

and from this you can cut your silk or velvet without waste. Three-quarters of a yard of velvet or silk is enough to cover a bonnet, but if you intend to make bows, you will require a full yard of material. If you desire "ruching" for the trimming, you must allow a yard of velvet, silk, or lace, to make half a yard of moderately close "pleating." It must be, of course, cut crossway or bias; and the manner of doing it in twilled silk and crape I will endeavour to explain further on.

An easily made and pretty bonnet for a beginner, for spring wear, would be a black straw bonnet with a black silk lining; a scarf of *écru* net edged with lace round the crown, terminating in loops and ends; a bouquet of violets or blush-roses at the back, and the same flowers for a wreath in front. This bonnet should have *écru* net strings edged with lace, and is intended to be the "gipsy shape."

The black silk for lining the brim is, of course, cut on the bias, and is sewn on round the edge, turned over, and fastened inside; for the head-lining you will need half a yard of black sarsenet on the straight, out of which cut a round piece for the crown, and tack in lightly; then hem a straight piece, the proper depth, over a fine cord, join it, and sew it into the head neatly over the edges of the lining of the brim; draw up the cord in it, and your bonnet is ready for the outside trimming.

The last thing usually done is the arranging of the front wreath. For the mounting of this you will need a little wire ribbon covered with black silk, and you had better pin it in, and then try on your bonnet, to see if it be comfortable before sewing it in firmly.

Wire-ribbon is constantly used in millinery, and costs about a penny a yard.

WHAT IS A DEGREE?



HERE are various ways in which the word "degree" can be interpreted, but as in this place it is only a certain technical meaning of the word which is in question, it will be sufficient to deal with it in reference to this, its technical and also most usually received meaning. In this sense it signifies comparative rank or standing in, or relatively to, a university. Universities are corporate bodies in England and other countries, which for the last six or seven centuries have had the chief part in the education of young men in Law, Medicine, Divinity, and other professions and callings of the highest standard. Their origin is somewhat involved in obscurity, but it is generally believed that the earlier universities—among which were those of Bologna, Paris, and Salerno—resulted from the union of different schools of study, the existence of which in different places was found to necessitate such centralisation, in order to save both time and expense in the work of education; and that such unions soon acquired the name of "universities," or institutions in which young men of promise and ability should be brought up *ad pietatem et ad studia literarum*, and should receive instruction in every branch of useful learning. In course of time, in the universities of England, the collegiate system became engrafted into the original university system—a system which, in its development, grew into an adaptation of what was originally a monastic institution to the advancing spirit of the age; and to which, from the semi-domestic character the colleges gradually acquired, Oxford and Cambridge unquestionably owe the strong social influence which they possess, education at either of them having frequently resulted in ties and associations that have lasted through life. Thus the growth of the collegiate

system, and the favour which it found with the students who resorted to the universities, gradually took the place of the system of independent membership of the universities of England, and, *pari passu*, led to the extinction of the smaller halls or hostels, of which halls Oxford has now only four, while it has no less than twenty-one colleges. The only difference between a college and a hall is that the colleges are, like the university, each of them a corporate body, holding and managing its own estates; the halls have no corporate existence, and whatever property is applicable to their benefit, is held in trust for them by "The Chancellor, Masters, and Scholars of the University." For several centuries these twenty-five societies, together, constituted the University of Oxford, which, however, in the year 1868 revived the ancient condition of university membership independently of any college or hall, and has since added to its students a body of *Scholares non ad ullum Collegium sive Aulam Ascripti*, commonly known as "unattached students," to the number of nearly 250. All students—both collegiate and non-collegiate—are equally entitled, on satisfying the statutable tests, to the degrees, honours, and all other privileges of the university. Almost identically, the same remarks (with the exception of those relating to halls, of which Cambridge possesses none) apply to Cambridge, which, however, with rather greater numbers, possesses only seventeen colleges, that are proportionately rather larger societies than those of Oxford. The University of Dublin was founded by Queen Elizabeth, and although differing from the English universities as comprehending, and being in fact co-extensive with, one large and historically celebrated society, known as Trinity College, was yet modelled in many points as regards the collegiate life, studies, and discipline, on the lines of Oxford and Cambridge. Durham, again, a smaller and far more modern university, was also formed on

the same model. In all these universities various titles, known as "degrees," are conferred on their members after satisfying various tests, or later in their course, after completing a certain number of "terms." These degrees are believed to date from the incorporation of the older universities in the tenth, eleventh, and twelfth centuries, and comprise B.A. and M.A. (Bachelor and Master of Arts), and the degrees of Bachelor and Doctor of Music, Law, Medicine, and Divinity. In the main essentials, the Oxford and Cambridge courses have much in common, of course with some differences in matters of detail.

