

Chat to . . . Boys and Girls.

A little girl, who is passionately fond of flowers has asked me to tell from out our corner, some stories and old-time legends about her favourites which I shall very gladly try to do; but where to begin, among so many beauties I scarcely know, perhaps it would be only right to consider first our national emblems, the rose, thistle, and shamrock, and as the rose, their emblem of England is called the queen of flowers, it is surely suitable to put her first, for queens are naturally expected to lead. The rose has long been bound up with the fortunes of old England—the red and white roses you know, represented the rival houses of York and Lancaster, whose wars for many a long day, wearied the country. In Germany, it is said, if a maiden has several lovers, she takes a corresponding number of rose leaves, and names one after each suitor. She then scatters them on the surface of a basin of water, and the leaf that goes last to the bottom is either that of her best lover or of her future husband. There is a beautiful eastern fable which tells how the nightingale fell in love with the rose, and in his desire to please her burst into song, finding his voice for the first time, and has ever since been the most beautiful of songsters.

How the thistle became the emblem of Scotland is so well known I need scarcely relate and yet some of you may like to hear how an attempt being made to surprise the Scotch army at night, on one memorable occasion, by the invading Danes one of whom trod on a prickly thistle as they marched in the dark and barefooted to prevent their tramp from being heard, and his howl of pain, roused some wakened ones, who flying to arms drove out the enemy; and out of gratitude the thistle was after that taken as the national emblem of Scotland.

The Irish have their pretty green Shamrock which closely resembles Dutch clover, and which tradition says St. Patrick made use of to illustrate the great mystery of the Trinity, as it bears three perfect leaves on one stem; when he was preaching to the Irish, and that thus it came to be adopted as the emblem of that fair land of which St. Patrick is the patron saint. Clover has a number of superstitions connected with it—you have often heard I am sure how the accidental finding of a four leaved clover, is a sure sign of good luck; and whoever finds one on Christmas Eve has the power of seeing fairies and all sorts of tiny folk! Very likely—I am sure it I should pick a clover of any description in this cold Canada of ours on Christmas eve, I should certainly expect to see something remarkable.

A curious story is told of a milkmaid who having finished her work, picked up a handful of grass and clover to put in her hat that she might carry the bucket more steadily; she had no sooner placed the hat on her head, than she saw, hundreds and thousands of fairies and brownies swarming in all directions about the cow dipping their hands in the milk, and taking it out on the clover blossoms. When she got home she looked over by candle light what was in her hat, and found a bunch of three leaved clover and one stem with four leaves! You are not expected to believe this story, I'm sure I do not, but it does for a fairy tale. Who does not love the daisy, "the golden tuft within a silver crown" the emblem of innocence and modesty? The Welsh call it "the eye of day" so the old English name for it is "Day's eye" and very suitably too, as it closes when night comes on. It is also called the Marguerite, which in French means a pearl, and in Germany it is known as the "meadow pearl."

Long, long ago Margaret of Anjou chose the daisy for her emblem and her knights wore garlands of daisies. Queen Catherine Parr adopted a turf of three daisies and two

