

LATEST FADS

TALISMANS.

All the newspapers have mentioned the rabbit's foot carried by one of the Presidential candidates of the present year, with the result that certain jewelers' windows have been filled with tiny furry paws set in gold and silver, and announced by printed placards as warranted to have belonged to a rabbit caught in the dark of the moon in a graveyard, by a cross eyed and otherwise gifted colored son of a seventh son. A few people bought these—"to give away as a joke," they carefully explained; but the subject being in the air, about nine out of every ten men and women confessed to owning a "mascot." Sometimes it was a bit of stone, or a scrap of wood, a foolish little ring, a scarf pin; some tangible thing of which its owner could spin yarns telling how luck fluctuated by its presence or absence.

For years the young girls of New Orleans have carried tiny tin images of St. Joseph, in queer leaden cases about as large as a peanut. What St. Joseph can do is known to all Catholic girls, and a great many Protestants were told in that charming little book called "*La Neu-vaine de Collette*." Within the past year, New York girls, those bright unsentimental faddists, have been carrying the little saints about in their pocketbooks with *matinée* tickets and samples.

There is another talisman which is said to work the same spell. It must be yellow, and odd, not one of a pair. It must be the gift of a bride, and it is generally her present to each of the bevy of maidens that escort her to the altar. It generally has a jeweled buckle and a monogram of the bride's initials. Sometimes it bears also the old motto, "*Honi soit qui mal y pense*."

A girl to whom one was given the other day, flung it aside. "That's my tenth," she said, "and two are enough, as I am not a centipede. Besides, I don't want any more just proposals. I want something that will bring me one I can accept."

TWO OF A KIND.

We are inclined to believe that a woman had something to do with the coining of the immortal phrase "Necessity is the mother of invention." The fair sex, long deprived by fashion of that most necessary of all accessories, a pocket, has finally risen in revolt and turned its keen wits to devising a substitute. Beauty shall be combined with utility, it decrees, and it has betaken itself to a part of the feminine attire where a pocket was surely never meant to be. The belt, once regarded as the only available place for my lady's *Point de Venise* or Irish lace, is no longer the proper receptacle, and she tucks her dainty little cob-

web under her sleeve at the wrist, where it falls out, partially covering the hand. The innovation will commend itself to the fashionable by the splendid opportunities it offers for exhibiting the fine old family lace; it will please the unfashionable but sensible portion of womankind by its convenience. Doubtless every fair reader remembers moments of agony spent in hunting for her purse, while the waiting conductor stood scowling and impatient, the old man smiled indulgently, and the charitable woman in the next seat attempted to distract attention by beginning a voluble conversation, which failed to drown the small boy's audible giggle.

Far less sensible—and therefore, perhaps, more likely to be popular with the faddish—is the caprice of utilizing the "choker," or soft ribbon collar, as a receptacle for the watch. This last should be the miniature watch, mentioned in another paragraph. Why it should be carried in the collar, rather than in the brim of the hat, it is difficult to say. We can only fall back upon the well known fact that woman's mind is so deep, so intricate, so unfathomable that it passeth the feeble understanding of man.

THREE PARISIAN NOVELTIES.

When some new thing makes its appearance it is invariably misunderstood. The rule applies to the trivialities of life as well as to the prophets and martyrs; and the other day it almost accomplished the destruction of the owner of a Parisian novelty which promises to become a widely popular fad—the animated scarfpin. This is a newcomer in America, and the faddish youth who first affected it in a New York public conveyance imagines that it might have been better if it had not come at all. His particular pin represented a ballet dancer, who, with the assistance of a bulb in the owner's pocket, pirouetted in a most life-like and hilarious manner. The tragedy developed when an old lady of humane mind and imperfect vision fiercely attacked the youth with her umbrella, on the ground that he deserved chastisement for impaling a live beetle on a pin and using the agonized and struggling creature for personal adornment.

But little accidents of this description may happen in the best regulated communities without doing any lasting damage. The animated scarfpin is not necessarily banned because one old lady disapproved of it. In fact, if we are to judge from the vogue it has obtained in the French capital, its success in a novelty loving city is assured. It is an ingenious innovation, and admits of all sorts of variations. The movements of the little figure which forms the pin, be it fish, flesh, or fowl,

are governed by a puff of air sent through a long tube from the compressible bulb in the wearer's pocket. In some cases the air passes through a small whistle, and then, the pin being in the form of a canary, the effect is startling indeed. It is more than probable that before the winter is over strange antics will be performed by strange little creatures on the scarfs of our faddish countrymen.

