

AS SEEN THROUGH WOMAN'S EYES.

Queens as Dressmakers.

ROYALTIES WHO ARE EXPERTS WITH THE NEEDLE.

The Queen of Roumania—better known by her nom-de-plume of "Carmen Sylva"—is not only a clever author and a writer of perfect verses, but she is also one of the most talented workers with her needle of all European Royalities. She excels both in needlework and in embroidery. She has sent to the St. Louis World's Fair a sample of her work, and hopes to repeat the success which attended her exhibit at the last Paris Exhibition. There her work—sent in not under her own name, but a nom-de-plume, in order that the judges' minds might not be in any way influenced—gained a gold medal. Competent judges have, indeed, said that Carmen Sylva's embroidery is absolutely unexcelled even by the finest workers.

It is well known that our own Queen Alexandra, in her younger days in Denmark, had but a slender dress allowance—far smaller, indeed, than the daughter of the average English country squire. She, therefore, took lessons in dressmaking, and used to cut out and with her own hands stitch the greater part of her wardrobe. She has never lost her love for needlework, and her sewing is said to be still as delicately fine as ever. Her taste is perfect, and she has the keenest of eyes for careless workmanship in the dress of those around her.

There are a number of other Royal ladies who are artists with the needle. Notable among them is the Czarina, whose taste for so homely an employment has been a constant source of shock to many of the useless great ladies of Russian Court society. But the Czarina cares nothing for their opinions, and is never more happy than when sitting stitching with her little daughters around her. The Czarina is also a great judge of lace and no mean worker herself. There is at the Russian Court a small colony of lace workers from Archangel. These their Royal mistress takes a great interest in, and much of the lace she wears is designed by herself and executed by them.

The sewing machine has no place in the Royal palaces of Germany. The German Empress insists upon all her clothes being made by hand. She is the finest type of German housewife, and her knowledge of needlework is as thorough as that she possesses of cooking and all domestic work.

The pet occupation of the Queen of Sweden is making jam, but she is also an accomplished sempstress, and is very fond of knitting. The Queen of Greece is second only to Her Majesty of Roumania in the wielding of the needle. Some dainty children's pinafores made by herself are usually among her Christmas presents to her relatives at the Russian Court.

The Queen Dowager of Spain is the first woman who has dared to break through the ancient and absurd etiquette of the Spanish Court, which decreed that its Royalities should never stir a finger to help themselves. She does many things well, but few better than sewing.

Society's Precious Gems

Never in the history of the world has there been such a mania for gems as at the present time. The day is past when valuable gems were only worn on State occasions, and when such a jewel as a tiara or diamond crown was reserved for wear at Court. Nowadays the smart beauty scarcely considers herself dressed unless she be hung with at least hundreds of pounds' worth of gems, and this even when paying an afternoon call or visiting a picture gallery.

Perhaps the two greatest gem collections of modern times were those gathered together by Lord Anglesey and the late Maharajah Duleep Singh. On her wedding day Lady Anglesey wore jewels estimated at over £30,000 in value; but the contents of the Anglesey jewel casket pale before those with which Prince Victor Duleep Singh presented his English bride. Among them were large uncut emeralds and rubies, threaded in the Indian fashion, and inherited by him from innumerable Eastern ancestors, pearls of enormous size and perfect shape, and bowlfuls of gems of every kind.

Of course, the greatest collection of jewels and unique gems ever seen gathered together in this country was on the occasion of King Edward's Coronation. Many peeresses had family heirlooms reset for the occasion; and particularly noticeable was the all-round diamond crown of Lady Ludlow (then Lady Howard de Walden), the design being that of large pointed stars alternated with diamond suns. A truly historic parure was that which was worn by the Duchess of Abercorn. It consists of a coronet, a necklace, and a stomacher blazing with large sapphires. Many of the untitled ladies in the Abbey wore even finer jewels than the peeresses. This was particularly true of Mrs Arthur Paget, one of the first Anglo-American women to set the fashion of pearl-wearing in the daytime. Lady Seaton has a unique family jewel, a kind of pendant containing a miniature of Queen Elizabeth, which was actually given to her ancestor, Sir Francis Drake, by the Virgin Queen herself.

Pearls are still the millionaire's pet gems. After pearls come in popularity rubies and emeralds. These two gems are now scarce, and very much more costly than diamonds. Perhaps one reason why the latter are somewhat out of favour just at present is owing to the fact that they are more easily imitated

than any other precious stones. Opals, beautiful as they are, never become really popular owing to the ill-luck which is supposed to attach to their wear; but the cheery turquoise has now had a long reign of favour, and many well-known women in Society wear them constantly.

Among well-known Society beauties noted for their pearls may first be mentioned the Duchess of Marlborough. Certainly no pearls have been more often described than those which were presented to the beautiful young American heiress by her father, Mr Vanderbilt. The Duchess owns literally thousands of them, some of which are said to be worth more than £1000 apiece, and in her collection is an old-world necklace which undoubtedly was often worn by Marie Antoinette. Lady de Grey's single-pearl necklace is said to be the finest of its class and kind in the world; but probably Lady Rothschild's two-row necklace runs it close, for the Rothschild family purchase only perfectly shaped pearls.

When They are Poor.

Their ideas are larger than their purses.

They do not keep account of their expenditures.

They reverse the maxim, "Duty before pleasure."

They have too many and too expensive amusements.

They do not think it worth while to save pence and expenses.

They have risked a competence in trying to get rich quickly.

They allow friends to impose upon their good nature and generosity.

They try to do what others expect of them, not what they can afford.

The parents are economical, but the children have extravagant ideas.

They do not think it worth while to put contracts or agreements in writing.

They prefer to incur debt rather than to do work which they consider beneath them.

They have endorsed their friends' notes or guaranteed payment just for accommodation.

They risk all their eggs in one basket when they are not in a position to watch or control it.

They think it will be time enough to

begin to save for a rainy day when the rainy day comes.

The only thing the daughters accomplish is to develop fondness for smart clothes and expensive jewellery.

They do not realise that one expensive habit may introduce them to a whole family of extravagant habits.

They have not been able to make much in the business they understand best, but have thought they could make a fortune by investing in something they know nothing about.



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