

## RINGS ARE IN FASHION.

EVEN WOMEN IN GOOD SOCIETY WEAR MANY OF THEM.

It is allowable to cover the fingers with jewels, though it can never be a custom of really good taste—latest styles in these costly ornaments.

I've had my earring stones made into rings," said one lady to another at a New York jeweller's. "It really seems almost like a provision of Providence that earrings are out just when rings are most fashionable, doesn't it?"

"Indeed it does, and, fortunately for me, I have seventeen pairs of earrings. They come in very well now, although I thought it was foolish in my husband to insist on giving me a pair of earrings on each of our wedding anniversaries. I liked it well enough for the first four or five years, and then I began to want a change, and, no matter how handsome the stones were, and they grew handsomer each year as his fortune grew I couldn't help but feel a little disappointed when I opened the box at my plate to find another pair of earrings.

"Oh, Henry," I would exclaim, "you are so good, dear, but what am I to do with so many earrings? A finger ring would have done just as well."

"No it wouldn't," he would answer. "A ring does well enough, but it's a mighty good thing to have two of a kind, especially when they are such fine gems as those. They'll come in handy enough some day, and sure enough they have. I've nearly enough stones to make a banquet ring, and you know they are the very latest in the way of a ring."

"You don't mean that you have enough stones in seventeen pairs of earrings for a banquet ring?" exclaimed the young woman; "why, I've just been looking at some, and the prettiest require over a 100 stones."

"Well we'll see," answered the elder with a smile that meant "I'm sure I have." Here comes the head of the ring department. "I'll show him my collection and let him decide."

She unlocked a polished wood casket and there lay seventeen small jewelry boxes. The ones that were given during the first years of married life, when the young couple were not over well off, were of simple white pasteboard, and as the owner removed the covers she showed earrings set with small solitaire diamonds. The stones were very white, however, in settings not old-fashioned enough to be valuable and too old to be fashionable.

"Do you know I value these little stones more than any I have?" said the owner, handling them tenderly, "because they tell of genuine self-sacrifice on the part of my husband? He had to stint himself and do without things that he really needed to buy these, but when he bought the ones that I have in my ears now," she said, touching the three-carat solitaires and shrugging her shoulders, "he merely wrote out a check for \$10,000 and didn't have to go without so much as a cigar."

Earrings aren't worn any more are they? "Yes, to some extent," answered the authority "in the evening." One has only to go to a fashionable function or to the opera to discover that. In London and Paris earrings are very fashionable. In truth, while finger rings are a distinct fad with not only women, but men also, nowadays, all jewelry is more worn than ever before. This is not because jewelry is more fashionable than it was in the old days, but because Americans have more wealth today than ever before, and they are putting a large percentage of it into precious stones, which always prove a safe investment. Perhaps another thing that gave rise to the idea that earrings are no longer worn is the fact that so many women do as you are doing—have them made into finger rings. The reason for this is obvious. A handsome pair of diamond solitaires is all that a woman ever needs for her ears, but for her fingers she must have rings up to her knuckles. The number is unrestricted so far as style goes. But to return to your earrings. Nothing could be handsomer than these banquet rings, and you have enough handsome stones to duplicate this one, which is wrought of diamonds, emeralds, and rubies. You see it has three immense solitaire diamonds in the centre running straight up and down; and they are separated from the top and bottom points and side points, which are formed of two large emeralds, and two large rubies, by small diamonds in graduated sizes. The ring covers an entire joint of the finger, and the setting is two inches in length and a little more than that in width. Of course you know without my telling you that such rings are never worn with a glove; they are designed for dinners and banquets, where the hand is bare, and no other ring, not even a pinkie ring, should be worn with it."

But here are banquet rings in the form of scrolls, coronets, plumes, and fleurs de lis. They are wrought with diamonds, emeralds, rubies, pearls, sapphires, and opals. One of our customers had two pairs of diamond solitaire earrings and a pair of these old-fashioned hoop earrings set in diamonds. They were so big that each contained fifty stones, so out of the four big stones and the hundred little ones we made her an exquisite plume ring. The ones with a few colored stones in addition to the

mass of diamonds are more popular, however, and are far more gorgeous. The band of the ring is of plain gold, and the jewels set in platinum. Most of these designs come from France, and, as many one can readily see, are just as elaborate as a finger ring could be made."

"You may make my gems up into the design that you first showed us," said the customer. How much would it cost if I were buying stones and all?"

"Oh, from \$16,000 to \$20,000 with such stones as you have here. Of course banquet rings vary in price from \$500 up.

