

HOME INTERESTS.

Conducted by HELENE.

Our city has been in the throes of the worst storm of the season. There is snow in abundance on all sides, the removal of which from our thoroughfares will provide work for the scores of men who depend on this every winter as a means of their subsistence. Then, too, there are the pleasures which follow in the train of a snowstorm of any proportion. What more ideal than a jolly party of friends—be-tuqued, be-sashed, be-snowshoed—starting out for a tramp over our grand old Mount Royal, its rugged sides and verdant slopes hidden beneath its winter robe of white. These merry tramps seek not the beaten paths, but strike out for themselves, their noiseless feet gliding along to the accompaniment of their happy voices ringing clear on the frosty air. From the mountain summit one can look down on the city with its innumerable lights, its church spires outlined against the evening sky, its sentinel-like smoke-stacks bespeaking the industry and commerce at our doors. A little further can be seen the St. Lawrence, or, rather, the ghost of our majestic river, for presently it is in the viselike grip of a mighty power—the Ice King. Then, nestling close to its farther bank, the twinkling lights like so many fire-flies, are the settlements of a frugal, industrious people on whose abundant products we of the city have to depend. After a few minutes' such contemplation of an almost fairy-like scene, the tramps take the road for home, the invigorating air giving a brilliant color to the cheek, brightness to the eye and general exuberance of spirits, thus proving that our Canadian winter and our Canadian sports stand unrivalled.

FASHIONS.

A pale gray chiffon broadcloth gown worn by a young woman at a recent reception was indeed a perfect frock. The bodice, while slightly draped, was close fitting. The skirt was one of the same length all around, just escaping the floor. At the top it was plaited into the figure the plaits being stitched down for a distance of fully eighteen inches and were cut out underneath in order not to add to the size of the well developed hips. The plaits were an inch wide at the top and an inch and a half where the stitching stopped and opened out in not full folds. Six inches from the skirt's hem diamond shaped insertions of heavy grey medallions ten inches long and eight wide, the points joining, of embroidery in various shades of gray, and with tiny quillings of gray velvet here and there formed a handsome trimming.

The bodice had a deep girde of gray satin laid in folds that came down fully five inches below the waist line in the front by three below in the back, and this closed at the back under a double row of cut steel cabochons, three in each row. The top of the bodice was rounded out and filled with a shirred stock of gray chiffon cloth, embroidered in tiny sprays and vines in shaded grays, and finished at the top by a fine ruching of gray chiffon. Around the base of this stock was a fold of gray satin, and from this in the centre drooped a ten inch flounce jabot of gray chiffon, embroidered to match the stock, and having a deep border of pointed embroidery.

Broadcloth trimmed with velvet is one of the features of the season and is eminently attractive and desirable. A very handsome costume may be made up in reseda green with the waistcoat and cuff in cream white and worn over a lace waist, the combination being a singularly effective one. The Eton to be worn with this is one of the best liked of the season, and is made with belt at back and sides, which is passed under the vest beneath the revers and closed invisibly. The skirt is a circular one.

White kid tops with patent leather vamps, heretofore left to the children, have now invaded the domain of the grownups, though they have not yet been taken up enthusiastically, even by the faddist in footwear; and the same may be said for the shoes with patent leather vamps and elaborately embroidered quarters, although the latter are liked by some women for house wear.

Full waists are much in vogue for young girls and are exceedingly charming both with plain skirts and with the suspender dresses that are so much worn. A very simple idea

may be followed out in embroidered challie with collar and cuffs of lace.

Negligé slippers and shoes deserve a story all their own, for perhaps here more than anywhere else the increasing luxury and extravagance of footwear is emphasized. Heavy silks and old brocades stiff with gold and silver are used for mules and bou-doir slippers, ruched round with ribbon or gauze—often with narrow ribbon of gold or silver gauze.

Rosettes of chiffon, lace gauze or tulle, with little jewelled buckles or buttons in their centres, adorn some of the evening slippers, and there are fuller rosettes or choux without the central ornament, but sewn with tiny gleaming beads of crystal, pearl, steel or iridescent paillettes.

Evening coats made of white cloth trimmed with heavy lace are eminently smart and are very generally becoming. An uncommonly attractive one seen recently was finished with little lace ruches of silk at the edges of the heavy lace and with heavy cord and tassels, by means of which it can be closed. The model was one of the most desirable and it can be slipped on without the slightest injury to the gown, yet means perfect warmth and protection. All seasonable materials are appropriate and the finish can be as simple or elaborate as one may like.

