

Cosy Corner Chats
With Our Girls.

"My wish . . . that womankind had but one rosy mouth, to kiss them all at once from north to south."

(This department is edited by Cousin Ruth who will be glad to hear from our girl readers. Address all letters, suggestions, comments, questions to "Cousin Ruth," Ladies Pictorial Weekly, etc.)

A COUSIN who has lost a dear cousin by death, writes to me, in a sad and melancholy strain; she is worried because she cannot afford to buy mourning, she does not think it right to go in debt for it. Good girl! Now I will tell you what you can do. Round your brown tweed walking jacket sleeve—the left sleeve—put a band of crape four inches wide, just half-way between the elbow and the shoulder, buy a pair of nice black kid gloves for Sunday, and that is all you need do. The sight of that band of crape will tell of your loss, and should anyone be so utterly tactless and obtuse as to remark upon your wearing the brown tweed suit, take no notice whatever of their imbecility. You will need to tack the band of crape (bias) on a bias lining, and put it on the sleeve very carefully or it will not lie even. If you desire a little bit more crape on the left side of your seal cap, just four little folds, laid on, not more than two inches square in all, you might put it, but the band on the arm is quite sufficient. I am sorry, sorry, dear, that you are for a little among the shadows. Look beyond; the sun is shining, on him whose memory you cherish!

THERE is quite a batch of letters in the little gold band this week, but I am not going to answer them now. Next week, I shall go over them all again and see what I can say to those cousins of mine. I had such a nice treat last night, and some fun about it too, and I want to tell you about it. You must know that Toronto is one of the cities in which Patti sang during this present tour, and Cousin Ruth longed ever so much to hear her. But the tickets were expensive, a dollar and a half for standing room, and sometimes one is too tired to stand for three hours, even to gratify one's taste and curiosity. So, as we talked it over, the mother, and the girls, and I, we came to the conclusion to give up the idea. Before we had quite done so, Cousin Ruth's brownie came to her aid and whispered in her ear, "Why not take your seats along with you, and plant them where you like." "Girls," I said on the impulse of the moment, "If I lend you each one of my tiny gold and white folding chairs, you can sit on them and hear Patti comfortably!" You should have heard those cousins laugh, "All right, old lady," they said, "Here is three dollars, go and get the tickets, and we'll carry our seats to the concert." When we got to the Hall, in our best French opera cloaks, each concealing a dainty little plush-seated folding chair, I charged into the crowd, armed with my never-failing weapon, a hat pin. My dear cousins, if you knew how a hat-pin, judiciously applied, can break a way through the densest crowd, you'd be amazed. The meanest man on earth can't argue or push against a hat-pin. Well, we got in, and were warned by the ushers that we mustn't sit down. You should have seen their faces when from under each opera cloak came the tiny white chairs, and on them all three cousins sat down, in a good place for seeing and hearing.

As for Patti, she was like the young ruler in the Gospel, "one thing she lacks." It is that subtle power that swells the throat and moistens the eyes of the listeners, that draws their hearts out to the singer, and makes them feel that twenty dollars was not too much to pay for that one moment's experience. A marvellous woman she is, in her plump, pretty, sparkling loveliness, after half a century and more of life and excitement. She wears dazzling jewels, diamonds on her round neck, and gleaming in her raven hair, and she wears the most atrocious bang, that sticks out and down like a Dutch porch over her bright eyes. She is so confident of pleasing, so sure of her value, so velvet voiced that there is no one who can criticise her, but, after the notes of those old sweet songs are sung, one does miss the true ring of feeling and conviction that should linger in the air. One knows that there was no thought of exile or no knowledge of friendliness, or no pretence or desire of such knowledge in the selfish little heart of the Diva, who warbled about "Home Sweet Home." A learned man, who thinks out loud, said slowly, as Patti retired after her third encore, "She's got no soul," and that was about what Cousin Ruth was thinking.

I WANT to tell you girls about a little cousin, whom I hope to some day to hear from, and of whom I am very fond. She lives away across the Seas, in a rather quaint and queer old city of Europe. Her name is Katerina, and she is so pretty. She is a working-girl, and she has hard work, but she prefers to work even harder than burden her father with her support. She has five sisters, and all these girls are trying to make their living, because "home sweet home," is not like it used to be, before their mother died. The father is a working man, he has a small farm, and he brought my little foreign cousins home a step-mother some three years ago. This step-mother often pities the father for having five great girls to support, and she makes life so unpleasant for them, that they are trying their best to get away, one is going to be married to an ugly old man, and she marries him on condition that the smallest sister lives with her always. Then, Katerina has come to the big city to do for herself, and already she has had times. There are great travellers who stop at the hotel where she works, who offer her great wages to come to Paris, to Berlin, to Vienna, and very soon Katerina found that these were false friends and only wanted to get her away from her friends. We used to have many talks over these matters, when I was staying in the city and at the

Hotel where Katerina lives, and often when I am not very busy, I think of how she cried and told me of her perplexities. And it sometimes makes me cross to think of one disagreeable woman making these six girls so unhappy. Isn't in mean?

