













## LADIES' DEPARTMENT.

### A Party in Florence.

A correspondent of the Chicago Times describes the life of the Florentines, and goes into raptures over the balls and fetes which enliven the ancient palaces of their old and fascinating city. We quote this picture of a wealthy lady resident and of the wonderful parties she gives:

Florence contains at this very moment a veritable Countess Monte Christo, not a theoretical ideal like that of Dumas, but a veritable heroine, with brains enough to think of all sorts of nice things, and practical sense and energy enough to give shape and form to her thoughts. She is English, a widow, rich as Cressus, and amiable as she is good and generous, and even the most envious cannot say evil of Mrs. Greiswood. She receives every Tuesday evening, and such weekly receptions were never seen before. The Palazzo Dhoogworst in which she lives, is on the Lung Arno, and is one of the most beautiful palaces in Florence. To see these magnificent rooms is pleasure enough. Dancing begins at eleven o'clock, and the cotillion or German, with which all the balls of Florence end, continues till five o'clock in the morning—supper at two o'clock. But as I do not wish to give you such an appetite as reading Sir Walter Scott's novels used to give me, I will not describe the "cena"—supper. The last ball was a fete d'adieu, the ladies in powder, patches, and trains, the gentlemen in knee-breeches, silken hose, high heels and diamond buckles. Mesdames Pompadour and DuBarry were there, but it was "the play of Hamlet with Hamlet" left out, for even the most illusionary could not see a Louis XV. among all this crowd of meisters in kingly attire. The supper was recherche, unique; a whole stag smothered in jellies filled the center of the table, while either end rejoiced in a veritable peacock, with his argus-eyed fans all spread, poor birds that had been wickedly murdered to grace this fete. But the cotillion favors surpassed all; beautiful fans, gold chains with their hostesses' monogram on the medallions, and divers other rich gifts. At the closing figure of the quadrille, when a table was placed in the middle of the room with a hand-organ upon it, every one was in delicious suspense. What next? rejoined in whispers through the room, when in came the second son of the Princess Strozzi, disguised as an organ-grinder in a charming velvet costume, and bearing on his shoulder a dear, disgusting little pet monkey, dressed in satins and tinsels, holding in his little hand a box containing cards upon which each lady guest's name had been written. The monkey was placed on the table, and each courtier in his turn received a card marked "Monkey," and the lucky recipient of the prize favor of the cotillion bore away in triumph this interesting specimen of our original ancestors. The wife of Count Mafiore, a son of Victor Emmanuel, the prettiest woman in Florence, appeared in the most gorgeous costume of pale-blue velvet and white satin. The Marchesa Ginori, wife of the proprietor of the famous Ginori porcelain factory, was dazzling in the most beautiful diamonds to be seen in Italy. Madame Grisewood wore a superb Worth costume of blue satin, embroidered with silver in arabesque design, pearl necklace, with diamond pendants and tiara of diamonds in her blonde hair.

### Fashion Notes.

Large buttons are more worn than small ones.

Buttons with invisible eyes will be much used.

Gray and purple are favorite combinations of color in new silk brocades.

Watteau and Marie Antoinette styles will prevail for dresses made of foulards.

Heliotrope-colored cashmere and satin of the same color make an elegant costume.

Dark claret velvet and satin are need to brighten up ecoru and almond-colored pongs.

Foulard and pongee dresses will be much worn in place of light checked and striped summer silks.

The favorite style of make-up for handkerchief dresses is with a plaited sash and a Tallon overskirt.

Jet fringes and passementeries and the new "blackberry" buttons are used on the richer black summer toilettes.

Satin finished foulards in illuminated designs are combined with other foulards in solid colors of various shades.

Claret-colored bunting is combined with a fabric of the same color, with white outline figures on it in a variety of effective costumes.

Breakfast caps are often made of colored foulards and fancy handkerchiefs than of white tulle or capelins, the frills, however, are of white lace.

Almond-colored and ecoru pongee makes a beautiful overdress and basque or polonaise to wear over a checked colored or brown corduroy velvet skirt.