buds as her badge. This modest little flower has played an interesting part in many a love affair, and in France they make the daisy a sort of thermometer for telling the warmth of other people's affections. Lovers take a daisy, and pluck its petals off, one by one, saying "she loves me," "she loves me not"—She loves me—and so on alternately and whichever saying fall to the last leaf, tells how the matter really stands; and indeed I think lads and lassies in this country are very familiar with this pastime. And now a word for those wee blue-eyed fairies the "forget-me-nots." do you ask me how they got their name? Well it is said that two lovers were walking on the shore of a lake one fine summer evening, when the lady espied some of the blue myosotis growing on the water, close to the bank of an island at some distance from the shore. She wished to have them, when her knight at once plunged into the water and swimming to the spot, plucked the wished for plant; but his strength was not equal to the task of regaining the shore although very near it, so he threw the flowers, upon the bank and casting an affectionate look upon his lady-love he cried "Forget-me-not" and was buried in the waters. But this is a very sad story—Let me tell you the pretty legend of the gorgeous Sun-flowers. Ages and ages ago when the world was still young, people believed very queer things, and one of these was that a person could be changed into a plant or an animal. In those days there lived a water nymph or fairy who dwelt in streams and whose name was Clytie. This pretty creature was so fond of the beautiful golden sun, that the sun-god, named Apollo, transformed her into a magnificent Sun-flower, which as you know, always looks up at the Sun, even when it shines the hottest, while other flowers droop and fade under its burning rays. Very familiar objects cease to attract us, and we see them without heeding them; so it is with the sun-flower, which you have often regarded no doubt as only a common garden plant good enough to hide an ugly wooden fence, but now, knowing the story of it, you will see it with different eyes. Sunflowers made of pure gold of exquisite workmanship were formed by the early Spanish invaders of Peru, in the Temples of the Sun. Their priestesses were crowned with sunflowers, they wore them in their bosoms and carried them in their hands as emblems of the sun. In this country people generally did not think very highly of the Sunflower, until somebody with a great love for the true and beautiful, some years ago, directed attention to it, by writing it up—Then everyone began to appreciate its actual beauty, and its favor increased to such an extent that florists now cultivate them in large numbers; but the wild ones holding up their heads in silent admiration of the sun are far prettier.

AUNT BELL.

FRILLS OF FASHION.

Even the advent of Lent on the heels of a big blizzard does not check woman's interest in fashions. Men may not be able to understand how she can think of, talk about and plan her spring outfit when the mercury in the thermometer keeps persistently near the zero notch; but man and woman differ in their way of looking at clothes. Man supplies himself with a winter wardrobe, suitable to his position in society, and then proceeds to get all the wear and enjoyment possible out of it. Not so with woman. She provides herself with no end of heavy clothing, but she does not especially enjoy it, for she is continually racking her brain to decide what is to be worn in the spring. If this were not so, man would be the first to raise a protesting outcry. Woman without her feminine frills and furbelows would lose one of her charms.

Lingerie just at present is receiving attention. To be arrayed in soft, well-made, well fitting undergarments is the desire of every woman of refinement. It was little more than a fortnight ago that the bargain sale of fine underclothing was spreading its influence. At such times novelty is necessarily absent, but women who are forced to economize are glad enough to get full styles for spring wear at reduced prices. Others who waited have now an opportunity of providing themselves with the novelties. Such perfection of fit is demanded, both in skirts and bodices, that all underwear, except the nightdress, must necessarily conform to the prevailing styles. Even this exception fits and clings more closely than former. The under arm seams are so shaped as to reveal the lines of the figure, and sleeves are smaller, though by no means tight. They usually reach only to the elbow, while they are finished with a full, fluffy frill. A new feature is to leave the under-arm seams entirely open, as in the first illustration. Nightgowns with broad berth-like frills or epaulettes are no longer considered good style. One of the simplest and most becoming styles for tall, slender

figures is shown in the next illustration. Colored silk nightdresses have taken a new lease of the feminine heart, as they always do in spring. They are in reality negligé wrappers, and are used as such as well as for sleeping purposes. Most of them are made with yoke effects, the yoke and sleeves nearly always being composed of lace and ribbon insertions. A gracefully arranged jabot or fichu finishes the front.

The Marguerite, which takes the place of corset cover and short skirt, has about ousted the corset cover. It is one of the most becoming and useful of garments and does away with an extra band about the waist, where it is drawn in closely with a ribbon. The newest Marguerite sleeve, an important feature in all undergarments since dress sleeves are so tight, never amounts to more than that in the first one shown. It gives a pretty finished look when seen through a thin gown, and in no way interferes with the fit of a thick one. More frequently still there is no sleeve at all, as in the second illustration. Corset covers are not to be obtained in the sets to spring underwear unless by special order, as the Marguerite has superseded them.

