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Fashion.

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Fashion.

"I've had a terrible shock to-day," said a baby in blue.

"We've had a loss too," said the child in white.

"Nurse isn't looking, let's sit down," said the baby in blue.

They put their dolls carefully on the seat, and then climbed up beside them.

"What have you lost?" asked the baby in blue.

"Just let me tell you from the beginning," said the child in white.

"Same sad story, I expect," said the baby "Change of fashion."

"Yes, isn't it dreadful? But just let me tell you."

"Go ahead," said the baby. "I'll keep an eye on nurse."

"When father came down to breakfast," said the child in white, "he was just in the ordinary bad temper. He banged about, swallowed his tea, and sighed over the paper."

"I know," said the baby, "they all do it."

"Well," said the child, "then mother came in. 'Good Heavens!' cried father, 'what on earth's happened?' 'Nothing, my dear,' said mother. 'Where's your—your figure?' 'Don't be foolish, go on with your breakfast.' 'But,' cried father, spluttering, 'where's your waist?' 'My dear,' said mother, trying to soothe him, 'they are out of fashion.' 'Out of fashion be bothered,' said father, 'I married a woman—not a silk umbrella!'"

"I know," said the baby in blue, "My father gets like that. He was like it this morning."

"Is your mother altered too?" asked the child in white.

"I should just think so," said the baby. "She came down this morning in a soft muslin sheath, with her waist somewhere under her eyebrows, her hair all over the place, and her—well, her legs looked simply ridiculous."

A baby in a perambulator near by woke up

and looked carefully at a lady who was passing.

"Doris," said the baby, screwing up his eyes, "do I see a tree or a parasol walking along over there?"

"You silly boy," said the child in white, "that is mother's great friend, Mrs. Vandaleur. She's the best-dressed woman in London!"

"I didn't recognise her," said the baby in the perambulator. "She looks very different."

"Of course she does," said the child in white. "All well-dressed women do, regularly, four times a year, when they change the fashions."

"Oh!" said the baby, and went to sleep again.

"Well, then what happened?" asked the baby in blue.

"Father said," the child in white replied, "'Of course you can't possibly go out in that.' 'Don't be absurd, dear,' said mother, 'it's the new fashion.' 'If that's the new, fashion,' said father, 'then I'll be——' 'Hush!' said mother."

The baby in blue laughed.

"'If you would allow me to finish my sentence,' said father," the child in white continued, "'I was about to say, 'I'll be—glad when it's over.' 'Now, what do you know about women's clothes?' said mother. 'For instance,' said father, ignoring the question, 'where on earth are your petticoats?' 'My dear,' said mother, very firmly, 'no decently dressed woman wears them any longer.' 'Nor any shorter either,' said father in an irritating way. 'Yours is a very crude form of humour,' said mother, getting up from the table. 'Yours is a very crude form of taste,' said father, also getting up. 'It isn't supposed to be fashion.' 'I know they are very different,' said father. Then mother went out of the room."

"You know what they are wearing instead?" said the baby in blue.

"Yes," said the child in white, "just like us. Absurd, isn't it?"

"My father," said the baby, "says it is women's lack of individuality."

"So it is," said the child. "Like a lot of monkeys. Never mind what style of looks they have, whether they are fat or thin, short or tall, they follow each other like a flock of sheep. So father said at lunch."

"I miss mother's petticoats," said the baby. "She is so bony to lean against now!"

A little boy came up and joined them. He was crying.

"What's the matter?" asked the baby in blue in a soothing voice, "Don't cry."

"I don't like my mother any more," he sobbed. "She and a lot of ladies are walking about in the gardens with only coloured nightgowns on."

"That's the new fashion," said the child

in white, knowingly.

"I don't like it," he sobbed.

"Nobody does," said the child.

"Then why do they do it?" he sobbed again.

"Well, you see," explained the baby in blue, "ladies are very funny. If somebody else abroad, says, 'How's business?' and they say, 'Bad,' then the first somebody and the second somebody think of the most expensive change they can make in the fashion, and then——"

"Then," said the child in white, "they give a lot of beautiful women dresses for nothing, and they walk about and tell all the women they meet that the new fashion is sloping shoulders, and no hips, and high waists, and small feet, and they all run to their dressmakers and get altered."

"And spend a lot of their husbands' money," said the baby, sagely.

"Father said this morning," said the little boy who had ceased to cry, "'Where's that nice brown thing you had a week ago?' And mother said, 'My dear, I'm simply in rags—

that was out days ago.' 'I'd sooner see you in rags,' said father, 'than in that indelicate bath-wrap.' 'Oh, you don't understand!' said mother."