The miniature opera glass which can be slipped into the waistcoat pocket has crossed the ocean also, and is to be seen (held very conspicuously) in the hands of theater goers far and near. The miniature watch is also coming into favor. A watch of the size of a ten cent piece, worn in the button hole, and keeping correct time, is verily a triumph of the horologist's art.

And, best of all, according to the American point of view, all three of these Parisian novelties are sufficiently expensive to make them a guarantee of wordly competence!

MY LADY'S TONGUE.

When Mr. Ralph Waldo Emerson, of sainted memory, said that no subject should be taboo in the best society, it is difficult to believe that he had in mind a society made up of young men and maidens; but the society in question evidently believes that he did, and elects to take him as an authority.

Nobody knows quite where it began. Some conservative folks date it back to the day when fashionable young people began to go slumming and witness the seamy side of life. Others lay it upon that facile burden bearer, the bicycle. Others point sorrowfully to the problem play and novel.

Long ago, when we were all younger, Mr. Howells made some comments upon a Canadian widow who talked about her "backbone," and alluded to colonial freedom of speech as contrasted with that of the United States. But the young American girl of today who would object to the mention of her own or anybody else's backbone would be hard to find. It is indeed true that the bicycle has taught even the "missiest" of maids that the whole wide world knows that her feet are not pinned to her skirts, as she was early taught to suppose that people thought.

Of course it is a beautiful thing to be "sensible." A young girl who can let a young man understand that she knows the wickedness of the world, and can detect symptoms of it in his manners just as readily as the taint of alcohol when he has looked too freely upon the convivial glass, is likely to keep herself free from unfortunate entanglements. Unluckily, she usually keeps free from all sorts, fortunate as well as otherwise.

The charm of the girlhood of other days has been prettily shown in "Rosemary." We cannot imagine little *Miss Cruickshank* discussing the problems of the day with *Sir Jasper*. Our modern girl is a splendid, rosy, hearty creature, but sometimes it appears to a conservative soul that she knows too much, or tells too

much of what she does know. It can hardly be called edifying to the average man of the world to be seriously asked by a pretty girl whether he thinks he has "risen on his dead self to higher things," and whether it is better to have eaten of the tree of knowledge, or to have remained in milk and water innocence. However big a man's crop of wild oats may have been, he doesn't care to discuss its market price with a young girl. That style of conversation should be relegated to the *passée* woman and the callow youth who is cutting his eye teeth.

"GRANGERIZING."

The art of Grangerizing, as the reader probably knows, is to take a small and usually an insignificant book, and illustrate it until it develops into a library of volumes at an enormous cost of time and money. The insignificant book is chosen in the hope that everybody else may have overlooked it, and that it may possibly be out of print. The less it contains the more credit is there in developing it to mammoth proportions. One enthusiast has enlarged a small history of Philadelphia into nearly a hundred volumes at a cost of seventy two thousand dollars, and is the admiration and despair of every one of his fellow workers. No man whose name is mentioned in that history has escaped having his portrait and some of his personal correspondence incorporated into the book.

In these days a portrait of Savonarola is valuable as an addition to the letters of some forgotten court dame of Florence who wrote a letter or two which have found their way into print. The original draft of the Constitution of the United States would be cut down and pasted into the life of some man who never did anything but sign the Declaration of Independence, if the man who was Grangerizing that life could get possession of it. Letters from famous men have been bought for exorbitant prices to illustrate the most puerile gossip of the most frivolous woman.

In this connection we are reminded of some recent books which have been illustrated by the publishers in a way that seems to reach the limit of absurdity. The most notable example is probably a life of Abraham Lincoln, which made a bid for a large circulation by inserting a picture of every man, woman, or child whose ancestors had ever known the great Illinoisan. Backwoods farmers beheld their names, their photographs, and their garrulous yarns in print, with the result that throughout a wide section of the West the volume rests on the parlor tables with the "Mother, Home, and Heaven" books and Dr. Talmage's sermons. The greater introducer of "Unknowns" was beaten at his own game. The publisher of the Lincoln biography printed a book which ought to have been called "Unknown Men who Knew Abraham Lincoln," and reaped his harvest from human vanity. He showed, incidentally, that ingenious modifications can be made of the Grangerizing idea. But he worked

on exactly the opposite lines from the amateur faddist. While the publisher hung Lincoln about with trivialities, as one would set up a noble white statue to be used as an autograph field for the idle and vain, the Grangerizer seizes the noble and the great and makes them accessories to the stupid and unknown. Either is an inartistic perversion.

