



Bloomingdale's Illustrated 1886 Catalog

Bloomingdale Brothers

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In the spring and summer of 1886, a popular New York department store advertised its wares in a finely illustrated catalog featuring everything from clothing, accessories, and housewares, to jewelry, leather goods, school supplies, and dry goods. This excellent reproduction of that now-rare Bloomingdale Brothers catalog provides fascinating views of approximately 1,700 mid-Victorian consumer items (all finely drawn and easy to reproduce) together with the original descriptive captions.

An informative introduction by Nancy Villa Bryk, Curator of Domestic Life at the Henry Ford Museum and Greenfield Village, precedes an entertaining panorama of fashions and other articles that include a stylish boucle jacket trimmed in velvet, a woman's tight-waisted riding costume, a variety of little girls' checkered pinafores (averaging about 35 cents apiece), infants' bibs, nurses' caps and aprons, men's nightshirts, suspenders, and smoking jackets; hosiery, hair goods, notions, parasols, silverware, toys, upholstery goods, fine millinery, delicate white laces, exquisite gold jewelry (remarkably inexpensive by today's standards), as well as "willow ware, walking sticks, zephyr worsteds, and fancy articles."

Artists and designers will find this catalog a splendid sourcebook of copyright-free period graphics; antique collectors, historians, costume enthusiasts, and nostalgia lovers will find it indispensable for dating and identifying antiques, clothing, and other vintage items.



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