HOUSEFROCKS AND APRONS; BLOUSES IN GAY COLORS

THE Christmas carolling of the shops becomes a spring song, almost overnight. In the interval between Christmas and New Year's, windows are filled with summery clothes and fabrics, and the housewife makes her annual excursion in the pursuit of stuffs for house frocks and aprons, children's clothes and household "linens," which are cotton of course. She cannot take winter seriously, with thoughts trailing off to spring; it is summer in the house.

Housefrocks and aprons are attractingly pretty this season, having long since turned from utility unalloyed to take on charms of their own.

Simple and Attractive Housefrock.

Their durability goes without saying, and both manufacturers of goods and designers undertake to contribute attractions to the matter-of-fact belongings. With combinations of plain and checked ginghams, or by tackling up with organdie the heavier cottons they have turned out crisp, smart, simple, frocks that everyone wants because they are pretty. One of the simplest and most attractive models is pictured here, made of checked gingham, easy to slip into and as neat as wax. The narrow leather belt, supported by slides at the sides, is a new and very worthwhile style note in it.

Japanese crepe in bright colors, with applique trimmings made off cotton cloth in contrasting colors, makes gay and practical house frocks and aprons. These applique trimmings, of conventional flowers and fruits, are used on

Spring Blouses in Gay Colors.

black satteen for aprons that slip over warmer dresses and they are in present demand. Unbleached cotton with applique of plain materials or cretonne make their cheerful contribution to the stock of utility aprons. For less responsible service dotted swiss aprons trimmed with grey cretonne in borders and pockets are a pleasure to their wearers and everyone else.

Many of the new models in dresses and aprons have elastic waist bands that keep them neatly adjusted and make them comfortable.

Thrice welcome are the newly arrived spring blouses. They are mostly cheerful in color, to say the least, and at the same time they are refined in style. Above all they have attributes that are distinctly novel.

These new style features include the combination of two different materials in one blouse, an emphasis placed on the peasant cuff (a more or less narrow wrist band) the ingenious employment of decorative slashes, especially in sleeves. Many-colored embroideries, of various kinds, put a resource in the hands of designers that is inexhaustible.

For fancy blouses the materials used are crepe de chine, crepe chenette, crepe satin and georgette. These are all lovely backing for fleshish colors that are grace-giving, and therefore destined to be popular. These colors are pretty in cotton goods also and so successful that they serve for blouses patterned after those of silk, made in about the same styles and enjoying colors.

All this news of spring blouses is welcome just now to those women who forestall their summer needs, at this season while they are spending much time indoors. Blouses are among the things that the home dressmaker is most successful with.

One of the two blouses shown here sounds familiar style notes, presenting the over-the-skirt treatment and the kimono sleeve, but it adopts a new neckline and is gathered up along the under-arm sleeve. This blouse is made of crepe satin and has an unusual pattern in embroidery adorning the front and sleeves and defining the neck line.

The blouse at the right is one of many fine tucks. It is made of black crepe de chine and lace, the lace, arranged in panels at the back and front, is caught in at the waist line in front but falls free at the back.

Julia Bottomley

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Fuchsia Popular.

Fuchsia is one of this season's prominent shades, and cute shop is featuring this as a trimming on navy blue dresses for girls. It is most effective as motifs. One model has it applied in continuous squares around the skirt, held down at each corner of square with a flat green bead. Another pretty frock has a trimming in the form of fuchsia and green embroidery. Fuchsia picot-edged ribbon set on in loops is another pleasing development. Cerise is another popular color. It is used largely in millinery. Also to give the touch of color to dark frocks. Handsome chokers in shaded cerise ostrich are being admired.

Pantalettes.

The straight, untrimmed pantalettes, which substitute for a petticoat and are as wide as the ordinary underskirt, are one of the singular innovations of the year. They are divided from the hem to the hips and may be covered by a transparent skirt several inches longer.

CONDENSED CLASSICS

THE MOONSTONE

By WILKIE COLLINS

Condensation by Miss Jessie A. Parsons, Smith College Library

When Wilkie Collins met Charles Dickens, his future was shortly decided. The lives of the two were intimately connected thereafter. Dickens was conducting, "Household Words," and for it Collins contributed, as he did for "All the Year Round," also in charge of Dickens, a large number of tales.

