

Courier des Femmes.

Our lady readers are invited to contribute to this department.

(Written for the Canadian Illustrated News.)

A SCHOOL GIRL'S TROUBLES.

I'm a resident, friends, of "Ignorance Lane,"
And crave a few thoughts to fill up my brain,
No matter how few, I'll gladly receive,
For my troubles are greater than you can conceive.

For many a day I've hopefully tried
To collect my poor thoughts which seem scattered so
wide;
But, alas! they elude me, and great are my fears
That at last I'll be drowned in my own bitter tears.

It seems quite heart-rending, when I'm so ambitious,
That Fate, stern Fate, should be still unpropitious;
Whatever I do, it all ends in this,
"Tis useless to try, you'll be always in bliss."

Oh, listen, kind friends, to my end, sad story,
I'll try to be brief, lest your patience I worry,
And if your sympathy I now can insure,
I trust to find out some method of cure.

When quite a young girl, I was sent here to school,
And have always sought knowledge by a very good
rule—
You'll agree with me here—"If you study and strive,
At the top of the ladder you'll surely arrive."

But though I am striving, no sign of success,
Not a bright, brilliant thought comes my lone heart
to bless.
And I'm often inclined to make bitter retort
When I ought to be silent,—because I've no "Forté."

Oh music I thought to turn my attention,
And master Gotschalk's most brilliant invention;
But my style was a jumble, and all was so flat,
That I said with a sigh, "my forté's not in that."

Mathematics, French, Logic, I can't comprehend,
Towards Geology or Chemistry my mind does not
tend.
Rhetorical Essays are not to my taste,
To pursue the "Fine Arts,"—of time seems a waste.

Now, I've told you my troubles, and ask you but once,
Is it your candid opinion I'll be always a Dunce?
Since I'm still minus knowledge, though I have a
good rule,
Do you think it advisable that I should leave school?

Now, kind loving friends, if for me you've a care,
Just forward advice and what thoughts you can
spare.

I'll gladly receive, and post them to Fame,
Please address 23, "Ignorance Lane." "PAYCHU."

PARISIAN BONNETS AND COIFFURES.

Very few bonnets are made with stiff crowns, that is to say, the material is not stretched closely over the shape. Bonnets are very high, and much trimmed with flowers, laces, and feathers; at the back there are streamers of ribbon, lace, lappets, and flowers on flexible stems. For theatres or carriage wear there is nothing prettier than a pale blue velvet bonnet, with a blue velvet scarf, fastened with a round pearl buckle, a pale rose above the buckle, and in front a diadem of gathered blue faille; strings also of faille. A rather stylish bonnet, called the Castellan, is made of black China crêpe, over a stiff foundation; China crêpe coronet, mixed with lace, and at one side of the coronet beneath the lace a series of pink and purple rose buds; China crêpe lappets, edged with lace. Felt hats of the Rubens form are much liked. One made of maroon felt, by MM. Albert and Leroy, was exceedingly pretty. It had a round crown, and the wide brim was trimmed up at one side, and lined with maroon velvet; a plaiting of blue faille encircled the inside. At one side there was a bow of maroon velvet, cut from the piece, the loops were lined with blue faille, and the pointed ends fastened so as to stand upright; two pheasants' feathers commenced at the bow and fell over the crown. There is generally a mixture of colours on all fashionable bonnets, and very eccentric mixtures too, such as marine blue, sky blue, and a small flame-coloured feather, all on one bonnet; pale green and bronze, prune, and straw-colour, &c., &c. There is no doubt but that bonnets and hats are very grotesque at the present time; but we ask ourselves what they will be when the revolution in hair-dressing really takes place—when we return definitely to the fashions of 1830, with its high coques massed on the top of the head, leaving the nape of the neck destitute of chignon or any other appendage?

The Castilian or Milanese comb is now so popular that very few young ladies appear in full dress without one. It is sometimes placed at the side, above a pyramid of curls and tresses. The hair is worn higher than ever, and the head-dresses are small, coming with a slight point in front and a pouf at the side. For example, a head-dress of Parma violets, with a white camellia, surrounded with white thorn, and a small tuft of thorns *en atrette*; a wreath of blue portwinkles, with a tuft of tea-roses and a salmon-coloured aligrette.—*Paris Correspondence of the "Queen."*

ORNAMENT IN DRESS.