A Scholarship, worth from £80 to £100 a year, is the reward of an exceptionally good Matriculation Examination; a Fellowship, worth from £200 to £300 a year, of (usually) only the highest honours at graduation and a sharp subsequent competition.

The standard of scholarship required for matriculation varies in the different colleges, and the university matriculates without any further inquiry any students presented by the colleges, or the "censors" of unattached students. But from this point the university imposes tests, the sole function of the colleges from this time being to educate; and at stated times examinations are held—known respectively as Responsions (*vulgo*, Little-go), First Public Examination (*vulgo*, Moderations), and Second Public Examination (*vulgo*, Great-go). For all of these tests, examiners are nominated by the Vice-Chancellor and Proctors; such nomination being confirmed by the whole body of Masters of Arts, a majority of whom can place a *veto* on any appointment.

It may be briefly stated that the subjects for these several examinations extend over a wide range of classical and mathematical reading; and that while the higher honours, which are the result of more extensive reading, are awarded only to the best men among those candidates who offer the most varied range of subjects, the fact of "passing" is sufficient to show that the test is a *bonâ fide* one, and entitles those who have complied with its conditions to a respectable position in society, and to some extent guarantees their fitness for certain positions to which the degrees of the English universities have long been considered an appropriate introduction.

The University of London is an exception to all those yet named. It is rather an examining than an educating body; it imposes no test of residence, and requires no attendance on the lectures of its professors, but it yet has a large number of colleges connected with it in all parts of the world. It grants *no* degree without the test of examination; its degrees represent both work and ability, and deservedly rank high as tests of merit; its medical school is among the first in the world; and although its charter embraces no faculty of theology, many clergymen of good standing and position are on its list of graduates.

There are yet two other English authorities for degrees. When England at the Reformation threw off all connection with the Papacy, the authority to confer degrees, which had been up to that time conferred by

the Pope, was vested by 25 Henry VIII., c. 21, in the Archbishop of Canterbury. But the "Lambeth degree" had at last become so cheap (except as regards fees, which were always high) that many who hold it, though wearing the hood (according to their degree) of the University of the Archbishop who conferred it, have become in a measure ashamed of the degree itself, and while using the badge and letters which denote the degree, studiously ignore its source. The present Archbishop of Canterbury has done much to rescue these degrees from the disrepute into which they had fallen, by instituting a real test for the degree of M.A., reserving the higher degrees for cases in which he may think it desirable to honour men of considerable merit as theologians, musicians, or literati, and whom it would be unseemly to subject to the test of an examination. Medical degrees are granted by all the universities of England, Scotland, and Ireland, and a qualification and "membership" by the Royal Colleges of Physicians and Surgeons respectively. The other source whence degrees are obtainable is the Divinity College of St. David Lampeter in South Wales, which was founded in 1822, and incorporated by royal charter in 1828. In 1852 the privilege to confer the degree of B.D., and in 1865 that of B.A., was added to the charter.

Thus much has related entirely to degrees, or qualifications for certain callings within the United Kingdom and its colonies. But universities, as an institution, are not confined to England and its dependencies. There are numerous universities in different parts of the Continent, and especially in Germany. Their degrees also represent work and tests, and although for the most part claimed by inhabitants of the countries in which they are situated, are not unfrequently sought by Englishmen, and have their own value with those who know how to estimate degrees and their antecedents. Other countries on the Continent also have their universities; and there are, again, universities of some prestige, and if not of antiquity, yet of respectable age, in America; and some of the dependencies of the British crown now own modern chartered universities modelled on those of England, and under the direction of graduates of England's universities, as at Sydney, Madras, and Toronto; and doubtless in time they will be found to have done a good and useful work, and to have produced good men and citizens, "living peaceably in their habitations, and honoured in their times." These, it is needless to say, are all of them a legitimate development and extension of a great system and a venerable institution, and are entitled to all honour and respect.

But one of the best tests of the excellence of any institution is the amount of imitation to which it is liable, and of imposture which results from it; and of late years a desire for such letters as M.A., or for others denoting a doctor's degree, &c., as an appendage to a name, having been developed, it has been met by negotiations with certain foreign universities, conducted through agents or correspondents, who undertake "to influence learned degrees *in absentia*." Unquestionably in some cases real degrees have thus

been obtained from genuine universities ; but it is a very grave question whether a degree so obtained is of any real value.