The close friendship and co-operation of Dickens not only found the direction for Collins to follow, but it seemed to lead him to the type of story on which rests his fame, that in which the skillful unwinding of an intricate and exciting plot, and the construction of a thoroughly involved mystery baffles the reader in a maze of details and circumstances. He might lack humor, fail to appreciate the finer shades of character, but he certainly conceived some striking personalities; for his own type of story he was unsurpassed by any of his contemporaries.

"The Woman in White" (1860) was his great success; "The Moonstone" (1868) was a close second in the opinion of a large and devoted following of readers.

BEFORE the Mohammedan conquest the Moon-god, in his Brahmin shrine, wore upon his forehead one of the most beautiful diamonds in creation. "Partly from its peculiar color, partly from a superstition which represented it as partaking of the nature of the deity whom it adorned, and growing and lessening in luster with the waxing and waning of the moon it first gained the name by which it continues to be known in India to this day—the name of "The Moonstone." After passing from one lawless hand to another, in 1850, "after the lapse of eight centuries the Moonstone looks forth over the walls of the sacred city in which its story first began."

Throughout this long period the Moonstone had been sought diligently by three Brahmins and their successors. Their vigilance was, in 1848, rewarded by the sight of the resplendent gem gleaming on the bosom of a lighthearted girl. Rachel Verinder had received the Moonstone as a legacy from an unscrupulous uncle who was in high disfavor with the family. Knowing that the Moonstone brought ill-luck, the gift was made in revenge.

Although thoroughly admired at Miss Verinder's birthday dinner, the uncanny influence of the stone made itself felt in the atmosphere of the party. Two rival suitors were present—both cousins of Rachel Verinder. One, Godfrey Ablewhite, persuasive in manner and eloquent as chairman of many charitable organizations, lived in the neighborhood and had hitherto gained the advantage which propitiatory gave him over Franklin Blake, lately returned to England, bringing the Moonstone, after several years spent on the continent. The latter was a guest of Mrs. Verinder three weeks before the birthday, where his graciousness and congeniality to Miss Verinder made him most welcome. Hence it was not surprising that Rachel fell in love with him and refused the importunities of Godfrey Ablewhite just before the birthday dinner. This major tension, accompanied by various misunderstandings on the part of other guests, ended in a dispute between the family physician and Franklin Blake over the latter's sleeplessness in which the doctor failed to convince him that medicine could triumph over his nerves.

On hearing a drum the guests rushed to the terrace to be confronted by three Indian jugglers. At a word from one of the diners, a celebrated Indian traveler, the intruders hurriedly retreated. This surprising turn of events argued for putting the Moonstone into especially safe keeping, but Miss Rachel, with ideas of her own, insisted on placing it in an unlocked Indian cabinet in her dressing-room. The company then dispersed, leaving Franklin Blake, who looked wretched, and Mr. Ablewhite together. After much urging Mr. Blake decided to take brandy and water to help combat his sleeplessness.

The household was startled next morning at the disappearance of the Moonstone. Franklin Blake, always alert, was instrumental in bringing in the nearest police. Rachel became exceedingly angry at their intrusion and was deeply offended with Franklin Blake for securing them. The chief of police succeeded in making a mess of affairs and was superseded by the famous detective Sergeant Cuff.

The chief of police had aroused the resentment of the servants by examining their boxes; Sergeant Cuff wished to begin with the personal effects of the family, not looking for the Moonstone but rather for an article of clothing bearing a paint stain from the door of Rachel's boudoir. Everyone acceded but Miss Verinder, who gave a most decided refusal. The only servant suspected by the sergeant was Rosanna Spearman, who had been rescued from misfortune by Lady Verinder. She was discovered by Sergeant Cuff to have bought a quantity of plain white cloth and made and laundered a new garment in her room when supposed to be ill with a headache. Miss Rachel's point-blank refusal to have her possessions searched and her decision to leave her home ended in gaining her point and the dismissal of the detective, who left the Verinder home convinced that Miss Rachel had disposed of the diamond through the connivance of Rosanna Spearman in order to pay some pressing debt.