"Many women who have a handsome pair of diamond earrings, have them set diagonally on a narrow wire, with a colored stone in the centre, and three shanks, studded with small diamonds, lead up on each side to the three stones. Again, many women are far-sighted enough to have their marriage finger rings changed into some other style. The marquise setting has had its day and is rapidly going out for two reasons. It is imitated to such an extent in cheap stones, and it is an awkward style, being too pointed. It is impossible to wear another ring on the finger with a marquise. The duchesse setting, which is a large oval, with flat top set in small stones, is popular, and so are nearly all cluster rings. Undoubtedly one of the handsomest ways to make up earrings, where the stones are fine, is to set from three to seven stones on a narrow hoop."

"As a rule, customers have a stick pin made of the left-overs. Women are just as fond of stick pins as men. A customer had a large pink pearl left over the other day and she had it set in diamonds. The stones were separated from the centre by gold wires, and of course, there was considerable space between them, so the expense was very little and the effect beautiful. Butterflies and bugs have been the rage in stick pins for women for several months, and a great many who have small diamonds and colored stones left over from resetting their earrings have them made up in this way. Those of the red, white, and blue stones are exceedingly popular. Lorgnettes hold their own about as well as anything that has come out in years, and this season finds them more elaborate than ever before. The handles are rather short which gives an opportunity of making them handsomer. The parts that conceal the glasses is studded with precious stones, and a favorite style is to have a diamond at the top and bottom and a colored stone on each side. This gives a woman a chance to use two pairs of handsome earrings, and many women take advantage of it. We made a woman a beautiful lorgnette out of a pair of old-fashioned earrings recently. They had hair in the centre, set in exquisite whole pearls. They had come down for generations in her family, but she has more style than sentiment in her make-up, and ordered a lorgnette of Burmese gold, and on one side she had a miniature of Josephine set in these pearls. Small stones can also be used to good advantage in lorgnettes in many other ways, and that is something a woman can always carry."

"It is an entirely mistaken idea on the part of women to give up all her earrings, however. Of course the most fashionable earrings now screws in the ear, the most desirable being, from a point of value, a pair of diamond solitaires. The proper size is not more than a carat and a half, and of course smaller ones are worn. Colored stones set in small stones, such as rubies or sapphires in diamonds, or emeralds in pearls, are very much worn, and suit young ladies better than the solitaires. To young women with rich dark skins and eyes and hair belong opals and rubies set in small diamonds; they should beware of emeralds, sapphires, and u quoise, leaving them to the blondes. Women with gray hair should affect pearls."

"What about engagement and wedding rings?" asked the young woman.

"A solitaire diamond represents the conventional engagement ring, though many men buy clusters. It may cost from \$15 up to \$10,000. It is not an unusual thing for us to sell engagement rings varying in price from \$3 to \$5,000. And the latest thing in a wedding ring is almost perfectly round and very thick and narrow. If a man asks for a broad band the clerk generally set him down as coming from Jersey."

"How is it that men have taken such a sudden fondness for rings?" asked the elder woman.

"I believe it is because Americans are growing more aesthetic in their taste. The rings for men this season are remarkable for their fine hand-carved mounting, made in Roman and antique gold, the most fashionable designs being that of the two sphinx heads, bears' claws, or satyr heads, holding either one or three gems. The centre one is most often ruby, emerald, or sapphire in cabochon style, so deep between two diamonds. Three fine stones set in Burmese gold in this style have an ancient look that most men like. Some do not, however, and prefer a plain or carved Roman setting, while others have a fine gem set in twenty-carat gold; of course it is soft and does not wear well, but it has that beautiful rich yellow color that is so desirable. The cat's-eye is one of the finest stones for a man's ring, and is not nearly as popular as it should be. This is because few men appreciate its beauty and value. The way to test whether a cat's-eye is valuable or not is to hold it under a single light; if the ray is clearly and distinctly defined it is all right, but if dozens of others rays shoot out from the centre of the stone, beware! These stones range in price from \$1 to \$700, and look well between diamonds. The four-claw setting—tooth, some people call it—takes well and is a good style for men. It contains a single gem, which, unlike deep-set stones, that catch the light only from the top, catches it on all four sides."

"The latest seal ring is the all gold. It has a flat, oval, or shield-shaped top, and upon this a man has his crest engraved. Some like the band carved also, while others prefer it plain. Massive rings with elaborately carved shanks are set in the same manner, with sard, bloodstone, topaz, and other seals."

Bicycles are now being made in the Indiana State prison at Warsaw, Ind. Experts from a prominent bicycle manufactory have been engaged as instructors to the convicts.

## MILLIONS OF BUFFALO.

AN OLD RAILROADER'S STORY OF DAYS OF GREAT GAME.

The Big Herd That Stopped the Progress of a Train Out West—The Fine Chance of a Fortune a Man Missed Because He Had an Idea on The Cash Basis.

