that the fashion was set by persons who had things to sell. Could not some of our ladies' societies induce Mr. Tegetmeyer to come to Canada and deliver a series of lectures on a subject of so much interest to the female mind? There is no telling the amount of good he might do.

SPRING FASHIONS.

The *Graphic* gives the following hints on dresses which will be fashionable at Vienna, gleaned from Parisian and London show-rooms. First for morning wear; coarse unbleached holland, trimmed with Indian red linen and buttons, or Navy-blue linen, trimmed with white, will be very fashionable, the embroidered *batiste* tunics and kilt-flounced skirts are as much in favour as last season, they may be purchased for so moderate a price, and wash so well that they really are the most economical costume of the period. A charming new material has just been introduced by one of our leading houses, it is called terry-plique; it is made in white, and produces an admirable effect when trimmed with *Eau de Nil*, rose-colour, mauve, or pale blue. Double skirts have appeared again, and with them bands and buckles instead of sashes, but the polonaise still holds its ground, and will be worn throughout the summer. We have seen nothing more graceful than a polonaise of dove-grey cashmere embroidered with a wreath of poppies, corn and ivy, edged with a rich silk fringe, to be worn over a petticoat of black silk with seven thickly-pleated frills. An appropriate hat for this costume is of grey sewn chip trimmed with grey velvet and a spray of chestnut blossom. We must not omit to mention a new French fabric, called *tissu lèges*, which resists the influence of sun and air, so as to keep its colour until quite worn out. A very elegant *apais-midi* toilette consists of a fawn-coloured silk dress made thus:—The train skirt is arranged on the front breadth, with three flounces, between each of which is a frayed ruche; at either side are flounces up to the waist, whilst on the back breadth are three moderately deep flounces; the bodice en *corset* has a square basque at the back, and two long peaks in front. For a long-necked person a *Henri Quatre* ruff of tulle and pink or blue silk may be worn. These ruffs are becoming more and more exaggerated, and when worn at a public promenade produce the effect of fancy pigeons as the wearers strut up and down; it is really a great pity that all fashions are so liable to be burlesqued.

There is surely a medium between wearing evening dresses so low as to outrage propriety, and so demure-high as to be positively disfiguring; in Paris this happy line has not been discovered. Two very pretty ball dresses were recently given in the *Kermesse de la Made*, both of which were spoiled by this semi-high corsage. The one was of pink silk, covered with pink crape, trimmed with *beauté* of pink tulle, through the middle of which ran a garland of white roses, with pink centres, the *beauté* of crape and tulle, was studded with roses, head-dress to correspond. The other was of turquoise blue satin, and silk grenadine of the same shade; the under-skirt was trimmed with a deep flounce, headed with a puffing confined by satin bows; a tunic made *en tablier* in front and long *revers* at the side was arranged at the back in two large *pois*, and exquisitely embroidered band of roses encircled the tunic-coiffure of roses and pearls. Both sashes and bows are made very large, and usually of watered silk ribbon; points in front and at the back are amongst the fashionable revivals; to a slender figure they are very becoming. Jackets, mantles, and black silk dresses are for the most part trimmed with gimp, handsomely ornamented with jet; this trimming can never be common on account of its costliness. As yet wide open sleeves have not made their appearance for outdoor wear, and even for dinner dress the *Henri Quatre* model, with ruffles at the wrists to match, the ruffs at the throat are mostly worn. In Paris the *fondards* have been brought to such perfection that the delicate bouquets of flowers on a white, cream-coloured, or black ground produce the effect of hand-painting.

The bonnets and hats for this month are very ladylike when not overloaded with trimmings, as is too often the case. A stylish bonnet for a young matron is made of black *faulle*, with a crossway pleating about three inches wide, lined with salmon-coloured satin; of two fan bows, on the left side the one is salmon, lined with black, in the other the colours are reversed. Another bonnet is of white chip, the brim turned up all round; a wreath of roses shaded from red to the palest pink is placed from the left ear across the front, and then carried over the top, terminating in a long spray; a rose-coloured bow with ends, and a tulle veil at the back. A very becoming bonnet for a young girl is composed of white tulle, alternately puffed and quilled. On the front is a wreath of fairy roses, and on the left side a bouquet of the same. One of the fashionable colours of the season is so hideous that we only mention it to caution our readers against wearing it, however beautiful they may be. It is a bright yellow-green mustard colour. As yet we have seen it only in the show-rooms and shop windows. Few persons will ever be bold enough to wear anything so ugly.