All the same there are plenty of women who will always cling to the corset cover, as their figures do not warrant the wearing of the extra thickness which the Marguerite entails about the waist and hips. Such will be glad to know that the newest models come only to the waist and are almost invariably devoid of trimmings, calculated to add fullness to the figure. The surplice effect is much used, and bias lace insertions are the only form of embellishment on such. All-over embroidery in polka dot and fleur-de-lis designs is also used for corset covers.

Drawers are more scant than they have been for some time, and are cut to fit as smoothly about the waist as possible. They are elaborately trimmed, with flounces very full, but by no means so full as those which trimmed the out-of-date umbrella design. Scalloped ruffles are quite the thing and are dainty when edged with a bit of fine lace or finished with embroidered bands which seem to have been woven for the purpose.

Waist dressing sacques do not come strictly under the head of lingerie, it is well to consider them at the same time, for they are closely associated in the feminine mind. All the very newest sacques, except those of thin wash embroidery, such as Irish point, have closely fitted backs. Taffeta vies with fine wash silks for first place. And by wash silk is not meant the cheap so-called wash silk, which does not launder at all, and spots after the least contact with water. A genuinely fine and satisfactory wash silk is not to be obtained for less than \$1 a yard, and seems to grow softer and more beautiful after each visit to the wash tub. It is of this fabric that many of the new sacques are made. Loose zephyr fronts are seen on many, and are youthful looking. The garments come together only at the neck, which is finished with a high collar. Open sleeves are particularly effective with this loose open front.

Another new model is made of coral pink taffeta, tucked all over in tiny bias tucks. The loose fronts come only to the waist line under the arms and run down from there into sharp points, while the close-fitting back is gathered in with a ribbon and ends in an elongated tail. This sacque is edged with broad pale yellow Maclean lace set on with ruchings of pink satin ribbon. By the way, ruchings of narrow satin ribbon are set right on the lace which trims many of the new sacques and much of the silk lingerie. This is a pretty idea, but does not strike one as quite practical.

Something youthful in the way of a lawn model is really made of deep Irish point embroidery. A yoke is formed by a series

of fine tucks running from the shoulder seams down to the top of the bust, and the embroidery is gathered in at the waist line blouse fashion, the scalloped edge forming a pretty finish. The back falls from a tucked pointed yoke straight and unconfined. Other lawn models have close-fitting backs and zephyr or pointed fronts.

After all the petticoat is of supreme importance, for upon its perfect fit, hang and sweep depends that of the dress skirt. Tailors and dressmakers absolutely refuse to hang a new-fashioned skirt over an old-style petticoat, and with good reason. Consequently there are models for tall women and models for short women, for stout and for thin women. Every model, however, is sheath-shaped at the top and fits as smoothly as a dress skirt about the waist and over the hips. No gathers are tolerated at the back, which is cut bias both in cotton and silk designs. Cotton skirts are finished about the feet with as many as five soft, fluffy frills overhanging one another, so that the correct effect may be given to the dress skirt.

Silk petticoats have undergone several changes, and it possible those designed for spring wear are more beautiful than ever before. In fact the softest quality is sought, since the alluring rustle is no longer considered so desirable. Most of the flounces are graduated, and are either pinked at the edge or finished with a flutement and a group of small tucks. Corded ruffles have lost much of their popularity, since they do not wear well, and accordion-plaited ruffles are not considered so desirable, as every woman, old or young, stout or slender, is seeking the soft, clinging effect, and the plaited flounces are a bit stiff. Tall women are wearing a skirt finished at the bottom with a graduated circular flounce, which in turn is hidden from view by a series of full, narrow ruffles. Skirts of soft China silk in light and dark colors have already made their appearance and are far cheaper than taffeta, inasmuch as they wear better and wash well. They are similar in cut to those already described and for dressy and evening wear are elaborately trimmed with Valenciennes and Point de Paris insertions and edgings. Authorities say that those who go in for the extremes in styles in their search for the soft and clinging are demanding petticoats made of plain foulards. This is not a bad idea, for foulard stands much hard wear and is exceedingly light.