What little girls shall wear to school or for hard play is a simple matter for any mother to decide, but when it comes to what she calls "nice" dresses it requires ingenuity and some thought to have the right thing. However rapidly she may be growing, every child must have at least several dresy little frocks for those times she goes to parties, to church or to dancing school. Just what these shall cost depends much upon what one wishes to pay, says an exchange.

But if economy is to be considered, a woman should never forget that a frock which may cost more at the beginning may be cheaper in the end, from the fact that its materials are better. For instance, a light silk will be more expensive in the original outlay than a muslin, but the silk will outwear the other by many months.

THE DEBUTANTE'S GOWN.

It must be becoming. It must be youthful. It is best not too elaborate. Chiffon is soft and becoming, but perishable. Brussels net is more durable and as attractive. Net needs a quantity of lace trimming.

Creme de chine is unequalled for real serviceableness. It cleans very well and can be dyed for another year.

Satin finished crepe is as soft and pretty as the new crepes and less expensive.

White liberty satin is extremely effective and a youthful-looking fabric. Liberty silk is pretty, but a poor investment where economy is a factor.

Peau de sole in white may be worn but the colored silk is too old.

A white cloth costume will be useful for many occasions later, and may be draped softly, so as not to appear stiff.

RECIPES.

Cabbage Salad—Cut a head of cabbage very fine, sprinkle the cabbage with salt, pepper, ginger and sugar. Take one pint of sweet cream, one cup of cider vinegar, three eggs well beaten. Mix vinegar, cream and eggs, let it get very hot but do not let it boil or it will curdle, pour it over the cabbage and let it cool. When it is ready for use.

Oysters in Blankets—Season large oysters and cut very thin slices of bacon, wrap the oysters in the bacon and fasten with toothpicks, cook a nice brown; serve with the pickles in them.

French Chicken—Cut chicken into small pieces, put a lump of butter into an iron pot, when butter is brown put in the chicken and brown in the butter, turning it often to keep it from burning. Add enough hot water to cover the chicken, season with pepper and salt; cover the pot and allow it to cook until tender; lift up the chicken, place it where it will keep hot, thicken the gravy with a little woodcock flour and pour over the chicken.

Corn Pancakes—One cupful of corn, one egg, one generous tablespoonful of flour, a little pepper and

salt, fry as pancakes in clarified butter or nice lard.

Iroquois Puff—Two cupful of mashed potato, put the potato into a saucepan with the beaten yolk of one egg, two tablespoonful of cream, small tablespoonful of butter, salt and pepper to taste, stir the mixture constantly over the fire until the potato is very light and hot; take from the fire and add the well beaten white of the egg, pile the mixture into a butter tin and bake a delicate brown.

Apple Custard Pie—Grate two large apples, mix the yolks of two eggs with the apples; add half a cup of milk, small half cup of sugar; flavor with lemon, bake in under crust. Beat the whites to a froth, add two tablespoonful of sugar, and spread over pie; return to oven and brown.

Chocolate Bavarian Cream—Scald one pint of milk, pour slowly over four beaten yolks, half cup of sugar, a pinch of salt; cook until it thickens; remove and add one ounce of gelatine dissolved in half a cup of water, one tablespoon vanilla, two ounces chocolate, melted; set in ice-water; when it congeals fold in one pint of whipped cream, pour into mold trimmed with blanched almonds and chill; unmold, garnish with whipped cream and a few blanched almonds.

French Salad Dressing—One quarter teaspoon of salt, one quarter teaspoon white pepper, three teaspoons olive oil, ten drops onion juice, one tablespoon vinegar, half tablespoon lemon juice, mix salt, pepper, onion juice and one tablespoonful of oil, then add alternately the remaining oil, vinegar and lemon juice.

YOUNG GIRLS ON THE STREETS.

Young girls with trim little tailored suits and natty hats, with snooded hair and fresh round faces, girls who ought to be home with mother and father, are to be seen upon the streets without escort or in groups of twos or threes at hours long past curfew time on any night of the week. There is something in the round faces that grips a little at the heart, however, and there's too often a swagger to the lightfooted walk that seems out of harmony with sweet girlhood.

There's a quick retort and a flippancy jest from lips that should be repeating the multiplication table at home, and a bold glance or brazen stare from eyes that should be veiled in maiden modesty. Poor little girls, not to know how much more precious than all the things born they are, when they properly estimate their own worth and prize themselves at it! Victor Hugo once said that he was one of those who "fall speechless in the presence of young girls and flowers," deeming them holy. And still they come to be unprized by themselves, neglected by their proper protectors, and taken at their own estimate by the world. And it isn't their fault. Most of them have mothers and fathers who can tell them of the pitfalls that lie in the path of vanity and disobedience. Most of them have homes that should be their shelter after the sun goes down, and most of them would listen to advice properly given—and in time. The mother and father who think their duty done in sending the young daughter out to school dressed as well as the neighbor's little girl will have a lot to answer for some day.—Detroit News-Tribune.

