

EDITOR'S TABLE.

EDITORIAL CHIT-CHAT.

WHAT BECOMES OF THE DRESSES OF QUEENS?—When Queen Elizabeth died, she left, it is said, a thousand and more dresses. Modern queens are more practical, for they dispose of their dresses in their lifetime. Eugenie, who sets the fashions for the civilized world, has a sale of her cast-off-dresses every year; and as she rarely wears a dress twice, the number sold is always very great. A Paris letter writer gives a graphic account of the sale just terminated. He says that "the custom was established by the royal ladies of the Tuileries long before the great Revolution, acceded to by the Empress Josephine, continued under the Restoration, maintained by the princesses of the House of Orleans, and kept up with great spirit under the present reign. A long gallery which runs along the basement story of the palace, looking into the garden just opposite the Prince Imperial's winter walk, is fitted up from one end to the other with oak wardrobes. This is called the *de froque* of the palace. It is here that the refuse dresses and the cast-off apparel of the royal and imperial ladies, who have succeeded each other for the last hundred years in their occupation of the Tuileries, are invariably borne when rejected from the floor above. These wardrobe cupboards, numerous and extensive as they are, get generally well filled during the year, and when the four seasons are considered thoroughly over, a sale is made of the whole, where every article is priced beforehand, and visitors are admitted to view and purchase, without the observance of further ceremony than the presentation of an invitation card from one of her majesty's attendants, to whom the privilege of granting them belongs. The sale is called in the present day the 'Retour de Compiègne,' but has been known under other appellations during former reigns—'Sacrifice de Fontainebleau,' 'Caprices de St. Cloud,' 'Joies de la Malmaison'—according to the place whence the court returned to spend the winter in Paris, and which has varied with every sovereign. The sale of the regal wardrobe of the Tuileries is conducted on the strictest principle of equity. The shutters of the long gallery are closed, and it is lighted up from one end to the other by lamps and candelabra, so that the light is stronger than it would be were daylight admitted, as the ceiling is low and the windows sunk deep into the wall. Every article is ticketed, and, of course, no deviation from the original decision can possibly be allowed. A long line of stretchers are placed all down the middle of the gallery, the doors of the wardrobes on either side are flung open, and the visitor, walking slowly down on one side and returning by the other, makes choice of what may suit her taste, and inscribing the number it bears upon a card, hands the latter to the attendant in waiting at the door and departs. The stretchers are occupied by the shawls and mantles, the wardrobes by the dresses, the shelves by the under linen, while a sort of counter at the further end of the gallery is filled with the *champignons*, on which are exhibited the bonnets and head-dresses. The white satin dress, most splendidly embroidered in silver, with the tunic of *bouillon* gauze and the silver *mouches*, confined by bands of ponceau velvet, in which her majesty went to the opera with the King Consort of Spain, was not quoted higher than the nankeen-colored dress and jacket, braided in green, which was recognized as the uniform invented by the Empress for the drives at Fontainebleau. To be sure, the buttons were of malachite, and set in gold, but the material of the dress could scarcely be considered as bearing any value whatever. The shawls were principally of French manu-

facture, and mostly for summer wear; the cloaks and mantles, deprived of their lace or fur, unattractive. The utmost exaggeration seems to exist in the prices put upon the bonnets. In the first place, the article itself is out of fashion almost as soon as seen; in the next, it possesses no resource whatever; and, above all, it is liable to far greater deterioration than the dress. The habit of leaning back in the carriage, which has become so general, destroys the bonnet immediately, and renders it shabby in form, even while still bright and fresh in color. The proceeds of the sale are given ostensibly to the poor; but the things are generally bought up by the valets and women of the wardrobe, who dispose of what remains unsold to the great dealers in Paris, who again sell them to their customers at immense prices."

We think this custom might be imitated to advantage in our own fashionable world. We have heard, that, after the season at Newport and Saratoga is over, certain olive-complexioned, hook-nosed women may be seen coming out of brown-stone houses on the Fifth Avenue, or Walnut street, loaded down with second-hand dresses, and that, very soon after, the fair owners of these mansions are observed entering their carriages and driving to Stewart's, or Hadsleigh's, Dedan's, or Russell's, bearing "shekels of silver," with which to replenish the finery they have sold. Would it not be better, since the thing is to be done, to do it in the frank and dashing way of the Empress? Only, instead of one lady doing it, two or three dozen ought to join, in order to give more *clat* to the affair; and the articles ought to be sold at public outcry, or auction, or, as they say in some country places, at *vandev*. How charming it would be, instead of the artists' sales of pictures, now so fashionable, to have a succession of Flora McFlimsey auctions, where the idle dears might dawdle away their mornings. "Here goes the last ball-dress of Miss Shoddy," would cry the auctioneer, "which she wore at the Bachelor's Ball at Newport—who bids?" "Or how much for this lovely breakfast-dress which Mrs. Coal-Oil had at Saratoga?" Let us have the *vandevs* by all means.

RAIN-DROPS are the latest novelties in Paris for the ornamentation of ball and other evening dresses. These artificial rain-drops have this advantage over other trimmings: they are exceedingly light. They consist of small balls of glass, each of which is attached to a miniature gilt link; by this means they are sewn to the dress. Sometimes the berthe is edged round with rain-drops, at other times rain-drops are used for separating the puffings, which cover a tulle skirt. On evening head-dresses they are found extremely useful, and we hear many spring bonnets are to be decorated with them.

FORMERLY, black or dark-colored silk was considered quite suitable for a small evening party, so that it was made with a low body. This is no longer the case; black or dark-colored silks are now looked upon as suitable for morning wear only, and light-colors are indispensable for an evening dress. The new silks are extremely pretty; many have fine-colored stripes over a white ground; sea-green, Mexican blue, mauve, or rose-color over white looks exceedingly well.

BLACK VELVET DOTTED with steel is the most effective and brilliant at candle-light. Bands of velvet, sparkling with steel, are arranged upon the front breadth of the skirt *en tablier*; likewise several bands are so placed as to simulate a succession of skirts, one at the top of the other. This style is repeated in jet for mourning.