MORE BUTTONS.

We have already had occasion to refer to the button craze, but each day—nay, each hour—seems to bring forth new and startling developments of the fad. "Button, button, who hasn't got the button?" is the question of the hour. The craze has spread with the rapidity of a "scorcher" and the death dealing persistency of a book agent. Like some other startling innovations, it hails from the West, where uncounted millions of these small round circles are manufactured and shipped all over the country. They are in constant demand in the larger stores, and are forming the street vendor's chief stock in trade.

For the political button there may possibly be some justification. We can understand the enthusiast who proudly displays the classic features of Major McKinley, or delights to exhibit a miniature Bryan simpering at an alleged portrait of Sewall. But what possible excuse is there for the inane devices that have blossomed out upon the garments of myriads of irresponsible young persons of both sexes? They are execrable and absolutely unfit for existence. "Golly, but it's hot," "You ain't my girl," "I'm dry," and "Don't you mind," are among the most widely favored of these. Exactly what you must not mind, or why it is necessary to label yourself as possessing a champagne thirst, is not clear to the mortal of average intelligence. Possibly we have not yet been educated up to the sublime height of comprehension which the button fiend has already attained.

Upon the coat of a small boy who recently paraded Fifth Avenue, and about whom there was an unmistakable swagger of swelldom, was a celluloid circle from which irradiated like a beacon light the words "You don't know who I am!"

What a misfortune that the passer by was unable to exhibit a similar circle on which was engraved "No, and by Jove I don't care!"

MIRROR GLOVES.

Ever since humorists existed, they have derived infinite profit from more or less apt observations upon the proneness of the eternal feminine to seek the mirror at every available moment. There has been a basis of truth underlying these quips, say certain ungallant critics who have closely watched the movements of the average woman. She is, it appears, entirely unable to resist the temptation to glance, albeit but for an instant, into every looking glass she happens to pass. She even utilizes shop windows and pieces of silverware, we are told, to discover whether or not

her hat is at the proper angle; at all of which the masculine observer is not a little scornful.

As we all know, the eleventh commandment—the one which is nowadays most rigorously observed—is, "Thou shalt not be found out." To facilitate obedience to this doctrine some mammoth mind has invented the mirror glove, and now woman may behold her reflection and prink and plume herself to her heart's content, and—which is the main object—escape detection in her little vanities. The mirror is skillfully inserted in the palm of the left hand glove, and therein may furtive glances be cast from time to time with absolute safety from discovery. Alas! if the mirror glove is widely adopted, and women cease to look for their faces in more public glasses, what will become of the humorist?

But here are certain heretical persons who contend that the human male is as vain as his wife. If this be so, perhaps we shall have mirror gloves for men, and all the world will be going about with its hand before its eyes and a smile of gratifying vanity upon its lips. Truly this is a progressive age!

A REPORTED FRENCH ATROCITY.

Yon work, in twenty volumes, once
Belonged to twenty friends!

When Iaman Blanchard wrote these lines he was referring to the library of a book borrower, but if we are to believe in the existence of a new Parisian fad, reported by a London contemporary, they take on a different and a gruesome color. Politically or otherwise, there is no telling what next to expect from the French capital; but in this instance we sincerely trust that some young Briton has been giving rein to his imagination, and that the item in question is rather a fling at Gallic folly than a statement of fact. And yet in France "all things are possible and most probable," and when a reputable journal tells us that "books bound in the skins of departed friends" are popular just now in the gay capital, it will not do to be too sceptical. The inventor of such a fad must be the possessor of an abnormal intellect. It is difficult to imagine a modern Damon finding consolation for the loss of Pythias in a volume bound in the cuticle of the late lamented latter, and we are unable to conceive of a friendship so ardent and enduring as not to be satisfied with remembering its object unaided by so realistic a reminder.

But the fad, if it exists at all, does so quite independent of personal association. The authority already quoted proceeds to inform us that it extends to cigarette cases, pocket-books and prayer books made of the skins of notorious criminals. Of all things—prayer books! We can understand a deceased bishop being thus utilized, but wherein lies the propriety of converting the epidermis of a notorious criminal to such a purpose it is utterly beyond us to conjecture. Also there is something not altogether inviting in the proximity of portions of a departed murderer to