WHERE IGNORANCE IS BLISS.

"Aren't men funny?" said the little bride who was learning how to cook. "Here is a whole panful of soup stocks that has got to be thrown out just because of a form of mental indigestion that has attacked John since he saw it."

"Why, we lived for weeks and weeks on this very stock or some just like it. You know, one of the things I learned at cooking school was how to make soup stock. So the very day we came back from the honeymoon I made up a quantity of it and put it in the refrigerator. John likes soup, so we commenced dinner with it every day. It was awfully easy just to take a few spoonful of the stock and season it one day with tomatoes, the next day with peas, the next day with celery, and so on. John ate it as though he were famished and complimented me so much that I finally took out my bowl of stock and showed him how I made it."

"What," he said, "I've been eating

the very same soup every day and thought I was getting infinite variety? I suppose," he flung at me, "you fancy a soup by any other name would seem as tasty. I thought there was an awful resemblance between those daily portions of liquid refreshments. Why, it's just like those cheap perfumes that they make all in one big boiler and pour into different shaped bottles and label with different names."

"And from that day to this," finished the disappointed bride, "he has looked upon my soups with suspicion and my cooking with contempt."

"My dear," said the experienced housekeeper, "some day you will learn that what a man doesn't know won't hurt him and that it is only when the domestic wheels revolve in the dark and he can't see them go round that he appreciates your housekeeping. Telling a man how you do things is just as disillusioning as giving him a peep behind the scenes at the comic opera."

HOTEL LACKING IN FELICITIES.

Half the profound truths one hears are spoken entirely by mistake. Up in the Virginia Hills is a small hotel or large boarding house, whichever you like to call it, where the air and scenery are supposed to make up for the lack of modern conveniences. A pitiful foot tub and a pint of water greet you every morning, and you pine for your home tub as Moses' followers hankered for the fleshpots. A Washington woman, who is own sister to Mrs. Partington, is staying up there. She sat on the gallery one day last week, and this is what she said:

"It's a lovely place, but it has one drawback—there are no felicities for bathing here."—Washington Post.

THE BEAM IN HER OWN EYE.

Mrs. Collins took off her hat with a weary air, and speared it by its two pins to the head of the lounge. "Do take off your things and stay to dinner, Jane," she said, languidly, to the cousin who had come home from church with her.

"I'm tired out with looking at the people in front of me who hadn't taken the time to finish dressing properly. I don't consider warm weather or a long distance a sufficient excuse for such carelessness. It shows a want of respect, according to my ideas. You were farther back, Jane, so I suppose you didn't notice, and at any rate, you are not so much disturbed by such things as I am. It nearly destroyed the pleasure of the service for me."

"Oh, I saw something of the sort," said the cousin, evasively.

"Well, I don't believe you noticed that Mrs. Thompson hadn't hooked her plaquet, and Mary had hooked hers wrong," said Mrs. Collins, plaintively. "It was distressing to look at them when they stood. And Milly Rogers had twisted the seams of her waist all out of place, and her cousin Margaret had put her stock pins in as crooked as a ram's horn. And when I looked away from them, there was Dorothy Cole on the other aisle with five hairpins just ready to drop out of her hair and her hat on one-sided. What did you think of her?"

"Why, I didn't really see her at all," said Cousin Jane, easily, "because, to tell the truth Mary, when my mind wandered from the service it was occupied with one question—whether you intended to start a fashion of going without belts or had simply mislaid yours, or possibly—"

Mrs. Collins' look of horrified protest as her fingers sought her waist was proof that the third, unstated, surmise was the correct one.

CHEERFULNESS THE FASHION.

Fashion is not always to be despised as frivolous. Sometimes, for want of a novelty, fashion hunts around and selects a virtue to mark with her attention. Just now it is the fashion to be cheerful. You know the girl who goes about telling of the dreadful things that happen and are going to happen in her family. She lives on sympathy, and I guess the present "cheerful" fashion will go hard with her. Of course, all these tragedies are told for just one reason—that girl hangers and Christis for pitying words and tender looks, so takes this way to get them.

But now it is the fashion to be sunny and cheerful, and she must change her views or be behind the

times. The best way to make yourself popular nowadays is to see the funny side of things instead of the tragic, to make people laugh rather than to make them say, "You poor thing!"

