

Woman and Her Work

Even though Easter is past, it is interesting to read about the beautiful gifts with which the sons and daughters of wealth marked the season for each other. In the American cities, especially in New York, Easter now comes only second to Christmas and the New Year, as a time for making presents to one's friends. Jewelers in New York say they are as busy for the two weeks before Easter, as they are in the Christmas holidays; and book-sellers, stationers confectioners and the keepers of fancy shops, have the same tale to tell, while with the florist it is the busiest season of all, and their powers are taxed to the utmost to supply the demand for their wares. Amongst the less expensive Easter offerings nothing can be more appropriate or in better taste either from the lover to his lady, the husband to his wife, or from one friend to another, than a jardiniere full of growing flowers; lilies, hyacinths, lilies of the valley, daffodils, or primulas, are all beautiful and suitable blossoms, and really give more pleasure than the most elaborate assortment of cut flowers. A Dresden china jardiniere filled with either Parma or white neapolitan violets is as dainty a gift as any maid or matron could receive on Easter morning, and of course the jardiniere may be as elaborate and expensive as the taste of the giver and the thickness of his pocket book may suggest. Beautiful jardiniere in wrought silver are shown by all the leading jewellers, the genuine article in sterling silver costs a mere trifle of thirty dollars, but an equally handsome one in quadruple plate can be purchased for three dollars, these are used almost exclusively for table decoration, and are filled with ferns. The vinaigrette is a favorite Easter gift perhaps on account of the heat in large city churches which are usually overcrowded, and the tendency to faintness that is so often the result of the heavy perfume from the flowers, and the heat combined. These pretty toys are of either gold or silver, and crystal and are sometimes jewelled; made to order they cost sixteen dollars. Bonbon boxes are also popular gifts for Easter, and perhaps the most elegant offering of all is a prayer book bound in silver, gilded and enamelled. The enamelled design is the figure of a novice in a scarlet robe bearing a spray of Easter lilies aloft in one hand and a prayer book in the other; the price of this placed it beyond the reach of all but the rich, as it was one hundred dollars. Purses galore have been utilized as Easter offerings; the newest are the chain purses something like those so popular at Christmas, but with an improved clasp which makes them very easy to open and get change out of.

Amongst the odd gifts that few people would think of, are steamer rug pins for holding the heaviest of rugs snugly under the chin, pitch keys for musicians, and boatswain's whistles in jewelled silver, to be presented to gentlemen friends who are fond of yachting, besides jewelled cigarette cases, and match boxes in gold and jewels. Some of the trifles are far prettier than the more elaborate gifts, for example an immense full blown tulip in silk and satin conceals a bag in the centre which is filled with bonbons and has proved to be so popular that other flower designs are to be brought out, and from being merely an Easter novelty it will continue as a standard bonboniere. Filled with choice bonbons the price of these pretty things is seven dollars and a half. Willow baskets shaped like an egg, satin lined and filled with "goodies" come next in popularity, the straws of which they are woven is usually in two shades, green and pink or olive and pale blue, and the lining is of the same color, while the lid is decorated with a big bow of ribbon. The smallest size costs six dollars and a half, while the largest comes as high as twenty.

Of course the toilet table was not forgotten at Easter, the fad for everything connected with the toilet having been so general at Christmas that it was sure to last at least until something newer came to take its place. As an instance of the extent to which the fancy for expensive toilet novelties has been carried the very newest thing in toilet materials limoges enamelling, and a small powder box of crystal glass with top of the new enamelling, showing a cupid resting on a spray of wild roses, on a background of green enamel, cost just sixty dollars.

The children were not by any means forgotten, and if their gifts were less costly, they were none the less new, and beautiful. Strange to say the rabbit seems to be almost as much a part of Easter as the egg or Easter lily, one is sure to see him at this season, and he is usually sitting up on his little hind legs stuffed full of sweets,

and only waiting to have his funny head removed in order to display the inward charms, of which his outward attractions are but the index. Beside the rabbit there were fish with doll's heads that were removable and showed an interior well lined with sweet things, and fluffy swans with outspread wings and tail, and also provided with a doll's head and a quantity of lovely candies inside.