Back in 1873," said an old railroader, "I was helping to build the Atchison, Topeka and Santa Fe Railroad, and we got it as far as Dodge City, Kan., or, rather, Dodge City had sprung up around the spot we had got the railroad built to. I was on the first construction train that ran all the way to that place, and on our way we were held up by this herd of buffaloes. We had seen the long, waving black line of that immense body of huge beasts approaching the railroad over the prairie from the north while we were yet miles away from the section of railroad where the herd would cross and the engineer made an effort to run the train past before the buffaloes reached it, but the track wasn't in condition to let him get speed enough on to do it. The head of the great column of buffaloes struck the railroad only a hundred yards or so ahead of us, and the engineer ran down to within a rod or two of the herd, but one seemed to mind. As far as any one could see, west and north there was nothing but buffaloes packed together, as they marched as close as sardines in a box. They were travelling between a walk and a trot, and were moving at the rate of about five miles an hour."

"The one buffalo that gave us any particular attention was a big bull near the column. He stepped out of the ranks when he got on the railroad, being on the outside line, and advancing a few steps, with his nose to the ground, began pawing dirt and snorting, and showing every disposition to forcibly resist an intrusion on that domain. As the bull stood there, getting fiercer and fiercer, the engineer pulled his whistle valve wide open. Such a wild, piercing, hair-raising shriek as that locomotive let go had never split the air in that far Western country before. It struck the big bull with such terror that he threw himself back on his hind feet so far that his great head and shaggy mane and ponderous shoulders towered straight above them in the air, but only for an instant. Then he toppled over like a falling tree and came down in a heap across the track, making everything tremble. He was dead before he fell, for he never moved a muscle as he lay. That unearthly shriek of the locomotive whistle had scared him to death. No one seeming to care to bother with the old fellow, I had the pelt taken off. A man at Dodge City cured it for me, and when I left there a couple of months later I shipped it along with my goods and gave it to my brother. That's the skin he refuses \$300 for now."

"One of our civil engineers made a little calculation on the number of buffaloes that herd contained. The herd was two hours passing, which showed that it was ten miles long. Between the point where we stopped to let the herd go by to the point its western edge extended to was three miles. The engineer figured in round numbers, and was liberal in his estimates. He allowed 6,000 buffaloes as the depth of the column and 3,000 as its width, thus showing that the herd contained 18,000, 000 buffaloes. During the two hours that it was passing us on its thundering march every one on our train amused himself by shooting indiscriminately into the herd. I suppose a good many buffaloes were shot dead, but a great many more were simply wounded, to be trampled to death beneath the feet of the mighty herd. When the herd had crossed the railroad and at last passed southward on its way, not less than 500 mangled and mutilated carcasses were left strewn about on the prairie the result of our ruthless butchery. We didn't think it anything out of the way then. It makes me sick to think of it now."

"The Atchison, Topeka and Santa Fe Railroad and the Kansas Pacific Railroad, which was building at the same time, opened up that country to the buffalo hunters. Wichita, Medicine Lodge, and Dodge City became centres for them. More than 5,000 professional hunters were at work in those regions in 1872, and the pleasure hunters were about as numerous. The railroads used to advertise buffalo hunting excursions, and run special trains to the feeding grounds, or as near to them as they could get. Hunters used repeating rifles and needle guns. The pleasure hunters, or sportsmen as they called themselves, despised the professional hunters because the latter slaughtered buffaloes for gain—selling the skins and the hind quarters—yet when one of these sportsmen killed one buffalo for the trophy of its head or skin he would, on a low average, kill ten for the wolves and vultures to feed upon. When I was in Kansas this great and wanton slaughter of buffalo had begun to alarm thinking people out there, and they were talking of bringing the matter before the Legislature. To impress that body with the importance of taking some action to prevent further butchery these people formed an organization, and stationed men at various points of observation to obtain statistics of buffalo killing."

"Their representative at Medicine Lodge reported that in that district alone 210,000 buffaloes were slaughtered in two months. At Wichita 65,000 skins were bought by traders, representing the work of professional hunters. As many more buffaloes were killed and left for four-footed and winged carrion eaters to feast on. I never heard what the legislature thought about it."



"Dodge City is 1873 had a population of perhaps 4,000, and two-thirds of it was made up of buffalo hunters. They overstocked the market with skins, so that the price fell to \$1.25 a skin, and the supply was greater than the demand. Buffalo skins were piled up in the storehouses by the cord. One man alone had 25,000 that he was anxious to get a market for. Hind quarters of buffalo went begging at one cent a pound. Fore quarters were worthless. One enterprising trader tried a speculation in buffalo tongues, and shipped a few hundred East. They made a hit, and a big demand sprang up for buffalo tongues—so big, in fact, that the price went up to \$25 cents a tongue. The man who started that line of business bought 25,000 tongues and sold them all at a good profit, but he rather overdid the market, and when I left Dodge City he was waiting for it to revive. It did, in time, and I heard afterward that he and others made fortunes in buffalo tongues."

