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Rags and Ads

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Advices

by **Patrice Verdière** translated from French by Chandrika Casali

Taken from "A Word of Advice" published between January and May 1909, signed "Jeanine", in *Chiffons*, a bi-monthly magazine.

To my readers who write constantly on this subject, I can only repeat the following: the best way to get rid of unsightly down on the upper lip, giving you the shadow of a moustache, is to use *Dusser Depilatory paste* which is to be found at 1, rue Jean Jacques Rousseau. In a flash, and without danger this troublesome, unwanted embellishment will disappear.

No, Madam. In society, one never refers to one's title. One refers to Sir or Madam and not his lordship the Count or my lady Marchioness. This would indicate a certain inferiority on behalf of the person using this term. Of course, we used to say my noble father or his eminence my brother, but this is no longer the case. Between close friends it is possible to use the terms count, princess or baron. Only the rank of Duke and Duchess requires his lordship or her ladyship to come before. It is a question of protocol.

The latest in babies' hygiene is to let them go barefoot. No more silk socks or little bootees. Now it is just darling little sandals, rather like those worn by certain monks, in natural leather and fastened with an old fashioned strap. It is very healthy to let them run in the grass and on the lawn. For those who are still toddlers, this system is very good and would appear to facilitate baby's first steps.

If one insists on white shoes, they can be cleaned with a chalk preparation dissolved in a little petrol. Leave to dry and then buff with a flannel brush when they are quite dry.

For food lovers American coconut cake, which can only be found with difficulty here, is exquisite. It has an extremely subtle flavour of hazelnuts and a taste that is refreshing and melts in the mouth as much as any sorbet. It is a good idea to train young girls in needlework early if they are to know how to make their own blouses and decorate their hats later on. Young women and young girls should be capable of using their fingers to make up for shortcomings in their budget. If this is done early enough, it will become a habit and even a pleasure. There are special classes for initiating young girls into the secrets of practical elegance, but it is better to start when they are still children at about the age of eight or nine. The doll's wardrobe could be the first pretext and the first inspiration.

To learn about sculpture, painting, drawing and all decorative arts which can become useful art, nothing is better than the Art School, 13 Cité Retiro. It is especially for young ladies and everything has been thought out in an intelligent way for this purpose. This is higher education with the most well-known teachers.

The Turkish Revolution allowed us to admire the faces of women who had been veiled until then but before that, a brave traveller brought back the secret of the radiant beauty of their complexions and this is a secret that we are eager to offer to our dear readers.

La Merveille de l'Orient for the beauty of the face, the neck, the arms and the hands (read the instructions with each bottle). On sale in leading perfume shops and stores.

General stock, David and company, 197 rue du Temple, Paris.

M.B. – if a bowl for rinsing the mouth is no longer acceptable at table, it is not so for the finger bowl. This is particularly necessary after eating prawns and crayfish and also after desserts. It can be scented with lemon, mint or lavender etc. But the most fashionable scent is Cédrat Bol, one of the most delicious creations of the perfumer, Guerlain.

We know about lucky charms for protection against all sorts of accidents, including automobile accidents. Here is one for a far more frequent accident: tears. It is a nice little medallion in crystal, circled in gold with tiny grey and white beads inside. It is these beads that protect you from everything that might make you cry. But perhaps a woman without tears loses part of her seductive powers. Never mind, this medallion is attractive to wear and will add to our little collection of amulets.

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You should avoid rushing when you walk. Nothing is less graceful to a woman's bearing than to be seen going too fast. I realise that it is not always easy, especially when we have a lot to do, but one must learn how to organise one's time so as not to have to run. Look no further than to your friend. the young English lady, for this lack of elegance which you find so displeasing.

Let us not hurry! I have already heard several people discussing straw hats, and we are hardly at the end of January! This haste is annoying and quite unjustified. The spring hats being made at the present time are not for Parisians; they are models for America. Therefore, be wary. Wishing to adopt them straight away might mean having to get rid of them as soon as the fashion is asserted. This would be an unnecessary expense that a practical woman should not accept.

To those who enjoy driving, I recommend the "Automobile Balm". It is applied with the fingertips after the face has been washed with milk, preferably un-boiled. Leave to dry and to penetrate the skin for at least twenty minutes, then wipe it off with cotton wool. It is excellent for protecting the skin against wind and dust. It will delay the appearance of wrinkles and help set rice powder foundation. (Detaille, rue Caumartin).

As we are talking about sport, the Japanese hand-warmer, used by all those taking part in outdoor games, is to be recommended. It is a small appliance which lights up instantly and maintains its heat for several hours. Tucked into a muff, it is designed to cause no damage. It is also very practical while travelling.

While waiting for the first lettuces of the season, try General Berthaut's potato salad: the potatoes are cooked in boiling water, after being peeled and adding a handful of coarse salt. They are sliced and arranged in a dish, alternating slices of potato with slices of egg, anchovies, herrings, shrimps, green beans or olives etc. The night before - for this salad is prepared in advance give it a bottle of excellent champagne. To serve, pour a small glass of champagne over the salad and season with olive oil, the juice of one lemon, plenty of salt, pepper and mustard.

To all those who dread becoming annoyingly stout, avoid taking breakfast in bed and do not mix your beverage with food. Simply drink a large glass of water at the end of the meal or, preferably, two hours later. Hot breakfast beverages, even tea, are harmful, so should be avoided as much as possible. No bread, but special well toasted crispbread.

The nightstand which used to be seen next to every bed has now completely disappeared from the bedroom, in favour of a larger round table which those who read in bed like to clutter up with books, framed portraits, knick-knacks, notepads and all sorts of bits and pieces. On the other hand, the former bedside tables, in Empire or Restoration style, can be placed in the corner of the bedrooms to display crystal vases brimming over with flowers. It is unexpected and pretty.

To a reader from the provinces. Do not be modest. Madam, the provinces are not as backward as you say, with such a charming spirit of humility. Furthermore, pleasant traditions and pretty things have been preserved there. This is my response to your question. In the morning and at tea-time, the hostess wears a tea-gown. A small or large buffet, a tea table. A large array of sandwiches, little cakes etc. Tea may be served in the English fashion, that is to say in coloured teacups or in the Swiss manner in gold and silver rimmed glasses, with slices of lemon.

In certain houses, men are allowed to stay and smoke in the sitting room, especially as nowadays most ladies are not averse to smoking cigarettes themselves. The guest who has taken you to the table should, once dinner is finished and if he is far from you, come round the table to join you and lead you to the sitting room. A tip to hostesses: provide several ashtrays if you wish to protect your rugs. I believe these pieces of advice should satisfy several readers who have consulted me on this subject.

Reply to a young reader who is bored. The dog in vogue at the moment is without contest, the King Charles spaniel. An adorable little creature that is very lively, very intelligent and very affectionate. Obviously it will be good company that will keep you busy and amused. But it has the disadvantage of being rather expensive. A real pedigree King Charles costs about eight hundred to one thousand francs. But if you don't object to the price ... !