So there was something to make everyone happy at the Easter season from the oldest to the youngest; those who could only admire the beautiful things in the jeweller's windows had only to pass on to the nearest florist's and go away perfectly happy carrying a glorious white hyacinth in the fullest bloom which cost the modest sum of twenty five cents, and is quite as lovely as if it grew in a silver jardiniere instead of an earthen flower pot, and which will give quite as much pleasure to the recipient. The confectioner has gorgeous Easter eggs holding quite a number of candies, for ten cents each, and even the jeweller can give you the sweetest stick pin in the shape of a butterfly, a winged cherub, or an Easter lily, of sterling silver in return for a single quarter of a dollar. So no one need lack some little remembrance which, however small might be made priceless by the love that went with it. It is a pretty idea this Easter giving, and I hope it will not go out of fashion very soon.

It will not be long now before we are needing parasols and sunshades to keep the hot spring sunshine from dazzling our eyes and freckling our noses, and fashion, ever thoughtful, has already prepared a stock of the newest and sweetest things imaginable in that line. Such is the fickleness of fashion that the Dresden china handle is no longer the best style. The very newest and most fashionable handles are of bright green jade carved by the skillful hands of Chinese artists into all manner of fanciful shapes. Spheres of the odd green stone set in crown prongs of gold, are the first favorites but the head of a Chinese lady in court coiffure, a cluster of lotus blossoms, or little owls with jewelled eyes are also amongst the most approved designs. From gay and original Paris come parasol handles in the form of crystal balls enclosed in a gold and jewelled frame, or with a fretwork of silver such as we see scent bottles set in. Long, wedge shaped handles encrusted with imitation pearls and diamonds, lovely enamelled designs, and handle of rough wood with the bark still adhering are all fashionable. Amongst the very most fashionable handles are those of rough hickory, peach, willow, or plum wood which look as if they had been hastily hacked off the tree without taking time to shape them. Instead of ribbon bows, these rustic handles have full rushes of silk, satin or tulle, whichever may be the material of which the parasol is composed, pulled like an Elizabethan collar around it, just where the ends of the ribs come, when the parasol is closed.

The newest parasol brought out from Paris is called the Sunburst, and at a little distance it looks very much like a Chinese sunshade, but on closer view it is shown to be composed of very delicate ribs covered with delicately tinted taffeta, over which is a cover of figured silk, lawn batiste, foulard or even gingham, closely accordeon plaited. A charming variety of the sunburst is of white muslin decorated with graduated widths of velvet ribbon in all shades, from the faintest lavender near the point, to a rich dahlia at the outer edge. It is quite a usual custom with imported gowns to send out a parasol made of goods to match, and trimmed to harmonize with the dress trimming. For the conventional dome shaped sunshade there are all manner of eccentric and original trimmings, and nearly all of them have puffings or frills of tulle concealing the ribs or the inside, as few are lined throughout. Double puffed frills finish the edges, and many of the most elaborate parasols are trimmed all over the outside with a series of puffings.

Barge covers laid over a changeable silk are lovely, and pink and white gingham ones trimmed with white lawn embroidery, are not only charming but economical, as they can be easily washed and

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are new again after each visit to the laundry. By the way, some of the handles have a hinge in the middle like those our grandmothers used, so they can be readily folded up.

The recent trouble between the Greek, and the unspeakable, and abhorrent Turk has had a curious effect upon the fashions even in our far away Canada. It has settled the destiny of the bolero jacket for at least another summer, and given that funny but convenient little garment a new name; it is now the Moslem, the Candia, or the Cretan coat, and it is, whether with or without sleeves making a simple, close fitting dress bodice an utter impossibility for the present. This is all very well for the small and slender woman, but the short, or even the tall and stout one looks perfectly ridiculous if she allows her dressmaker to persuade her into wearing one. The bolero is no longer out in Spanish, but in Greek or Turkish fashion, and is decorated all over with Greek and Turkish chain stitch embroidery.