Probably nothing that is not useful is in any high sense beautiful. At least it will be almost universally seen in the matter of dress that where an effect is had it is an artificial or false effect, and vice versa. A trimming that has no reason *d'être* is generally ungraceful. A pendant jewel simply sewn to a foundation where it neither holds up nor clasps together any part of the dress, usually looks superfluous, as it is. Above all, bows (which are literally nothing but strings tied together) stuck about when there is no possibility of their fastening two parts, almost always appear ridiculous; when needed for a mere ornament, a rosette should be used, which pretends to be nothing else. In the making of dresses, lines ending nowhere, and no-

how, are often apparent, and never fail to annoy the eye. The outlines of bonnets are conspicuous instances of this mistake. There is no art instinct, and but little of the picturesque element, in a nation who are indifferent to these things, and whose eye does not instinctively demand a meaning and a token in everything. In architecture do we not immediately detect and condemn a pillar that, resting on nothing, appears to support a heavy mass of masonry; an arch that is gunned against and not built into a wall, unsupported, and, therefore, in an impossible position; or a balcony that has neither base nor motive, unsupported and supporting nothing? And these things are not seldom seen on the fronts of our more decorative buildings, where the ignorant architect, knowing the whole thing to be a sham, the balconies of plaster, the carvings of cement, the lintels fictitious, the pillars hollow, forgets that the forms he borrows were meant for use, and not merely for show. Mr. Ruskin has preached to us the motive of all good art: Sir Charles Eastlake and others have taught us the practical dangers of debased art, and we may at once see how principles that are bad in one place are also bad in another. The uncultured dress-maker, only longing for novelty, invents forms of attire that would be impossible were dress less utterly artificial than it is, and this is half the cause of our universal ill-dressing. No fashion or form can leave the mind without a jar that is not where it is because indispensable there. Whether it occurs in a house or in a gown, the principle must be the same. One of the reasons why peasants, fishwives, and such folk look picturesque and beautiful even in their rags, whatever be the mixture of colour or arrangement of form—so much more beautiful than fashionable people look, even when they try to imitate the fishwife—is, I think, the motive apparent in everything they wear. The bright kerchief that covers the peasant's shoulders is so much better than a bodice trimmed in the form of a kerchief. The outer dress that really covers an under-dress fully and fairly is so much more satisfactory than one which only pretends to do so, and betrays its own deceit at the elbows, or the wrists, or behind, or in some other unexpected place. Anything that looks useful and is artificial is bad, and the more obviously artificial a thing is, the worse it must always be. A hood that is at once seen to be incapable of going over the head; something that looks like a tunic in one place, yet in another is seen to have no lawful habitation, nor a name; a false apron, a festoon that looks as though it had fallen accidentally upon the skirt, when by no possible means except glue or irrelevant pins could it stay there; a veil that you at once perceive is never meant to descend over the face, but is tacked to the top of the head in an exasperating manner; heavy lappets, that instead of being the natural termination of something else, hang meaningless and mutilated; slashes that are sewn upon the sleeve instead of breaking through it; and other things of the same kind;—they leave the eye unsatisfied, discontented, often disgusted.—*Saint Paul's.*

HAIR-DRESSING IN CHINA.

The *Graphic* says: "The Chinese lady, in common with all her sisters of whatever climate or colour, makes the most of her long tresses and toilet. Her *coiffure* varies in the different provinces of the empire. It is always, however, modest, tasteful, and strictly modelled after the rules of propriety and fashion, which have undergone little or no change for centuries. Unmarried women of China can always be distinguished from matrons, as the hair is allowed to fall over the back in long tresses or in the form of a queue, or caught up at the back in a simple bow, fastened with silk cord. In Canton it takes the form of a pleated tail at the back, and a fringe of hair over the forehead. After marriage it is taken up, and dressed into the form of a teapot, having its handle above the head. In Swatow it is made to resemble a bird resting on the crown of the head, or of a horn bent backwards, and rising from the back of the head. The Manchu or Tartar matron parts her hair in front, as our ladies do; while the back hair is done up in a huge bow adorned with flowers. There are certain head-dresses worn only by women of rank, according to the rules laid down by the Board of Rites and Ceremonies of Peking. These head-dresses are also worn by women of the lower orders on occasions of marriage, &c. When the hair becomes short or thin, a complete wig or chignon may be bought for a trifle. Hair dyes are unknown, and not required, as the hair of all is straight and uniformly black, and grey only with extreme old age. The new dye for transforming raven into golden locks has not been introduced; nor would it take, as we suppose the yellow bells of China dare not affect (assuming that she would not esteem it an invention of the devil to rob her of her charms) the fair hair of the blonde, under the penalty of being at once suppressed and sat upon by the august Board of Peking already noticed. Cosmetics are in common use all over the empire. Ladies who have any pretensions to rank, or even respectability, paint their faces—first laying on a white ground of fine chalk, and finishing with a patch of red on each cheek, and a spot of vermilion on the under lip, which in England at this season beneath the mistletoe would leave a decided impression."

The advocates of Woman's Rights are making some gigantic strides towards the conversion of England to their views. During the past year the number of constituencies in favour of the cause has risen from 125 to 141; the number of petitions has been trebled, while the total number of signatures has been nearly doubled, rising from 187,000 to 380,000.