"Next to buffalo, poker was the game most sought after in those days of Dodge City. I used to chase it a little myself. One night, about a week before I left for the East, I got up a pretty fair winner in cash, and a friend of mine owed me \$200 for having too much confidence in a hand he held. He was a trader in buffalo skins, and had plenty of them, but was short of money. So he came to me and said: "

"See here, old man, I owe you a couple of hundred. I haven't got it, but I'll give you 250 buffalo skins to call it square."

"That was better than \$200, but I had no time for buffalo skins, and I said no."

"I'd rather take \$150 cash," said I.

"So he skinned around and raised \$150, somehow, and settled, and I left for the East. But see what a chump I was. If I had had half a head on me I might be owning a railroad now instead of climbing around on somebody else's greasy old locomotive. Why? Because I'd have taken those 250 buffalo skins and held on to 'em. Buffalo skins are cheap now at \$250 apiece. I've figured it out and know how much 250 is. It's 62,500, and that's just the number of dollars I'd have had this minute, not counting interest, if I hadn't been a chump!"—N. Y. Sun.

## Conversation at Meals.

A writer in the Speaker of London calls attention to the value of conversation at meals as an aid to digestion. He says with truth that the frugal repast eaten in silence is more harmful than a copious one enjoyed in the society of gay and vivacious companions. He asserts that an English dinner is, as a rule, a funeral rite of taciturnity, and that his countrymen reserve all of their talk for the political platform and sessions of Parliament. The writer in the Speaker contrasts this habit of the English with that of Americans and Frenchmen, who he maintains, are loquacious at meals. So far as the latter are concerned he is correct but his assertion in regard to the former is only partly true. To those who have given attention to this subject the habit of our people who take their meals at hotels or more notable restaurants is, during their repasts, one of timid hesitation in indulging in conversation. Men and women seated at the same table are more than sparing of words. Each separate group appears to be oppressed with fears of the others. Oblique looks and an occasional sentence uttered in low tones take the place of animated talk. Those who are eating have an air of furtive apprehensiveness. The writer in the Speaker has probably drawn his conclusions in regard to the vivacity of Americans at meals from experience at minor French and other foreign restaurants in this country. In those, the funeral taciturnity that oppresses our men and women who take their meals at pretentious establishments collapses under the inspiration of example and unconventional environment, and with almost boisterous glee they give free impulse to a natural love of conversation.—New York Sun.

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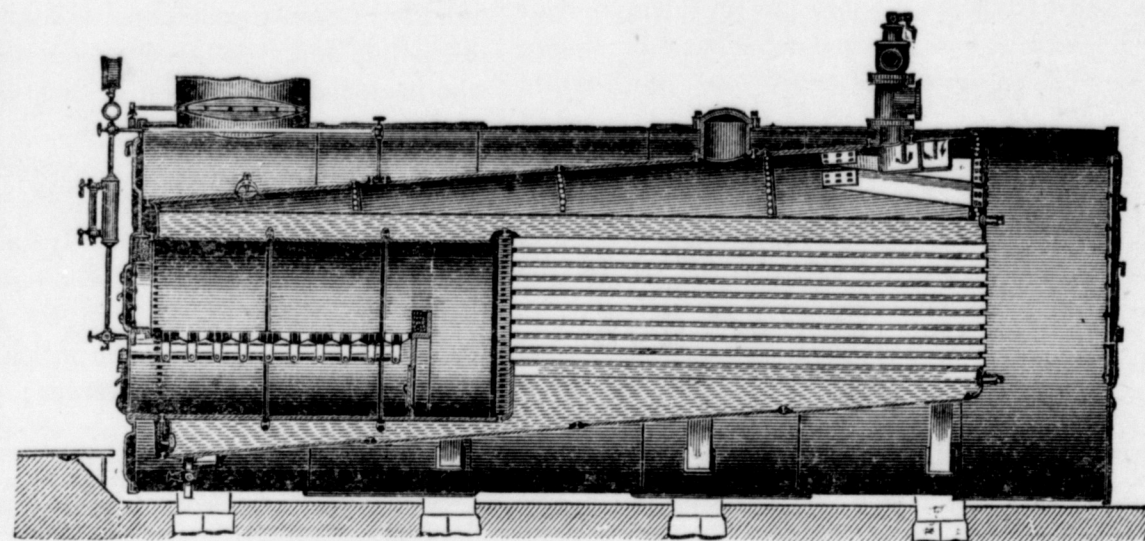
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