Picture dresses are made of pale blue French bunting and cashmere, with borderings and trimmings of erconettes, with white grounds, covered with Japanese figures.

Spanish styles are represented in importations of black dresses of fine thin all-wool tulle repousse, or wool tulle, trimmed with black open-work silk embroideries, or black Normandy or black Spanish lace.

Dark blue linen suits make up stylishly for garden, party, or indoor dresses,

with borderings of gay Turkey red oil cloth, with palm leaf figures used for the collars, cuffs, pockets, and frills where frills are needed.

Handkerchief dresses will be made this season of dark, blue and other solid colored percales, as well as of unbleached domestics, and decorated as last year with handanna, Madras, and Scotch gingham handkerchiefs.

Plant screens, made of moss and ferns, and other suitable vines on a lattice of green wire attached to a long green tin window garden on rollers, are among novelties for house decorations. They are made to fit in fireplaces, or to stand in any part of the room that needs to be screened.

### The Punishment of Silence.

Mr. James Greenwood has published a frightful account of the silent system, which is in operation at the Holloway model prison in London:

It is an offense for a prisoner to speak one word, and he is never addressed except in whispers, so that he may be in prison two years without hearing the natural sound of the human voice. The effect of this is so terrible on the mind that prisoners will speak out in desperation, at the risk of any punishment, rather than endure that horrible silence.

The prisoners never see one another, but remain in perpetual solitude. One poor wretch driven to desperation by nine months' solitude and silence, recklessly broke out, in Mr. Greenwood's presence, "For God sake, governor, put me in another cell. Put me somewhere else. I have counted the bricks in the cell I am in till my eyes ache."

The request of the tortured wretch was refused.

There is a fine hole in each cell, and as the warden wears shoes of india rubber soles the prisoners can never be sure of being alone.

Those condemned to the treadmill have to ascend twelve hundred steps every alternate twenty minutes for six hours. And this is in a place so hot and close that prisoners often lose in perspiration three stone in as many months.

### A Generous Reward.

In one of the hotly-contested fights in Virginia, during the war, a Federal officer fell in front of the Confederate works. While lying there, wounded, and crying for water, a Confederate soldier (James Moore, of Burke county, N. C.) declared his intention of supplying him with a drink. The bullets were flying thick on both sides, and Moore's friends endeavored to dissuade him from such a hazardous enterprise. Despite remonstrances and danger, however, Moore leaped the breastworks, canteen in hand, reached his wounded enemy, and gave him drink. The Federal, under a sense of gratitude for the timely service, took out his gold watch and offered it to his benefactor, but it was refused. The officer then asked the name of the man who had braved such danger to succor him. The name was given, and Moore returned to his position behind the embankment. They saw nothing more of each other. Moore was subsequently wounded, and lost a limb in one of the engagements in Virginia, and returned to his home in Burke county. A few days ago he received a communication from the Federal soldier to whom he had given the "cup of cold water," announcing that he had settled on him the sum of \$10,000, to be paid in four annual installments of \$2,500 each. Investigation has established the fact that there is no mistake or deception in the matter.—Baptist Weekly.

### The Hero a Bull-Fighter is in Spain.

Speaking of the fete held in Paris for the relief of the Murcia sufferers, a correspondent of the London Truth writes: Of all the innumerable lions at the Hippodrome, the espadas, or professional bull-fighters, were the most lionized. In Spain their yearly earnings range from \$20,000 to \$30,000 a year, and no prizes down here receive handsomer presents from male enthusiasts and female admirers. If they were customary for them to go in their bare feet, they would, I dare say, wear diamonds in their toes as well as on their fingers, which are covered with these sparkling gems. They have double buttons of diamonds, large as marrowfat peas, on their shirt-collars, and a row of smaller ones fastening their embroidered linen breast-fronts. In the rosettes of their shoes are stones of the finest water.

Spanish ladies of rank are not ashamed to write love letters to espadas. The espada is a dandy without being a fop. If he chooses, he can pass his evenings in the company of grandees. If he is ill, the king sends daily to inquire after the state of his health, and he must be a careless dog if he is not able to retire in the prime of life from the arena on a good fortune.