Mme. Offenbach, the wife of the celebrated musician, recently gave in Paris a large fancy ball, which was attended by the leading members of the artistic and literary worlds. The financial world (which always ensures a host of pretty women who indulge in great luxury and costliness of attire) was well represented at Mme. Offenbach's *bal costumé*. The most splendid costumes were worn on the occasion, amongst others an authentic Chinese in pink and green silk, elaborately embroidered in many-coloured flowers, with gold and silver profusely intermixed. One fancy dress represented a fan; the material pink satin, covered with fans in white lace. Another represented a pearl, the white tulle dress being studded with small pearls, and the white satin petticoat with oyster shells. The tulle embroidered with pearls, varying in size, those near the waist being considerably smaller than those near the feet. The white satin bodice a peplum covered with pearls, and fringed with the same. The waistband entirely of pearls. A third costume was that of Marie de Medici, precisely as Rubens painted her, wearing blue satin, studded with gold *fleur de lys*; the large lace collar-like gold; the hair powdered with gold, and the small regal coronet of diamonds. One of the most beautiful impersonations was that of Peace. Short white lace skirt, covered with laurel leaves and golden berries, and bordered with blue satin, on which is embroidered in gold letters "Pax Homini-bus." White wings and the wand of Peace in the right hand. Olive branches for head-dress.

This is what is said by the Paris correspondent of the *Warehouseman and Draper's Journal*: "Those who cry out against the extravagance and exaggeration of the prevailing fashions, and who are trying to coax the mode back into a reign of rigid good taste and simplicity, should begin by modifying the height and size of the head-dresses. What is the use of a woman trying to emulate Sainte-Mouseline with a quarter of a yard of frizzes and bows on her head, surmounted by six inches of carved tortoiseshell? A towering bonnet, a high plumed hat, or a collure of flowers, ribbons and diamonds necessarily entrains luxury of costume. For the time being it is quite impossible to arrive at simplicity. Ever since the war extravagance in toilette has increased rather than diminished. The Republic is certainly not the cause of this. Our present Government in nowise encourages luxury of any kind, nor does it give any of those magnificent *fêtes* that were so good for trade and so disastrous in their effects on women's pockets in the time of the Empire. There being fewer opportunities of showing off elegance of costume, there seems a general determination to make the most of every opportunity. A perfect *furor* for dress takes the place of more engrossing interests. Of course it makes a very considerable difference to trade if a season be a gay one or not—we know the effects of a long continuance of Court mourning; yet I doubt whether tradesmen really benefit much from any particular extravagance of material or style. Women cannot spend more than they have; and if a dress costs twice as much money as it used, they have fewer made, that is all. I believe we shall find here the answer to another problem that has vexed us lately—Why are fashions so long in going out? Each article being now so rich in texture and so expensive, no one can afford to put them aside until they have really done good service. Our *élégantes*, therefore, wear their dresses longer than they used, and as the mode takes its cue as much from them as from anyone, we are surprised to find how long a fashion will remain the fashion. Fortunately, an immense variety of styles from which to choose saves us from any monotony."

A Kentucky farmer refused to look at a sample sewing machine recently, as he always "sewed wheat by hand." He is related to the man who did not want a threshing-machine on his farm; "for," said he, "give me a harness tug or a barrel stove, and I can make my family toe the mark according to law and Scripture."

Mr. Brandytoddy's three reasons for not drinking are very characteristic of that gentleman: "Take something to drink?" said his friend to him one day. "No, thank you," replied Mr. B. "No! why not?" inquired his friend in great amazement. "In the first place," returned Mr. Brandytoddy, "I am secretary to a temperance society that is to meet to-day, and I must show my temperance character. In the second place, this is the anniversary of my father's death, and out of respect for him I have promised never to drink on this day. And, in the third place, I have just taken something."

Men make steam engines of themselves from morning till night, and vice versa, dream of gold. The fearful strain upon the nervous system by thus taxing the mind produces not only Heart Disease, Dyspepsia and Lung Maladies, but is often the direct cause of Apoplexy, Insanity and Suicide. It is very remarkable that during the world's progress discoveries are made suitable to the times. Hardly had man become prepared for speedy transit when the railroad and steamboat were introduced, the desire for rapid intelligence developed the telegraph. Coals are usually discovered as wood becomes scarce, and now when men's minds are being taxed to their utmost in order to secure and enjoy the luxuries of an extravagant age, Fellows' Hypophosphites appears that they may by artificial means keep up this mental strain to an indefinite extent.

Buy it, try it, and you'll like it, Jacobs' Liquid.

News of the Week.