The quaint little braided tailless coat for street wear that accompanies so many costumes, and appears so often in the fashion plates, is called a mess jacket, and those shown by the best houses are exact copies in color and braiding of the jackets worn at mess by the men of famous English regiments; the Coldstream Guards and Scots Greys being amongst the most popular. The coat itself is important of course but a great deal of emphasis is laid upon the color of silk with which it is lined, so that an effective contrast is obtained between the exterior and the lining. For example a navy blue coat should be lined with lettuce green, a Lincoln green coat with sky blue, a black one with a delicate shade of rose, and a grey one with dandelion yellow. Green and sky blue is, however, one of the favorite combinations. The flare of many of the cuffs is a great feature of spring fashions, they are cut almost bell-shaped, and if we do not want our wrists to have a bare, unfinished look, we shall soon be going back thirty years and wearing the undersleeves in which our grandmothers delighted.

Tucks seem to be dividing the honors with ruffles, and when a muslin skirt is not flounced to the waist, it is pretty certain to be tucked at least half way up the skirt. One pretty dress of figured grenadine has the skirt tucked from the hem to the waist, the sleeves tucked from shoulder to wrist, and the blouse bodice composed entirely of horizontal tucks; it was a pretty dress but when one thought of the amount of work it represented, and the probable length of the dressmaker's bill a decision in

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favor of a less elaborate style, would probably be the result.

A new idea with many dressmakers is to discard the silks slips so long used as foundations for dresses of lawn and organdie, and substitute a particularly stiff coarse tartan which is said to give a much better "set" to the dress. The tartan skirt is made separate, gathered very full both in back and front, and finished with a deep hem.

ASTRA.

GLACE GLOVES RICK NUMBERS.

Suede Kid Alone Permitted by Present Fashions—The Colors Allowable.

'Except in white, glace gloves are back numbers,' said a well-known importer and manufacturer of gloves when asked about the latest styles. 'At last women seem to be waking up to the fact that suede gloves make the hand look far better. Why? Because glace gloves, no matter how fine the quality, have a tendency to make the hand look larger in length, breadth and thickness.

'Dealers are selling a few white glace gloves to swell women now for street wear, but they demand suede for everything else. In Paris no woman would any more think of wearing a glace glove after 12 o'clock than she would think of going bare-headed, and most Parisians never wear a 'glace' glove. Those women know better than any others in the world how to bring out their good points and how to cover up their bad ones; so fat women, thin women, women with pretty hands, and women with awkward, ungainly digits cling almost exclusively to suede gloves.

'The soft shades of tan, mastic, yellow, and gray are the most used. Many of them are stitched over in black, fingers and all, and finished with a black hem and black buttons. They are very chic looking. No woman of refined taste would make herself conspicuous by wearing what the French call eccentric colors. You couldn't go into a shop in all Paris and buy a pair of red, blue, green or purple gloves.

'French women ought to be authorities on gloves. The raising of kids for the skin is a leading industry among the mountaineers of that country. In fact, many of them make their living in this way. Perhaps it is some of the women who won't wear the plumage of birds on their hats and bonnets knew a little about the kid industry they might be inclined to discard kid gloves too. Softness, delicacy of texture, and freedom from blemishes are principal factors in determining the value of kidskins. To secure perfect ones great pains have to be taken. So soon as a young animal begins to eat grass its skin immediately begins to grow coars and hard, and its chief merits, so far as the glove-maker is concerned, vanish. This being the case, the mountaineers keep the kids closely penned to prevent them from getting any grass, and also to prevent them from accidents which might scratch, bruise, or otherwise blemish the skin and impair its value. When the kids reach that age when their skins are in the best condition for the glove's use they are killed and the hides are sold to travelling buyers, who in turn carry them to the great centres of the tanning industry.

'One can readily see why suede gloves should be much finer than the glace. Only perfect skins can be made into suedes, while many blemishes are often concealed in a pair of glace gloves. True suede gloves resist wear less than the glace, but they look much better while they do last, and many women claim that for rough and

ready wear black suede proves more satisfactory than anything else.

'No glove except a suede should ever be worn in the evening, no matter whether the wearer is in full dress or not; and as for colored gloves to match an evening gown—well, there aren't adjectives enough in the English language to describe the bad taste of a woman selecting them. White of course, is more used than any other color, but the dainty pears, delicate tans, and soft yellows are also very much used. One parting word. Women should beware of highly colored gloves as they do a plague.'—N. Y. Sun.

Wanderings of the London Bus.

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