Paris has 602 painters in oil, 193 miniature painters, 597 pastel and fan painters, 107 sculptors, and 754 molders, not counting the many photographers, decorators, colorists, etc.

### What To Do in Case of Fire.

The loose garments worn by women and children expose them to especial danger from fire. If the fire starts from the bottom of the dress, the natural upward tendency of the flame soon envelops the whole person, unless by self-control and presence of mind the necessary care be taken by the sufferer, or some one near, without a moment's hesitation. To obey the first impulse and open the doors and rush out, is sure destruction. The only safety is to fall down instantly on the floor, and roll over on to the fire, snatching a woolen shawl or rug, if near, to wrap round the body. One is comparatively safe by rolling over and over, for the flames will not rise to the face, and the lungs and breathing will be less likely to be injured. Those who may be in the room, or may come in, have their work plainly before them. Keep doors and windows closed; snatch the first woolen thing to be found—a table cover—without thinking of the works of art on it. Pull it off! Who cares where the bric-a-brac rolls to? It is a human life in danger. Or snatch a woolen shawl from a chair, a curtain or a rug, anything but that one human form is valuable. Wrap the sufferer instantly something that is woolen—the coat from your back, if nothing else offers—and thus closely wrapped roll her on the floor in the folds. Scores of lives have been saved in this way, scores lost for want of such immediate action. In case the house is on fire there should be one "captain," if possible, who can lead the less self-possessed out of the burning building. Every door, window or aperture through which air can find entrance should be closely shut, except during egress. There are always eight or ten inches of pure air close to the floor, and if one cannot walk erect through the smoke, he should, as soon as enveloped in some woolen article, drop on the floor on the hands and knees and crawl out. A silk handkerchief, or piece of flannel or woolen stocking, wet and put over the face, will enable one to breathe in dense smoke.—Mrs. H. W. Beecher.

### An Odd Character at Washington.

A character who up to a few months ago was a daily visitor to the Capitol, says the Washington Star, was Colonel Maurice Pinchover. This man has a grievance. He seems to be haunted by the phantom of Colonel Tom Scott, the railroad king. He declares that Colonel Scott years ago robbed him in a railroad transaction, stole his money and reduced him to penury. He carries with him usually a tin case about two feet long and six inches in diameter, in which is a drawing of some kind. One day last summer when the House was engaged in an exciting political debate, Pinchover came to the Capitol with a woolen shirt saturated with blood, and which he declared was the shirt worn by him when he was assaulted by Tom Scott on the plains of Colorado. Pinchover also has a claim. All that he has ever yet succeeded in explaining is that it is for a million dollars, and is connected with a mine of some kind, which Scott robbed him of. At times he is dangerous. Journal Clerk Smith on one occasion filled the tin case he carries with mud. When Pinchover discovered it he became ungovernable, and would have done Smith bodily injury had he not fled incontinently out of range.

### The Length of the Actual St. Gothard Tunnel is Nine Miles and Sixty Feet.

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### What is a Grain of Wheat?

People handle a large amount of wheat, and yet very few know what it really is, and no doubt will be surprised when we tell them that it is a little sack which has many coatings. The outside one is mineral, principally, besides which it has a glutinous covering, which contains nitrogen. Again, there are very minute compartments, which contain starch. At the end is a little germ, which is double, one part of which is called the radicle; the other is the future root of the plant; the other is called the plumula, and is the future stem of the plant. In this is contained the future stem of the grain, although the future stem is only made visible by the aid of a most powerful microscope. Then, by the aid of heat and moisture, the starch, by the active agency of a very small amount of substance known as diastase, which is very similar in character to yeast, starts a process of fermentation, which converts the starch into sugar, and this is food for the small root till it becomes large enough to extract nourishment from the soil. In the meantime, the plumula, or future stem, is pushing its way through the outer covering, and from that through the soil to daylight, when it begins to extract carbonic acid from the atmosphere, and perhaps nitrogen. The grain of wheat is very small, but on that little seed volumes might be written, and generations will come and go before the last sentence could be completed.—American Cultivator.

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