



AT the British Museum, an interesting collection of prints of fashions, dating back to the eighteenth century, is on exhibition. The collection is loaned by the Princess of Wales, to whom it was bequeathed by Sir William Fraser, the most discriminating curio collector of the day. A correspondent, writing of these prints, says: "In view of the present tendency towards Empire and Directory modes, these pictures should prove peculiarly applicable; while the turban toque, with rampant, uncurled ostrich plumes, the *bonne-femme* skirt, and the huge, flat mull, are all repetitions of the reign of the ill-fated Marie Antoinette, to say nothing of fichus, than which no drapery is better loved at the present day, and close-fitting elbow sleeves, deeply ruffled. Nor, short of powder and those curls about the neck, are our latter-day coiffures very violently dissimilar to those worn during the Louis Seize reign. The dressing of the Directory time I have always hugely admired. It is the epitome of the picturesque, lacking the voluminosity of the Louis Seize, and the unpleasantly suggestive skimpiness of the First Empire. The Directory coat, with its large buttons, double capes disappearing behind large pointed velvet revers, and full skirt, owns an elegance quite supreme. Its re-introduction, if I mistake not, was attempted some nine years ago, but for some reason inexplicable it then failed to secure any pronounced success. However, there is a much more encouraging promise that a better fate will be accorded it in the near future. But the vogues of the Directory time altogether lend themselves to an infinite variety of aspects, and never will they have been more decoratively aided in the matter of buttons, buckles, and jabots than just now. My private impression with regard to the Empire frock is that it will not be extravagantly patronized. There is just one, and only one, type of figure capable of doing its long, semi-revealing lines justice. And while it crosses my mind, let me hint that the gathered skirt, characteristic both of the Directory and Louis Seize periods, is a very possible adoption by the woman only averagely endowed with inches, and hinting, perhaps, at embonpoint. I know many are laboring under the reverse impression—hence the warning."

THE Countess of Aberdeen has accepted the presidency of the Aberdeen centre of the Women's Branch of the Scottish Red Cross Society, by special request of the Duchess of Montrose, who is president of the society.

THE city of Paris has just received a splendid legacy—the largest, in fact, that has ever been left to it. It amounts to 5,000,000 francs, and is bequeathed by Mlle. Marie Genevieve Tames, who herself had inherited the money from Dr. Dubreil. The legacy is to be devoted to the establishment of three institutions, an orphanage and a school of architectural design in the eighth arrondissement of Paris, and the rest to such public or private works as the municipal council may deem advisable.

LADY SYBIL GREY, second daughter of Earl and Countess Grey and niece of Lady Minto, is destined to make her court courtesy this coming season. Her eldest sister, Lady Victoria Grey, of whom a portrait appeared in this paper last week, came out at the time of the Diamond Jubilee, and their uncle, Capt. Holford, gave a ball in her honor at Dorchester House of which he is the owner. The Countess of Morley is an aunt of these ladies, and their father, Earl Grey, being a rich man as well as a great peer, pretty Lady Sybil's introduction to society bids fair to be arranged in pleasant places. Perhaps the most interesting debutante of 1900 will be Miss Jeanne

Langtry, daughter of Mrs. Langtry—"Mrs. De Bathe" still seems so unfamiliar. Miss Langtry is an extremely handsome girl, and Mrs. Cornwallis West is to be her social godmother. Miss Langtry is not perhaps so beautiful in an orthodox fashion as her celebrated mother, but she has, in addition to pretty features, a quite noticeable air of high breeding and refinement. She is also very highly educated, and has been kept in strict seclusion during her childhood and early girlhood—a fair and carefully guarded flower. The young lady is said to possess a handsome dot.

MISS MARY CHOLMONDELEY has acquired what is understood to be the laurel crown of the modern story teller—her novel "Red Pottage" is to be put upon the stage. She is dramatizing it herself with skilled assistance.

IN London, Mrs. Patrick Campbell has surprised everyone by making an unequivocal success with a serious play in a small theatre hitherto the home of farce-comedy. Magda, at the Royalty, is the fashion of the hour. It seems almost inappropriate to speak of gowns in connection with a great artistic achievement; but Mrs. Campbell's dresses in Magda merit description. Her first is a long, clinging evening dress, cut *princesse* fashion, made entirely of a glittering, transparent embroidery of crystal beads. Under this is worn a slip of maize-colored silk, embellished at the bottom with ruffles of maize-colored chiffon. The last dress has a skirt of white and pale gold brocade, veiled with a second skirt of white chiffon. Bodice and overskirt are of mauve grey crepe de chine. The overskirt is made of long, square panels caught with silver ornaments a little below the waist line. The bodice is relieved by a yoke and sleeves of lattice-work, made of narrow black velvet studded with jewels. With this gown, on entering, Mrs. Campbell wears a long cloak of emerald green velvet, richly trimmed with chinchilla, and a halo-shaped black hat trimmed with a half wreath of shaded pink roses.

A CORRESPONDENT of The Rider and Driver (New York), severely criticizes a statement in an article, "English at Fox Hunting," viz., "ladies generally dress in dark blue habit—for them a high hat and veil are indispensable." The correspondent says: "I have hunted for the past two years with a pack of fox hounds, and at times with Her Majesty's stag hounds, and I can only remember one dark blue habit in either field, and that was replaced after the Christmas sales by a smart dark grey melton one. The tall hats on ladies I could easily count on the fingers of one hand, and veils are rare (never the blue or grey variety shown in old prints by Leech and his time) and are only used to steady the hats. I have heard my wife and other hunting women often wish they could wear them, but they found the branches tore them and they interfered with their sight. Then the knot of cherry or scarlet ribbon at the throat—Ye Gods! A tight collar and plain white Ascot scarf, or, better still, a regular hunting stock and full scarf, with a gold horn or crop pin, the bowler hat (or, as we call it in America 'derby') and dark grey or black safety habit, is what is always used by ladies who hunt here. I believe with the regular hunting women of Quorn and Pychley, the most fashionable packs, the tall hat is said to be coming in again, but is still the exception, not the rule."

THE Philadelphia Ledger says that a bacteriologist asked a woman who did not usually have to go on very dirty streets if he might make an experiment on one of her skirts. It was a comparatively new one, and received daily brushing. He found on part of the skirt binding at the hem the following small menagerie. Two hundred thousand germs, many bearing diphtheria, pneumonia and tonsillitis; also collections of typhoid and consumption microbes. To say the least, I do not think Philadelphia's streets are dirtier than Montreal's, so what would be the result, one wonders, of a bacteriological examination of walking skirts here. Such startling scientific disclosures as the above may be used as a crushing arraignment of the long skirt. But, after all, they might also be used as the basis of an argument against walking in the city at all, for our feet must touch the pavements, and boots will pick up germs with the same ease as skirts. Perhaps, like the Hollanders in their homes, or like certain Orientals in their temples, we ought always to leave our shoes at the door as things unclean. But even then, geratophobia—that worst of modern nightmares—would probably pursue us into our homes, through the keyhole or up the water-pipe! So what are we to do?

GERALDINE.