Rachel and Lady Verinder spent some little time in London, where Rachel was ordered by her physician to have as much gayety as possible to counteract the depression of recent events. Franklin Blake left for the continent and Godfrey Ablewhite again resumed his attentions to Rachel. Shortly after leaving Lady Verinder's country home for London, Godfrey Ablewhite was summoned to a strange house by an unknown person, bound, gagged and searched by a tawny-skinned individual. On the same day a notorious money-lender met with a like experience in the exact spot where Mr. Ablewhite was maltreated, only that in his case a receipt for a valuable left at a banker's was removed from his loose papers. The news of the disappearance of the Moonstone having reached London an ugly suspicion began to attach itself to Godfrey Ablewhite, only to be dissipated by the emphatic assertion of Rachel Verinder: "I know that Godfrey Ablewhite is innocent!" Soon after this Rachel became engaged to Mr. Ablewhite, although she told him her heart was elsewhere. He seemed, however, to be quite satisfied with this condition until after Lady Verinder's death when he had an opportunity to examine her will. When Rachel's lawyer found this out and communicated it to Rachel she dismissed Godfrey Ablewhite on suspecting him of wishing to marry her for pecuniary reasons. He accepted his dismissal more gracefully than his father, in whose house Rachel was residing after the death of her mother, Mr. Bruff, her lawyer, then made arrangements for her to live with one of her aunts.

At this time Franklin Blake was quickly summoned to England by the death of his father. In his unhappiness he visited Lady Verinder's old home, where he found things sadly changed with no one in charge except a faithful old steward. This servant told him that there was a letter waiting for him from Rosanna Spearman, which her confidant would deliver into no other hands than his. The short letter contained directions to search on the seashore for a hidden box. This box held a garment stained with a smear of paint from Miss Rachel's boudoir and had on it the name of Franklin Blake. A long letter explained that the garment had been hidden there by Rosanna Spearman on account of her love for Franklin Blake and her hopes of shielding him from discovery. Immediately, knowing that there must be some mistake, Mr. Blake tried in vain to see Rachel in London by all fair means. His resort to a trick to accomplish this ends unfortunately and they part in great bitterness. Rachel's words: "You villain, I saw you take the diamond with my own eyes!" spurred him to do all in his power to prove his innocence.

He returned to the country house and soon met the assistant of the family physician with whom he had disputed at the birthday dinner. Doctor Candy had caught a severe cold that night, which with complications still affected him mentally and bodily. His assistant had taken in shorthand the doctor's delirious ravings, and after studying them had found out what was preying upon the doctor's mind. In the tumbler of water measured for Franklin Blake the night of the birthday a small quantity of laudanum had been placed. Sleep-walking results were immediately suspected and even Rachel was persuaded to have the experiment repeated under conditions as nearly as possible like those of the year before. Her aunt came with her to chaperon this strange house party, and all eagerly awaited the experiment. Franklin Blake walked in his sleep as far as the cabinet which held a mock diamond. Although he let this stone drop to the floor as the effects of the medicine wore off his innocence was established and the two lovers were reconciled.

The time had nearly come when the money-lender was to take from the banker's vault the valuable which he had deposited there. Detectives watched the bank and several people near the money-lender were followed on wrong suspicion. A shrewd office boy took upon himself to follow a large man with a dark beard. This man had taken refuge in a low-class boarding house awaiting the sailing of his steamer for Rotterdam. Franklin Blake and Sergeant Cuff hastened to this house and found the man had been murdered, presumably by an Indian. The detective on removing the black beard and pasty complexion revealed to onlookers the fair hair and ruddy features of Godfrey Ablewhite.

Thus the Brahmin priests, after patiently waiting for eight centuries, were able to restore to the Moon-god his famous Moonstone.

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California Goat Ranch.

The Penobscot farm at Cool, Eldorado county, California, recently stocked a 3,000 acre ranch with milk goats, production to be used exclusively in the manufacture of goat milk cheese.

Big Saving in Hogs.

Discovery of a serum to prevent hog cholera and its use as shown by the department of agriculture, has reduced losses from that disease by $40,000,000 a year.

Gee! Haw! Haw!