"You see," said the baby in blue, "it's one way people have of pretending to be richer than they are. If ladies' fashions didn't change every year there would be no competition. Nowadays you need heaps and heaps of new clothes, or people would think you weren't smart, and to be smart is far, far more than to have good taste, or to be beautiful, or witty, or good, or even rich."

"Why doesn't every lady wear what suits her best?" asked the little boy.

The children threw up their hands in horror.

"My dear little boy," said the child in white, "that's got nothing whatever to do with it."

"People who are smart don't wear what suits them; they wear what suits smarter people. Just as you are getting used to this new fashion it will change."

"Will mother change again?" asked the little boy, a little tearfully.

"Certainly she will change," said the baby in blue. "Next spring we may all powder our hair, and be fat, and wear petticoats. You never know."

"And what happens if you can't get fat?" asked the little boy.

"Then you're just old-fashioned and frumpy until fat goes out of fashion again."

"It seems rather hard," said the little boy.

"Women's lives," said the child in white, "are very hard. They never knew what shaped figure will come in next."

"Oh, please, why?"

"Well," said the baby in blue, "I'll tell

you a secret. No woman has the courage of her own opinions when it comes to dress. The straight-featured, classical women dare not dress to suit their particular form of beauty. Fashion says they've got to dress like Dresden shepherdesses. The pretty, fluffy women are terrified when a classical fashion comes in, but they do their best to look like Greek goddesses dressed in Paris. The big, rosy Englishwomen never see their own absurdity when they dress like skinny ladies of the First Empire."

The baby in the perambulator woke up again. "Oh, Oh!" he cried. "Doris, look at that roll of newspaper that's been out in the rain, walking about!"

"Hush! dear, hush!" said the child in white, "that's a lady."

"What's the difference between the woman and a lady?" said the baby.

"A woman, my dear, dresses to please herself, and a lady dresses to please her dressmaker."

"Look out!" said the baby in blue, "here's nurse coming back."

"How she rustles!" said the child in white.

"Doesn't she?" said the baby, "she's got all mother's silk petticoats on."

"Now, then, you children," said nurse, coming up to them, "what are you chattering about?"

"Dolls," replied the little girls, truthfully.
—Dion Clayton Calthorp

A rumour has been going the rounds of late in Bangkok that a movement was on foot to stir up the anti-Japanese boycott here, says the *Siam Free Press*. It was stated that certain Chinese arrived from Canton in connection with the movement, and that some secret meetings were held to discuss the matter and to decide on what means to adopt, but by all accounts opinion was very much divided on the subject, and finally it was decided not to enforce the boycott in Bangkok.

THIS morning, says Thursday's *Times of Malaya*, word was brought in both by Mr. Walt Jackson and Mr. Maddon, Manager of the Ipoh Marble Works, that a tiger had been seen just at the back of the quarries and was hiding in the bluka thereabouts. Enquiry this morning failed to find any local sportsman with the leisure to enable him to go out at a moment's notice, so that it is not unlikely that the brute will be able to get away without any trouble. It is some time since a tiger was reported so close to the town.

The Telok Anson correspondent of the *Perak Pioneer* says:—

Mr. C. E. Spooner, C.M.G., from Kuala Lumpur, and Messrs. H. C. Barnard and A. M. Stevenson from Taiping, arrived here last Tuesday to see what progress is being

made in the building of the Town and Harbour railway stations, at Changkat Jong, and Sungei Jelawat. The foundations of the latter are already laid, and the pillars up, and it is expected that it may be finished about the end of the year.

A LONDON letter to the *Times of Ceylon* says:—

The subject of freight on rubber from Singapore is being taken up by the Rubber Growers' Association, as the Shipping Ring has lately raised this to 60s. without apparent justification. As rubber is packed in tea chests it is difficult to see why it should be subject to a much higher rate; and the answer put forward by one of the large shipping companies, that rubber can afford to pay these rates, has nothing to do with the case.

THE work in connection with the erection of attap buildings in Kampong Bahru, Kuala Lumpur, for the Agri-Horticultural Show is making remarkable progress. There are now buildings there 700 by 50 feet in extent which have been completed, and these cover an area of 35,000 square feet. At present there is a stable with 20 stalls and an 8 feet verandah nearing completion. When it is borne in mind that, at the end of last month, there was not a sign of any building at the place referred to, it speaks well, says the *Malay Mail*, for the energy displayed by the Engineer in charge of the work, Mr. H. R. Moullin, of the P. W. D. Factory. All the workmen employed in the place are Chinese mining-kongsi builders, who are well adapted for the kind of work in question, and it is no doubt owing to the engagement of this class of men that the work of construction has progressed so rapidly.