Beware, always, of the fussy or nagging woman. You will know her among a thousand by her look of utter dejection, corners of the mouth drawn down, and eyes that look upon every living thing as dishonest, disloyal and untrustworthy. Woe and misery are over at her heels, be she mistress or servant. If the latter, her work will always be lagging, her pastry will be heavy, and her cooking as uncertain as her disposition. She will make constant trouble with the other servants, and keep the entire household in turmoil until she is gotten rid of. If it is the mistress of the house who is inclined toward this unfortunate habit, affairs of the home will indeed be pitiable. She will whine at everything, and prove herself to be one of the most tiresome creatures on earth.

The fussy woman is generally idle and lazy, and one of the best cures in the world for fustiness is work. Let her be made to do for herself what others do so unsatisfactorily for her. This will in all probability effect a cure.

THE MYSTERIOUS PANEL.

In 1815 my mother died and my brother and I were left destitute, for my brother was much younger than I, and my mother would never allow us to work, for she said my ancestors were not common people. My father had died four years since, and we had lived as best we could with the small fortune that he left us. My mother was always very careful, and while in a delirium near the time of her death would exclaim: "Oh, if I had the letter, or enough money to go to England." And sometimes during the night she would cry out, "Give up your secret, desk!" So I took it for granted that something was lost.

She never told me anything at all concerning the desk, and after her death I went to work cleaning up everything in order to find out the secret, as I believed, of her life.

As I searched the drawers of the desk I thought surely I should find a clue there, but nothing could be found, so I looked through every possible place of concealment in the house, but as I found nothing, I decided to go back to the desk again. As I put my hand back into a pigeon hole, it seemed as if I touched a spring, for my hand sunk down into a hole. At once I knew that this meant something, so I put my hand in and brought out a sheet of fine linen paper, yellow with age. I took it to the window and found it to be a letter from one of my ancestors, dated April 13, 1689. It read:

Dear Daughter-in-Law:

"This letter is written on board the 'Viking,' perhaps it will never reach you, but I want you to watch and take care of my son Thomas. I leave to my son John, your faithful husband, all my fortune. On account of wars in England I have hidden in the M.P. Tell John to find it. I told him about it in his youth.

We are now out in the wild ocean, but I shall give this to a homegoing vessel as soon as I reach port. I am not in the best of health and fear that I shall never reach home. From your father-in-law,

JOHN GOWER.

Imagine how surprised I was when I found this letter. I knew that my mother must have had some idea that this letter existed, but had been unable to find it. I looked at the letter again and found a postscript, nearly faded, which read: "Look in our old Bible." It might be that it contained papers which would throw some light upon this subject, so my next act was to plan how I could get this Bible. I knew that a castle in England belonged to my ancestors known as Stonehurst, which was sold in 1745, but I did not know if it even existed now and how was I to go to England?

I determined to go, economizing as much as I could, and at the same time I went to a firm in New York and asked them to loan me enough to take me to England and establish myself there. I showed them my letter. They were rather disinclined at first to grant my favor, but after considering it awhile they consented. In 1817 I set sail for England and a month later arrived at Stonehurst, which I found in an excellent condition. The owner, Mr. Howell, gave me an interview, and told me I could live at his house and he would help me as far as he could. He also said that the library and whole house was as it was in 1619, as far as he knew.

I received the news joyfully, and after resting awhile, I started my real work. The old Bible was found on the top shelf of the library. In the back of the book a little pocket was made by means of a sheet of paper, being glued on the inside of the back, which opened toward the side toward the leaves. If I had not looked intently through the book I should not have noticed it.

There were several letters in it, nearly all of which were dated in 1689 and usually from some foreign port. I concluded that my ancestor was a sea captain, and John, his married son, and that Thomas was his youngest son, a lad about seventeen years of age.

These letters were not what I wanted, so I looked in again and took out a notebook personally of the daughter-in-law. One note in it ran: "I received a strange letter the other day from my father-in-law. All hope for me is gone. In the letter he spoke of the M.P. which John knew of, and I know nothing of, John and Thomas have both disappeared. About a fortnight ago I was awakened by a crash in the north tower, but as I was tired I went to sleep instantly. The next morning after I had my breakfast one of the servants told me that John and Thomas were missing, and I looked everywhere I could, no trace was found of them. Last night it seemed as if I beheld a vision, or, as I fear, the ghosts of John and Thomas, for about 12 o'clock I awoke and saw two men who resembled them. About fifteen minutes afterwards I heard the crash that awoke me the night of their disappearance.