COUSIN RUTH.

An Ideal Husband.

17. He who does right for his own sake out of respect for himself. The man whose wealth is for the poor, whose understanding is for the world, whose life is for God, gentle to inferiors, treating them as if he were dealing with himself, possessing manliness, tempered by gentleness, not intentionally wounding the feeling of others, that true courtesy which prompts its possessor to begin each day by being good to his own children love and trust such men. Cats and dogs do not fly from their presence, and women implicitly feel that their honor is safe in such hands.

18. What things are necessary for the making of a good husband, well he must be honest, upright and truthful and an abstainer from all intoxicating liquors, and above all, to be a Christian, one that fears God and walks in his ways these; are the things which make the man. Every man that looks like a gentleman is not one, but he that acts as one in all his ways, thoughts and doings happy is the woman that has such a man for a husband, it can be said of them they are walking in the Christian path and are help-mates one to another.

19. A good moral character is the first and surest foundation upon which to build all other requisites to perfect an ideal husband, to which we add honorable principles of truth, firmness, generosity, and industry, a firmness in his rightful authority which has no taint of oppression. A good husband provides well for his family, considers his wife's comfort and pleasure. Writers tell of "Poverty for love's sake," etc., but life is real and needs to be provided for in a substantial manner, which judicious provision insures comfort, contentment and happiness, all of which sweeten the life and strengthens the heart of an ideal husband, being the fruit of his own generous creation.

20. An ideal husband must be in every sense an ideal man. An ideal husband should be a Christian, he should love his wife with a true, holy, affectionate love. He should be kind and courteous to her and to her friends, ever-mindful of her comfort and happiness, he should be of a patient and loving disposition. He should abstain from all evil habits and be sound in body and mind, intelligent, and capable of taking a man's part in the world. He should be honest, truthful, and a persevering worker for God and his fellowman.

The Fashionable Neck.

Odd, isn't it, that there should be a *fin de siecle* neck, just as there is a mode in bonnets or a style in gowns? Stranger still that the girl of the period conforms her physical being to the conventional idea just as she cuts her draperies in the fashion. Now, the *fin de siecle* neck at the end of the century is not at all what it was at the beginning, when all the sweet girls wore low-necked gowns in the day-time. Then the essential qualification of beauty was a sort of cushion-like plumpness. No bones or suggestion of bones must be traceable between the round column of the throat and the tumultuous upheaval of the too redundant bosom.

Now the neck must have subtle expression, not capon plumpness, and this expression depends upon—bones. To be classically beautiful the line of the clavicle must be visible at the base of the throat, and the hollow just above this that every Venus has, and that some one has called a rest for Cupid's kisses, must not be lost in too abundant flesh, though the flesh be the fairest and most dimpled ever bared to the eye of mortals.

There is a *fin de siecle* bust, too. It is small, round, low, exquisitely chaste, and beautifully modeled. The important thing in dressing for the best expression of this modish neck is to wear everything loose about the bust and to have a corset either cut entirely away over the bust or cut very low. The French woman grasps the ideal of the end-of-the-century neck and leaves her corset, which is made to order if the gown worn over it cost less than a shilling a yard, very loose at the top where it sustains the bust, but does not compress or push it out of place. No matter how low cut is the ball-gown, the effect is delicate and modest if the fullness of the breast is not apparent.

The slender woman is the woman of the mode. The ideal of beauty approaches more nearly the antique standards, and we are outgrowing the notion that the loveliness of a woman's neck and shoulders depends upon flesh alone. The anatomical structure must be defined about the ankle, must be guessed at the wrist, and must show a faint line or tracery at the throat. Too much flesh takes from the impressiveness of the throat and shoulders.

MRS. GROVER CLEVELAND uses plain, rough finished linen paper, and a seal of white wax. Mrs. William M. Evarts prefers cream-tinted Irish linen of a somewhat heavy quality. She uses no seal. Mrs. Cyrus W. Field has a most imposing coat of arms emblazoned upon her letter paper.

ELLA WHEELER WILCOX, uses translucent paper with a gilt design, round as a dollar, upon which are the three letters of her name.

PAULINE HALL uses pretty stationery, and Helen Dauvray-Ward writes on gray paper, with a ragged edge. Ada Rehan uses dark, blue paper, with her monogram and address in white or gold.

MRS. ELIZABETH CUSTER uses the plainest of paper, with nothing whatever upon it except what she writes there in a beautiful, flowing, legible hand.

Correspondence.

The correspondence columns are open to all readers of the LADIES PICTORIAL WEEKLY. Questions relating to fashions, etiquette, literature or any subject of interest to our readers can be sent in for reply. Address correspondence editor in care of this paper.

SAGESSE.—This correspondent puzzles me a little. It is always difficult to say how much a woman should accept from a man, in the way of chaff. Sometimes if the woman be sensitive and quick tempered, a very little makes her uncomfortable. There are limits, and her own nature defines them. I saw a very sarcastic and clever man completely crushed by an innocent looking girl, who in reply to a trying question, intended to confuse and annoy her, calmly remarked "no-goosie!" It is sometimes extremely difficult to parry unpleasant remarks, but anything is better than to resent them. If the man you complain of tells you broad stories and embarrasses you by his remarks, you can only pretend abtiveness, and if he forces them upon you, give him a decided and quenching snub. "Hold your tongue sir," in stern tones, will settle him.