We were spending the summer in the country. I was entertaining a city friend. One afternoon I rented a horse and buggy of a neighboring farmer. All went well. We enjoyed our ride through the charming country, but when we wished to go back, I couldn't turn around (never having driven before). So we had to ride till we came to a barnyard. When I had turned around and was about to drive out again the whole farmer's family came out. When I said, "I had to drive in to turn around," the man threw up his hands and called out, "Ach, himmel!" We drove away as fast as we could.—Chicago Tribune.

Mouse Kept Receipted Bill.

A worker in a house near Derby academy, Hingham, found a piece of paper in a mouse nest which proved to be a receipted bill for the construction of the house and was dated 200 years ago.

LAND OF WEALTH

Potentialities of Western Canada Abundantly Proved.

Prizes Taken at International Live Stock Exposition Show What Land is Capable of Producing.

Forty years ago the first sale was made of lands acquired by the Canadian Pacific railway. This is but a short span in the lives of many, and there are those who look back upon that period as it being but of yesterday. Yet when one glances back it is to marvel at the accomplishments of that period. One of the most striking of these is the progress that has been made in Western Canada since that day, forty years ago, when an official of the railway placed his signature to the document that gave possession to the new owner of a section of land. This was the first sign of the wealth that in time would be added to the wealth of the world in forty years, this single section of land being the base upon which the future would be built. The potential wealth was but in embryo, today it is a big, living reality. Among the many things that reveal this, may be seen the winnings made by Western Canada exhibitors at the International Live Stock show held in Chicago in 1923. These were so marked in their number as to give to the world—the American world—a splendid idea of the excellence of the products of the farms of the new but rapidly developing country lying to the north of the international boundary line.

The results of the exhibition show, according to the Manitoba Free Press, that in live stock and grain exhibits the three prairie provinces of Canada made something like 150 winnings. Every animal sent from the province of Alberta won a prize. Exhibits included Shorthorn and Hereford cattle and Percheron and Clydesdale horses. An Alberta-bred heifer got fourth place in a class of eighteen outstanding individuals. In grain, Alberta made simply an astounding record, securing the sweepstakes for oats, and eight or nine prizes before even the American exhibitors secured a placing, and while the grand championship for wheat went to Montana, the prairie provinces took 23 out of 25 possible placings. The first prize for alfalfa seed was awarded for seed grown at Brooks, Alberta, in competition with 43 entries. Alfalfa-growing in Western Canada has been increasing by leaps and bounds, and this victory will give it and the dairy industry, which is always linked with it, a further impetus.

In live stock classes alone Saskatchewan had sixty entries and took sixty-four ribbons.

The winning of the grand champion ship for Clydesdale stallions by a Saskatchewan horse, for the second time in succession, was almost sensational. He was bred on Western Canada farm, fitted and prepared for exhibition there, and able to win over horses shown from the studs of men who have unlimited money to spend on the breeding and preparation of their exhibits. This is proof positive that the farmers of Western Canada are not only in a position to breed their own horse power, and that of a very high quality, but to breed horses that will be saleable in any market of the world.

Manitoba takes just pride in the fact that a Percheron stallion, first in his class and Canadian-bred champion, was bred by Vance, of Crandall, Manitoba. Manitoba took 64 places outside of the grain exhibits.

When all is said and done, the real triumphs are the wins of hot live stock and grains actually produced in the great Canadian provinces.

Commenting upon the enterprise of agriculturists of Western Canada in sending exhibits to the International Live Stock exposition at Chicago, the New York Herald in a recent issue said: "Western Canada is encouraging diversified farming in a way certain to bring an increased flow of dollars into the pockets of agriculturists, who at one time devoted their energies exclusively to the raising of grain crops."
—Advertisement.

Really Gets Nowhere.

"Tellin' a man his troubles is his own fault," said Uncle Eben, "simply helps along de worry an' don' give no assistance."

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"Yes, mother, but you ought to see the look in the other boy's eye."—Boston Transcript.

The Suez canal was opened in November, 1869.

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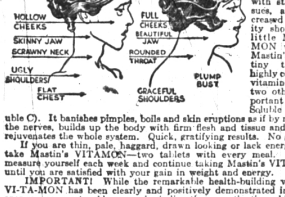

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