"I fear that they have been murdered. May God have mercy on them!"

There was nothing else, but I had two clues now, the north tower and the M.P., whatever that was, and Mr. Howells helped me. After an hour's thinking one evening I said: "The P. might stand for panel." "That is so," said he, "and M. for mysterious. Now I think we have it; the letters M. P. stand for a 'mysterious panel' in the north tower, and I believe that your two ancestors met their death; perhaps they were hiding some money or looking for the treasure."

The next day we went to the north tower and there we looked for the mysterious panel. At last we found it. I was feeling around the wall, which was formed of panel-work, and soon I found one that was loose. I pushed it in and found a dark, bad-smelling hole. Mr. Howells lit a lantern, which was in the tower, and brought it to the hole. Here we found the cause of their death. At the top, about four steps were seen; below this were none. Any one might be easily mistaken and go on and then drop at least forty steps before they reached the bottom.

The next thing we did was to get a ladder. This accomplished, we descended to the bottom of the hole. Here we found two skeletons, one the size of a full-grown man and the other a lad. On top of one and on the side of the other were two chests filled with money and the jewels of my ancestors. At last, after a long lapse of years, the mystery was explained.

The jewels we kept, and the money I sold to different parties, for on account of its age it was valuable.

Looking around we found several bayonets and suits of armor, which told us that this castle had been built before the sixteenth century.

After having settled with Mr. Howells and the New York firm, I returned home.

DE BERGERAC'S TOMB.

When the Dominican Sisters leave their convent in the Rue de Charonne, Paris, an effort will be made to find the tomb and skeleton of Cyrano de Bergerac, or, to give him his full name, Savinien de Cyrano de Bergerac, who was buried there in 1635. Records preserved in the convent, by the way, contradict the legends that the poet was a Gascon and that he had an abnormally long arm. In fact, a portrait which is regarded as authentic shows him to have been rather a good looking

Dear Boys and Girls:

We are quite a little and school work in full swing. I am sure there is no end. This is glorious very stuffy after the crisis after the jollification, you will look back on the sociations of your lives there must be a lot to

Dear Old Aunt Becky:

I have read so many letters from you that I am going to stop. I live in a quiet little place, where you can hear no pigs grunting, and cattle have great fun skating over nearly every day. We have a horse that I can drive, and love to go driving with mamma lets me. I have three and three sisters. I am going to school. I am eleven years old. My birthday is the 2nd of January. We have a lot of cows, my letter will be in the Times next week, so I can write a very happy and prosperous New Year. The wishes of

WASHINGTON Kouchibouguac.

Dear Aunt Becky:

I am a girl seven years, think it would be very nice you a letter for the boys' corner. I go to school and like it very well. We have vacations to-morrow, a nice doll and lots of sweet Santa Claus. I will send with my cousin, for I want mamma to see it only in for this time. Wishing you New Year,

Sherrington, Que.

Dear Aunt Becky:

As long threatening come I have made up my mind you a letter for the boys' corner in the True Witness enjoyed the Christmas holidays much that I cannot tell you fun we have had, and the received. Father gave me piano and my sister got watch and Willie a watch also. I am taking music and can play very well. The pieces are Irish Washerwoman, Rustic Dance, Feuilles de Peuplier and a duet which I play with sister Katie. I will bring to a close, hoping to see you print, and wishing you Christmas and a happy New Year.

Sherrington, Que.

AN HOUR WITH A BROTHER.

Uncle Will, the good-natured brother of the family, was left of the baby one day while she was out, and out of curiosity made a list of what the baby in one hour. Here it is:

1. Yelled fifteen minutes taking breath. (Uncle Will solemnly that this is a truism.)
2. Pulled out enough hair from uncle's head and whiskers to sola pillow.
3. Blacked the wall paper as he could reach with the brush.
4. Broke a stereoscope looking down on it.
5. Swallowed six buttons good part of a spoon of the jam.
6. Emptied the contents of her work basket.
7. Tried to squeeze the head into a tin cup, and was ed badly in the attempt.
8. Knocked the head off a doll belonging to his elder brother trying to drive a tack into wagon with it.
9. Fell off the edge of the bed and brought down with costly vases, which were run glass with a cane which his him have.
11. Fell into a coal scuttle spoiled his new white dress.
12. Set fire to the carpet under out of the room using something to amuse him.
13. Crawled under the bed refused to come out unless you give him the trundle jar.
14. Got twisted into the of a chair, which had to be to get him out.
15. Poured a pitcher of water his mother's best shoes.
16. Finally, when he was