THE DOMINION.—The Acadia Powder Works at Waverley, N. S., exploded on Saturday week. Her Majesty's birthday was very generally observed throughout the country. In some places the celebration was postponed until Monday the 26th. Dartmouth, N. S., intends petitioning the Dominion Government to be made the terminus of the Intercolonial Railway. The Terrapin Tower at Niagara Falls has been blown up to give place to a new iron structure. This was one of the oldest landmarks on the continent. It is reported that Mr. John Carling will succeed Mr. Howland as Lieut.-Governor of Ontario. The western division of the Canada Southern Railway was opened on the 26th instant. The following railway bonus by-laws have been carried within the last few days: City of Hamilton, to the Hamilton and North Western Railroad, \$100,000; Port Dover, to the Hamilton and Lake Erie R. R., and the Port Dover and Huron R. R., \$15,000 each; Brighton, bonus to the Presque Isle and Belmont R. R.; Village of Vienna to the Brantford and Port Burwell Branch of the Norfolk Railroad.

UNITED STATES.—The Hon. Chas. H. Adams has been appointed commissioner at Vienna. The Modocs sustained a defeat on the 10th instant. In the Bank of England forgery case Commissioner Gutman has decided that the prisoner George Macdonald is to be committed to the custody of the United States Marshal to await the action of the proper authorities. The investigation into the insanity of George Francis Train commenced on Wednesday.

THE UNITED KINGDOM.—Snow fell in England last week. George Smith, the *Daily Telegraph's* correspondent in Assyria, has found the king's library at Nineveh, and discovered numerous valuable fragments, particularly the missing portions of the broken tablet containing the history of the deluge, hitherto undeciphered in the British Museum. A letter has been published in London from John Bright, in which, referring to the adherence of the Americans to the Republic, he says the arguments used by the Monarchists in support of the present form of Government in Great Britain may be used with equal reason in support of the Republic in America.

FRANCE.—Another serious political crisis occurred in France on Friday week. The Government was defeated in the Assembly and President Thiers and the whole Cabinet resigned. The resignation of Thiers was formally accepted by a vote of 368 against 339. McMahon was thereupon elected President, receiving 399 votes from the Right while the Left, who are warm friends of Thiers, abstained from voting. The Orleans Princes were in the National Assembly when President Thiers tendered his resignation, and voted for its acceptance.

GERMANY.—The session of the Prussian Diet closed on the 20th. The speech from the throne was read by General Von Roon, President of the Ministry. The cholera has made its appearance in East Posen.

SPAIN.—Bradlaugh, while on his way to Madrid to present the English resolutions congratulating Spain on the establishment of the Republic, was taken prisoner by the Carlists, but soon afterwards released. On his arrival at Madrid a banquet was given in his honour. It is reported the Government will propose that a President of the Republic be elected by plebiscite. The Carlist force under Don Alphonso made an attack last week upon the town of San Ahuja, Province of Lerida. The insurrectionists met with desperate resistance from the garrison, but the commander of the Government troops finally surrendered upon condition that the lives of his men were spared. Notwithstanding the terms of the capitulation, the Carlists, it is stated, butchered sixteen volunteers. The insurgents, however, deny the butchery.

RUSSIA.—The Russian press represents that Turkey is tottering with misgovernment, and predicts that the time is coming when her troubles will culminate, and Russia will then be able to vindicate her interests. The Shah of Persia arrived at Moscow on the 20th. Upon entering the city, he was met by an immense concourse of people, who welcomed him with the greatest enthusiasm. The statement that the Shah was accompanied on his European tour by three of his wives, is not true. A *Herald's* cable despatch from St. Petersburg, of the 25th, says: It is believed that the Russian Government assents to the proposition of Ferdinand de Lesseps for the construction of a line of complete railway communication across the continent from St. Petersburg, connecting with the English railways to India and Calcutta.

TURKEY.—The Sublime Porte protests against the Dutch war against Acheen.

HOLLAND.—The Cabinet has resigned. A despatch from Padang announces that the army of Battahus and Achenese, 10,000 strong, is marching on Delhi, a small town on the north-east coast of the island. The States Generals have voted a supply of 5,500,000 florins to meet the expenses of the war.

ITALY.—The Pope contemplates anathematizing the members of the Italian Cabinet and all other parties engaged in secularizing the monasteries.

SOUTH AMERICA.—Advices from Monte Video of April 23rd say that the yellow fever prevails there to such an extent that the people are flying from the city. Business is suspended.

Dr. Colby's Anti-Costive and Tonic Pills cure Piles.