

stretched his bushy head forward, and gleamed with satisfaction through his spectacles.

Phyllis had disdained to have any note or book in her hand, so calmly confident was she of her memory. She went smoothly on until she came to the sixth verse—

“Mein Vater—mein Vater—”

Then for one awful moment it all went from her.

She lived in that instant through an hour of misery. As she turned her appealing eyes towards the pleased but for the most part uncomprehending audience, all the disgrace and misery of a break-down pressed upon her with intolerable horror. She—Phyllis Buchanan—to fail in public! Why had she trusted her memory so implicitly?

At this torturing moment her ear caught the words, low, distinct, and penetrating, just in front of her—“und siehst du nicht dort?”

The clue was supplied! It all came back to her, and with a catch in her breath she went on to the triumphant close.

No one, except the experienced Herr Musaeus and Ailie Munro, whose study of the poem had enabled her to prompt her rival, thought of the momentary pause as anything but a means of producing effect. But amid the loud applause Phyllis went to her seat a humbler and a wiser girl.

She did not know whose voice had supplied the missing link, and tried, indeed, to believe that the words were prompted by her own brain. In this supposition she was confirmed by the fact that nobody came up to her afterwards to allude—as Phyllis herself in the like circumstances would certainly have alluded—to the narrow escape, and to claim the credit of helping her. Her schoolfellows gave her nothing but congratulations.

And Ailie? Nobody congratulated her;

nobody thought of her as anything but an insignificant, awkward, dowdily-dressed girl. But when she found herself in her little bedroom, whither she went to take off, carefully fold, and put away the despised white gown, she would not have changed places with the most fortunate pupil in the school, for the peace of the Kingdom of Heaven was in her heart. The struggle had been hard for a little while, but now it was over, and a great happiness—the happiness that only those can know who submit themselves in humility to the Master's teaching—was in her soul. This happiness is the gerardon of His kingdom.

“Blessed,” men say, “are the rich, the successful, and the fortunate.” But He thinks not of condition, but of character; and, so thinking, utters His first beatitude—

“BLESSED ARE THE POOR IN SPIRIT.”

## WHAT TO DO WITH A WEDDING-GOWN.



ONE of the incubuses of a young married woman's existence is her wedding-gown. Let no one imagine that I speak unadvisedly, or without testing the truth of my remark by personal experience.

Of course it is the desire and pleasure of every young and pretty bride to go to be married in the dainty white gown and veil which are so becoming to her blushing morning face. And even if it be only the simple white muslin or cashmere, a girl so attired gives greater pleasure to her own admiring family and bridegroom than she would have done in the smartest morning-gown and most immaculate bonnet.

And many a mother, who can ill afford it, strains every nerve to provide the white satin gown and shoes, and the orange-blossom wreath—perhaps crippling the resources of her family for many long months—that will render her treasured daughter a fair and dainty bride to look upon.

During the short time that a bride is being fêted and honoured, and is taking precedence of more staid matrons at parties and dinners, the white satin gown is a thing expected by everyone, and much admired and regarded as a matter of course. For a bride without her finery is like a peacock without its tail—an anomaly.

But it is the year following her marriage that the satin gown becomes the incubus to the young matron that I stated it to be at the beginning of my article. It is still so clean that to dye it black would be a decided shame and pity; and besides, the little woman regards it with eyes of tender sentiment, remembering the happy day when first she put on its pure white folds—the day that began the new era of wedded life for her, which has proved, in spite of little clouds that must drift into every life, so blissfully happy. But again, to wear it in the second year of her wifehood unaltered cannot be thought of; for which of us has not heard, and perhaps shared in, the slightly contemptuous remark—

“Well, dear, and what did Mrs. Smith wear?”

“Oh, her wedding-gown, of course! Poor

old frock! I wonder she doesn't try and do it up somehow.”

The thought that these remarks will be made about her renders the wearing of the white satin rather nervous work the second year. And my advice is, to have it altered at once, casting sentiment to the winds. Every wardrobe should contain a white as well as a black evening-gown, and the wedding-dress may be easily converted into a smart dress by the following means.

I take it for granted that the gown is a simple white satin or silk one, made plainly, with a demi-train; but of course if it is of handsome brocade or rich material the transformation may be effected in exactly the same manner, with even happier results. Cut the bodice either low all round or square back and front, and also cut the sleeves off quite close to the shoulder. Then trim the top of the bodice with some handsome gold embroidery about an inch deep, which will cost about 1s. 2d. a yard; and if the bodice has been cut in the fashionable long shape, convert it into a short one by taking away the basque and putting a deep edge of the gold all round the hips, nearly up to the waist, the trimming in this case being four or five inches in depth. This arrangement will form a sort of band, and give a smart finish to the bodice. Then fill in the sleeves to the elbow with gold-spangled net, put in rather full, and drawn tight just above the elbow with a narrow line of gold embroidery.

The skirt may be left plain as it is, with just a beading of the gold round the hem in front and round the bottom of the short train. This is a most successful way of treating a wedding-dress, and the gold is a great relief to the dead white, which is often a little trying, even to a young complexion, although in point of fact perhaps a dead white gown is very seldom seen, there being so many lovely shades of ivory and cream to be procured at the present day.

This gown will grace many a festive scene before the gold is tarnished and the silk spotted, and the wife of four or five years' standing begins to think that it is high time to “do up” the dear old frock once more.

It is a great mistake to be in a hurry to dye a good silk, for the material is sure to shrink in the process, and the result be disappointing. So that once more inventive genius must come to the rescue, and the wedding-gown be overhauled and delivered into the dressmaker's

hands. This time the object is to convert it into a species of magpie colouring, for the silk is spotted in some places, and not nearly so fresh as it was four or five years ago. So to begin with, all traces of the gold must be removed, and the whole garment laid out once more in all its uncompromising bareness, and perhaps shabbiness.

Then buy as much black velveteen—which may be nowadays procured in excellent quality at 2s. 4d. a yard—as will make a train of a pretty length, which you must set on to the skirt band in full gathers. Line this black train completely with the original white back of the gown, and tack a deep white muslin frill at the bottom, so that neither velveteen nor satin may sweep the floor. Cover the front of the skirt with fine black lace, kept in its place at the hem by a narrow band of black velvet ribbon; and also veil entirely the white bodice with the same lace, finished off by narrow braces of velvet from the waist over the shoulders.

Nothing can be prettier for the sleeves than straps of narrow black velvet showing the arm between, and coming down midway between shoulder and elbow, tied at intervals in dainty bows.

Arranged in this quaint and pretty fashion, the wedding-gown may go on for several years before it is finally relegated to the dyeing vat, and to becoming an inferior instead of the prominent part of an evening dress. In time to come it will probably descend as low as the foundation of a best morning-gown; but before then its owner will have got much pleasure out of it, and be thoroughly glad that she was endowed with so handsome a dress at the beginning of her social career.

Then a word as to the little et ceteras that go so far towards making up a successful toilette, and which are apt, if ill-considered, to make a woman appear dowdy even though the most expensive silk should be on her back.

Plain white suède gloves and no bracelets should be worn with the white and gold gown, and white kid shoes or white satin ones, with a suspicion of the gold embroidery introduced into the rosettes.

If by these few hints I have managed to relieve any young matron's mind regarding the beloved incubus of her wedding-gown, I shall be more than delighted—yea, even thankful.