From Washington we learn that the decree has gone out from the White House that high waltz shall be worn. Miss Grundy writes to the *World* of New Year's receptions: "Mrs. Grant and her daughter and their assistants wisely set the example of wearing high waltz. Nothing can be in worse taste, to say the least of it, than wearing low dresses when a promiscuous crowd is to be received. This choice of dress is the more praiseworthy in the President's wife and daughter in that vanity had no part or lot in it, for both ladies have exceptionally beautiful hands, arms and necks."

An English contemporary says: "Certain aristocratic ladies of the West-end of London, who are devotees of Ritualism, have found for themselves a new employment, which has the recommendation of being healthful in its influence. They cannot brook the idea of their sacred edifice being cleaned out by the hands of hireling menials, and they have formed themselves into a society called 'The Phebes,' the members of which are solemnly pledged to do this work of cleaning themselves. Ladies of the highest rank take their turn of polishing the tiled floors, blackleading the stove, sweeping out the pews, and beating the hassocks, and burnishing the brass candlesticks and other paraphernalia of Ritualism. Some of the ladies complain that the work is harder than they expected, and it is not thought their devotion will sustain them long in their self-imposed labours."

Another room once has recently been exploded. Mr. John M. Francis, editor of the *Troy Times*, and at present minister to Greece, where he has become the especial guide, philosopher, and friend of the king, has utterly extinguished the story about the Maid of Athens, and that the said maid is now an old woman in want. When the bit of poetry which created her was written, Byron was boarding with a Mrs. Macri, and left these few famous lines behind with other scraps when he left the house. They were entirely imaginary so far as the heroine is concerned, and were only preserved by the family as a memento of their afterward distinguished boarder. Subsequently the daughter of Mrs. Macri—at the time the verses were written a girl of ten years—became associated with the verses as "Zoe," but without reason therefor other than the imagination of those curious in Byronic legend.

A correspondent of the *Queen* gives a really useful hint on the utilization of old kid gloves. With these despised cast-a-way beautiful little boots and shoes for babies may be made by following the directions given. The gloves must be perfect, and in colours to match, say pink with black or white, two shades of grey, two of lavender, or primrose and pink; of course, black and white do with any other colour. Cut a good pattern of either boot or shoe in stiff paper, cover this with flannel for the inside; the vamp (or front) of them can be cut out of the hand of two pairs, joined vandyke across the foot; cut all the fingers and back into even strips, binding each strip with ribbon, and seam neatly together to shape; the ribbon used is extremely narrow, without edge called "galloon." I have bought it at a penny the yard, sometimes elevenpence a dozen, at other times I have given three half-pence the yard. Stitching the ribbon makes it lay flat and even; the holes to lace the boot being worked like embroidery, with sewing silk to match the ribbon; the shoes fasten with straps; the top and front are bound with ribbon. For a very young baby the soles (cut out by a shoe) will be strong enough of cardboard, covered both sides with flannel, binding the edge of the sole with ribbon to match, and seam neatly to the top; if for a baby walking, the sole must be made of basil; for a few pence a carrier will sell bundles of little scraps of this leather, which needs no covering, but binding and stitching in. I have known the little boots take three pairs of gloves, sometimes only two, and when well made there is nothing prettier. A mother can embroider and braid them in all colours, and give her "little trot" a pair of boots or shoes to match every dress.

The Constantinople correspondent of the *London Echo*, writing on December 28, says: "I have already mentioned the marriage of the Princess Nazle, daughter of Mustapha-Pacha, to Khalil-Pacha. Your readers may be interested on knowing that on the arrival of the bride at her husband's palace, she was attired in a French bridal costume of white silk, trimmed with orange flowers. Her wreath of the same blossoms was surmounted by a diadem of brilliants, and a long veil of tulle illusion fell partly before and partly behind her head. It was her own choice to be dressed in this fashion; Turkish brides always wearing a rose-coloured dress, embroidered with gold. Another strange innovation on established custom was that Khalil-Pacha gave his arm to the Princess. She came in a carriage, with closed white satin curtains, the coachman and English footmen wore white wedding favours on their breasts; two Mamelouks on horseback preceded the cortege, and eunuchs rode beside the windows. The relations and the suite of the bride followed in forty coaches, also accompanied by Mamelouks and eunuchs. At noon a table of 100 covers was placed for the assembled guests. The Princess retired into her boudoir and changed her Parisian costume for a Turkish dress of pink velvet, almost covered with gold embroidery, but still wearing her wreath of orange flowers and diadem of brilliants. The ladies honored by admission to her presence describe her as dazzling them with her youth and beauty, remarkable for her elegance and refinement, and sparkling with priceless jewels. Let us hope the gradual upsetting of silly old prejudices among the Turks, and the adoption of some European customs, will lead to the better education and greater freedom of Eastern ladies."