TRIED.—I cannot give you a cure for a bad memory. In your case it is probably the result of over taxing. We can't do more than our strength allows, and when you feel you begin to forget important things don't try to remember them, keep a tablet handy and jot down what you wish to remember.

SKATER.—A skating dress should be plain, neat and of some rich material. The divided skirt is very comfortable for this exercise, worn under the plain gored skating costume. A pretty dress seen on the rinks this winter is of dark green velvet and chinchilla fur, and a cosy looking one of wine-colored cloth, braided, and edged with narrow bands of Persian lamb fur.

IPSEDIXIE.—Women have a great deal to do with the management of the World's Fair. The American women are just waking up to show what they are capable of, and you won't be ashamed of your countrywomen when they come to the front next year.

JANE EYRE.—Charlotte Bronte the authoress of Jane Eyre, Vilette Sherley and several other novels, was the daughter of an Irish clergyman, the Rev. Patrick Bronte. Her early life was secluded and her nature highstrung fanciful and nervous. She married happily, and died after a short wifehood, leaving no family. Though her writings are very different in style from FIN DE SIECLE literature, they are most original powerful and interesting books, and I can safely recommend you to read them. If you can get Mrs. Gaskill's life of Charlotte Bronte, read it first, it is very interesting and you will find it a help to comprehending several parts of the writings of the gifted subject.

MAGGIE MAY.—No apology can be tendered. It was a simple slip of the tongue, and though very embarrassing, should not be resented. Try and forget all about it.

JAMESSE DOREE.—I think you have written before, have you not? Certainly the next heir to the throne of England after the Prince of Wales, is his second and only surviving son, Prince George. 2. I don't at all know whether it is likely he and Princess Mary of Teck will marry. Don't you think its rather soon to advance such an idea, her former Fiance having only been dead a week or two? 3. Yes, I have seen Prince George, he looks a good deal like the Royal family, he has been talked about but so have they all. Let old gossip rest, I pray you!

IMBELIEVER.—I. You are very far astray in your estimate of Canadian women. They are neither prydiced narrow nor conceited, as a class, any more than women of other English speaking countries. The trouble with them is that they are a poor crowd, money not being gained as easily nor spent as lavishly by the Canadian men as by your compatriots. I think they are more retiring, patient and contented than their American sisters, and I am willing to concede that their motto is "make haste slowly," but we all know the tortoise won the race, though the hare started fastest. A spirit of enterprise is often only another name for discontent, and when the goal striven for is reached, the discontent still remains. All the same, I admire the collected businesslike and generally sensible way the American women transact affairs, and also her heartily objection to cumbersome traditions and usages. There is compensating charm for the lack of each, and both can be very sincerely respected.

TYPO.—A contest was held in this city sometime ago, and was fairly conducted. The winner is well known and made very good time indeed. I should have to look over the fyle to tell you just what his work was, and I have not time this week, will look it up soon.

GRACE.—Snowshoeing is not at all hard work, it is awkward at first, but you can soon get accustomed to the shoes, and then you are all right. A nice pair of ladies shoes costs about four dollars. Any sporting goods emporium in the city will get them the size you want.

STUDENT.—The poem is by Victor Hugo. It is called in French "Les Chatiments de Napoleon," and rehearses all the bad fortune and defeat which fell upon the famous Corsican. It is not easy, and for you, would be much too difficult. Have you gone over Lafontaines fables? They are the spoon food generally offered to young students, you will find them easy, amusing and very helpful. I don't know the name of your teacher, but if you are dissatisfied I can recommend the Ingres Coutellier Schools which have branches in many parts of the States and Canada. The Toronto branch is in the Canada Life building, King St. West.

PICKLE.—I am sorry you have gotten yourself into such a mess. It is too bad if you miss your concert by your heedlessness, for the programme is worth hearing. Suppose you were to write to the second gentleman, and say that circumstances over which you have no control will prevent you from accepting his escort, and that you are letting him know in good time, that he may not be put to inconvenience, also tell him you feel grateful to him for his kind attention. Don't express regret, because that will be a reflection on the other gentleman. If you word your letter carefully, I think you can wiggle out of a complication which you owe to your own indiscretion.

MATER.—There are various pretty ways of dressing your little girl for a party, but a soft china silk, in cream and crimson, cream and sage, or cream and rather deep blue, or later still in one, of the handsome plaids now in vogue would make a pretty dress, as the party is so early I don't think gloves will be worn, let her take a pair, and the nurse can observe whether others wear them or not, and act accordingly.

WALTER.—A pretty birthday present for your sister would be a calendar. You can get very dainty ones at the book shops. As she is fond of writing and keeps the house accounts, you might get her a pen-stand, with drawers for different sorts of pens, and red ink in a small bottle, or you could select a handsome blotter, or a box of fancy stationery.