In point of color, violet in every shade is by long odds most in demand. Parisian women have adopted all shades of coral and other pinkish reds with their accustomed fervor, and tints will be much used here as warm weather approaches. They do not serve well for every-day wear, but make effective dressy petticoats. Cerise skirts hold their own, and many of manufacturers say that they can not supply the demand for this color in all of its varying shades. Corn-flower blue and almost every known tint of green are also noted in the spring models. Short silk petticoats for early spring wear and cool summer days are made of wash silk and lined with albatross. The black ones, trimmed with white lace, are considered very smart. Most of these are finished with full pointed or scalloped flounces and all are cut with a bias seam in the back.

The indications are that all shades of violet and coral and national blue with predominate in spring millinery. Hats of many shades of one color are quite the thing, and are very effective. The stiffer flowers, such as pond lilies and camellias, have the first call, though violets have lost none of their popularity. Gauzy material of one sort or another is introduced on nearly all the new models and upon this are sewn bands of fine light straw braid. Hats are worn over or off the face.

Some of the Fifth avenue shops are showing a novel veil which is being worn by Parisian women. It is a made affair of black Chantilly lace, of such heavy design as almost to hide the face. The cut

is narrow, running down to a well-defined scallop in the centre. It enhances a beautiful woman's beauty, but plain faces should beware of it, and those with limited incomes should not even permit themselves to think of this expensive accessory.

The very newest color so far is a very bright rendering of the periwinkle tint. It combines cream or any of the paler tones of beige.

Embroidered fans are the mode at present. They are worked in silks with big roses, orchids or lilies, which are accentuated by spangles.

Cobweb braiding promises to be a feature this season. It has something of the appearance of lace without a pattern.

A spring parasol of novel and symmetrical shape is known as the Feston. As in millinery, violet, coral, national and turquoise blue prevail in the sunshades, which are simply embellished with narrow ribbon ruchings of another shade of the same color.

Ruchings are much employed on gowns and lingerie. This being so it is satisfactory to know that they are to be had ready made in every color and width.

At last it is really in fashion again—the colored handkerchief. One design is made entirely of delicately tinted linen with a border embroidered in white, while another which is very effective, is carried out in fine white linen and is embellished with colored embroidery. Daisies, forget-me-nots and violets seem to be the favorite flowers, and both garland and spray designs are employed.

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Hotel Clerk (suspiciously): "Your bundle has come apart. May I ask what this queer thing is?"

Guest: "This is a new patent fire-escape I always carry it, so in case of fire I can let myself down from the hotel window. See?"

Clerk (thoughtfully): "I see. Our term for guests with fire-escapes, sir, are invariably cash in advance."



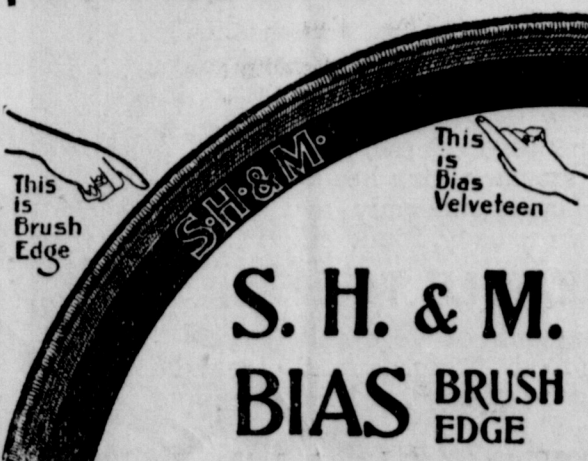
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