The advertising columns of the daily and provincial papers show that such negotiation for degrees has become a regular trade ; and one of these agents has admitted in a little publication of his own that the diplomas of many so-called degrees obtained through agents are simply manufactured in England. This gentleman is evidently fearful that his calling is in danger, or he would not take the pains he does to show the worthlessness of English degrees. But he proves too much ; for after showing in one place that examinations are valueless, in another he as stoutly defends them, and rejoices in the triumph of an ordination candidate from a theological college, while an Oxford graduate is rejected. All that such an instance tends to prove is that English graduates who rise to posts of eminence in Church and State, do so rather by their own ability than by their antecedents, and that an Oxford graduate who is ignorant and incompetent will fail like any other person. And of course there are *some* inferior men who do by sheer luck, or

after many desperate struggles, succeed in obtaining degrees at Oxford and Cambridge. As a rule, their degrees are of little use to them, and their university training has been thrown away. But such instances in no way tend to impart a value to those utterly valueless titles, agent-bought degrees, with "M.A." extracted from the title "Philosophiæ Doctor Artium-que *Liberalium* Magister," and used as if it were the familiar Master's degree peculiar to Great Britain and Ireland and their colonial dependencies.

When will *all* non-graduate members of professions learn that their existing highly respectable position is infinitely preferable to that which they would occupy as *soi-disant* graduates of a non-existent university ? And when will all such aspirants, whether lay or clerical, learn that a degree procured *by money only* cannot but be immediately gauged by all who know anything of universities ; and that it is not the degree even of a genuine university, but the training, the *bonâ fide* work, and the associations that have led up to it as a result, which make its possessor either able as a preacher, serviceable in his calling, respected in society, or useful in his generation ?

CHIT-CHAT ON DRESS.

BY OUR PARIS CORRESPONDENT.



IN the merry month of May—

"When daisies pink, and violets blue,
And lady-smocks all silver-white,
And cuckoo-buds of yellow hue
Do paint the meadows with delight"—

Nature seems to set us the example of freshness in her apparel. The winter-worn dresses look shabbier than they need do, and the shops only too attractive ; so it will be well to see what is to be worn in order to make our purchases wisely, for a few things thoroughly good and well made are worth twice as

many which do not possess these qualifications. It is quality, not quantity, which should be studied in dressing well.

The fashions in silks for the spring and summer are now very clearly defined, and their character is rich and heavy. Among the most noticeable brocaded silks are Teheran, Armure Diamant, Brocatelle, Broderie Antique, Satin Brocade—thick, substantial fabrics, covered all over with the design, which is sometimes floral and sometimes arabesque : the former mere revivals of what were worn thirty or forty years ago, the more elaborate kinds being reproductions of the styles adopted during the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries.

Stripes will, there is no doubt, have numerous patrons, and among many curious kinds of stripes there is the Rayé Musicale, a silk which displays rows of coloured lines, calling to mind those on which music is written ; but, as a rule, stripes will

be more worn on a thin and inexpensive class of silk, and on mixed materials, than in costly silks ; brocade will reign triumphant there, and most of the dresses sent over for the last Drawing-room held by Queen Victoria, were of the vague class known as Venetian Brocade, a term which is pretty generally applied to any rich thick figured silk, covered with close-set arabesque designs. By-the-by, the fashions are changing not a little in matters appertaining to costume at Court receptions in England.

There is quite a new way of making the trains ; and the bodices match the skirts now, and not as before, the trains, which are always of a contrasting colour or material. Of old, trains were gathered beneath the bodice at the back, or arranged in heavy box-plaits from the shoulders ; now they are still worn from the waist, but the sides are elongated and carried on to the shoulders, where they fasten beneath shoulder-knots formed of the two colours of the toilette. No better arrangement could be imagined ; it has all the grace to be derived from a regal mantle, floating from the shoulders, while at the same time the figure is not hidden.

Coloured plumes and lappets are worn, the latter of coloured tulle or lace, and much smaller than they ; used to be ; and the hair is dressed closer far to the head.

The gloves come mostly to the elbow, which fashion is now a matter of course in Paris, where they are finished off by a "porte-bonheur" of diamonds looking like a line of light around the arm.

The full-dress shoes have very short fronts, and