

Selected Matter.

ODD TASTE IN JEWELRY.

"Here is something new in the way of ornamentation," a salesman in a large up-town jewelry store said, opening a box and exhibiting a monster beetle four inches in length. About its body was a solid gold band, locked by a tiny gold padlock, to which was attached a costly gold chain, about two inches in length, fastened to a pin. The beetle's back glistened in the light, having been treated to a dress of gold, and as it lumbered along its legs worked in a curious fashion. "It's a shawl pin. You see the pin is used to fasten lace or a shawl, or perhaps worn on the bonnet, the insect crawling around the length of the chain. They are perfectly harmless and not expensive, as they live on hair—that is, they have never been seen to eat. This one was brought here to mount, which is a very fine operation, as the legs and antennae are all so delicate. After all, there is nothing objectional about them, except the idea of having them crawl over you. They all come from South America and the only lot now in the city is to be taken to France, where the owner will try to introduce the fashion of wearing them. They cost from ten to fifty dollars, depending entirely upon the mounting of the ring. There is nothing cruel about it, as they are bound loosely, and the gold has no effect upon their hard sides."

In Brazil the fashion of wearing beetles is carried to a great extent. A well known resident has a beetle with a collar of gold which meets at the top, and is there ornamented with a diamond of great value. The insect has a cage, surrounded by the plants among which it lives in its native state, and nothing is neglected to make it as comfortable as possible. But the most popular insect used for an ornament in Brazil is a small phosphorescent beetle. These are often worn fastened in the hair, and as the two phosphorescent or life-giving spots are on the sides of the head, the black insect is, of course, invisible when in the raven locks of the fair Brazilians. Twenty or thirty of these beetles will throw out a light sufficient to read by, and when arranged around the head in a circle or grouped over the forehead and held in place, the effect is beautiful.

Several years ago a New York lady gave a masquerade ball at her summer house in Newport. The dancing was on

the lawn, and the guests were requested to be there half an hour before dark. The hostess wore the costume of night, and in daylight her black dress, covered with ivy leaves, did not attract special attention, but when she appeared in the gay throng after dark she presented a perfect blaze of light, and was the centre of the admiring and wondering company. Tremulous waves of reddish-yellow flame seemed to move over her entire dress while in a cap on her head gleamed one great fiery star. The cause of this illumination was the phosphorescent light of more than five thousand fire flies. For weeks previous to the ball the designer of the costume had been steering away fire flies, and on the day of the fete they were rapidly put on the dress. As the light-giving spot is on the ventral surface, each one was placed on its back held down by a fine silver wire, so skilfully caught that it could not turn over or escape, and was injured. The star was formed of many beetles.

In Jamaica a large beetle, the *Lampyrus*, is used by ladies. Some of the phosphorescent beetles used by them give out lights that have to be seen to be appreciated, and more than twenty different kinds are used, representing as many different degrees of light, shade, tint, etc. One, the *Pygolampis*, has a rich orange color, changing to yellow, flickering in intermittent flashes of light; another, called *Photuris*, is curious for the gradual increase of light it shows; commencing with a faint reddish hue, it rapidly grows in brilliancy, finally blazing like a torch, a rich green light, and then dying away to reappear again. They attract other light-giving beetles, and frequently numbers of lesser lights are seen flitting around them, combining red and yellow lights of the greatest brilliancy. Other uses are made of these beautiful creatures than ornaments. Travelers have fastened them to their feet and carried baskets of wicker to light their way in the dark.

Snakes have been used as ornaments, the small inoffensive green snakes being the most popular, on account of their beauty and harmless nature. They coil around the arm, clinging on with all the tendocity of their golden jewelled imitators that are now so fashionable. Animals or parts of them, though naturally the adjuncts of barbaric splendor, are greatly used in the make-up of fashionable toilets of the present day. Some of the handsomest sleeve buttons and studs are made

of polished fish skin—sharks or dog-skin being preferred, as they take a fine polish and closely resemble the fossil coral *Favosites*, that is also used, and when highly polished the delicate cells that were once the home of the coral polyp are distinctly visible, and as a whole resembles honeycomb.

An expensive costume was a cape made of an extremely rare humming bird. The whole bird was hardly larger than one's thumb and on its breast a single patch of gold was found about an inch in length. The cloak was composed wholly of these patches, and in the sunlight must have vied with the golden fleece. The birds are valued at \$50 each.

A lady in St. Augustine created a sensation by appearing in public with a chameleon resting on her headdress, and held there by a delicate silver chain. The little creature was perfectly tame and made no attempt to escape; but when touched by any other than its owner, its throat puffed up and curious waves of color passed over the whole body, ranging from deep green to dark brown. Small lizards are used in Egypt by some of the native ladies as ornaments, and lie half concealed in the drapery that overhangs the face. The red clawed soldier crabs are sometimes used in Mexico as pins. The crab is dislodged from its stolen shell and given a beautiful pearly one, or one that has been plated with gold or silver. Fastened to the lace by a pin and chain, they make unique ornaments.—*Jeweler's Circular*.

ABRAHAM LOUIS BREQUET.

[A BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH BY D. N. IN *Allg. Uhrmach. Ztg.*]

What a volume of incentive contemplation to the growing watchmaker is connected with the honored name of a man who, among the horologers of Europe up to our time, has been one of the greatest and most skilful masters.

Born in want in the year 1747, in Neuenburg, Switzerland, whither his father, who was a merchant, was forced to fly from France, for the sake of his religion, he showed even in earliest childhood a deep interest in horology, which stood in high repute in his native town. The parents decided to let him learn watch-making, but the father died when the boy was barely eleven years old, leaving the widow and child in misery.

Misfortune, however, has often been