News of the Week.

THE DOMINION.—All the officials concerned in the St. John (N.B.) custom house irregularities have been dismissed.—Dr. Robitaille has been appointed a member of the Privy Council and Receiver General in the place of Mr. Chapais, resigned.—There have been heavy snow storms in the Lower Provinces, and the trains are greatly delayed.—The Halifax election takes place on the 18th Inst., and the nomination on the 11th.—The Provisional Directors of the C. P. R.R. have been appointed.

UNITED STATES.—Philadelphia is preparing for the centennial celebration.—In the Massachusetts House of Representatives a bill to prohibit the sale of malt liquors has been ordered for a third reading.—Laura Fair has been lecturing in a Sacramento lager beer saloon.—There have been heavy snow storms on the line of the Central Pacific railway. In some places the drifts are sixteen feet deep.—The Committee of the Detroit Board of Trade report that the completion of the tunnel under the river is doubtful, owing to the unfavourable condition of the soil through which it must pass.—The Modoc Indians made an attack on the U. S. camp on the 25th ult., and were repulsed with some loss.—Tweed's trial came up on Friday last, but the jury were unable to agree and were discharged.—Three wealthy Cuban planters now residing in New York, who have been cited by the Captain General to appear and stand their trial under pain of confiscation of their property, will appeal to the United States to protect their rights, being citizens of that country.—Preliminary steps have been taken by the American officers who served during the war to erect a monument to the memory of Gen. Mead.

GREAT BRITAIN.—The Tichborne claimant has entered into recognizances in the sum of \$2,000 to appear before the Court of Queen's Bench and answer a charge of contempt for certain utterances in a recent speech at Brighton.—Prince Napoleon disavows all the responsibility for the recent newspaper announcement of his views in regard to the future policy of the Bonaparte family.—The Chancellor of the Exchequer has again declined to entertain any proposition for the repeal of the malt tax.—It is reported that the American bankers of London loaned Napoleon £200,000 to facilitate the *Coup d'Etat* he was meditating, and that since his death the money has been returned to them.—The ex-Empress Eugenie has decided to leave Chislehurst. She will take up her residence in some other part of the kingdom.—Her Majesty has subscribed £200 to the fund in aid of the survivors of the "Northfleet" disaster.—A despatch from Geneva says the Rev. Dr. Pusey is better.—The steamer which collided with the emigrant ship "Northfleet" has arrived at Cadiz, uninjured. She was going to Lisbon, where she has touched since the accident, but was signalled to sheer off, as her officers would be delivered to the English authorities under the existing extradition treaty. An enquiry will be instituted into the case at Cadiz.—A London despatch says it is probable that the present tolls on despatches by Atlantic cable will soon be reduced.

FRANCE.—The final protocol of the Treaty of Commerce with Great Britain was signed on the 29th ult.—One hundred and twenty-two alleged internationalists have been arrested at Montmartré.—It is stated that the union of the Orleanists and Bourbonists is complete.

GERMANY.—The Admiralty have decided to build no more large iron-clads at present, but to strengthen the coast defences by a number of monitors and torpedoes.

AUSTRIA.—It is said that the Prince of Wales, the Emperor of Germany, the Czar, and the Shah of Persia, will visit the Vienna Exhibition.

ITALY.—It is said that the Pope has stated that he would leave Rome if the establishments of heads of religious orders were suppressed by the Italian Government.—A Royal decree was promulgated whereby the State takes possession formally of sixteen convents in Rome.—A slight eruption from Mount Vesuvius has been in progress during the past few days. No damage has been done, but the residents of the villages at the foot of the volcano are greatly alarmed.

SPAIN.—The Queen has given birth to a boy.—The Carlists have undergone several defeats. This has made a most favourable impression, and many of the insurgents have laid down their arms and returned home.

PORTUGAL.—The Dowager Empress of Brazil is dead.

SWEDEN.—The new King of Sweden, Oscar XI., will be crowned on the 21st May.

AFRICA.—The latest news from Dr. Livingstone is to the 28th September. He had received the goods sent to him by Stanley, and had gone on a final exploration.—Sir Bartle Frere arrived at Zanzibar on the 12th ult. He goes to the coast of Africa, and will penetrate some distance into the interior.

MEXICO.—The Mexico and Vera Cruz R. R. has been finished.

CUBA.—It appears, by a census just taken, that the number of slaves in Cuba is 269,000.

SANDWICH ISLANDS.—Prince William, of Honolulu, has been elected King. The election was held on New Year's day, after the endorsement of the Prince by a majority of the Legislative Assembly.

Dr. Colby's Pills are approved by all Physicians who have seen the formula.