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**LONDON AND PARIS FASHIONS**



HE coloured straw hat and bonnet shapes seem to be catching on so far; and the plateaux of coloured straw for working on to lace foundations seem likely to become popular. An example of the latter novelty, just recently sketched from an ultra-modish source, forms the subject of my first illustration. The foundation here is of black lace; the straw plateau of rose colour; while black ostrich tips, fan bows of black lace, and a diamond buckle, complete the 'altogether' of a stylish and becoming chapeau. I was much amused at a remark recently heard from an artisan, who, with a neatly-attired little wife, was gazing in a smart milliner's window at the fearful and wonderful confections therein displayed. 'They are atrociously gay, aren't they?' he asked. 'Atrociously gay' the millinery of the hour undoubtedly is, and seems likely to be throughout the season. Some 1830 bonnets—as in my initial—are being displayed in the West End windows and show-rooms. I have not yet seen them in wear, but it is very probable they will be during the summer, at garden parties and race meetings, a good deal worn. They

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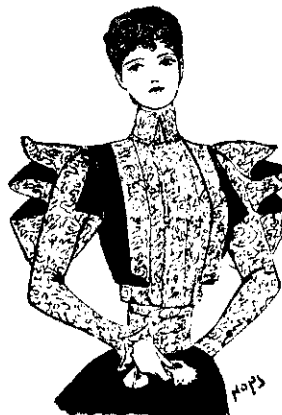


COLOURED STRAW PLATEAU HAT.

are nearly always entirely white. Entirely white hats are also *en evidence*, and are quite a relief to the eye amidst such a glare of colour. They are certainly distinguished looking, but, oh! my sisters, carefully consider the subject of your complexions ere donning them, for they are a trying ordeal. White, however, is to some complexions an assistance, as it is an illuminator, and more frequently than not a necessity near the face—hence the fashion for centuries of some kind of collar or ruffle, of white linen, lace or muslin—its absence, excepting in cases of particularly clear and fair complexions causing a dead, or dirty, aspect of skin. It is the absent illuminating bit of white at the throat that makes mourning so unbecoming to so many people far more than the black itself, as black again is an assistance to the complexion, enhancing what fairness it possesses.

When 'she will, she will,' we know, and Dr. Wood's raid against veils has not, I fancy, disturbed the rest of many wilful shes. Now we can shelter, too, under the opinion of various eminent lady doctors, who, though not always wearing veils themselves (an important point), do not consider there is any harm likely to ensue from their wear. Even the spotted ones may be worn in safety they consider, provided the wearer does not read in them: a note for railway travelling.

A very smart bodice is shown in the second sketch which commends itself highly for afternoon wear, or would even make a good dinner bodice for informal occasions. The bodice itself is made shirt fashion, and is of sapphire-



A STYLISH BODICE.

blue silk, the turn-over collar and centre pleat being edged by a narrow Valenciennes lace. The folded band

and sleeves are also of silk. The short Bolero is of sapphire velvet, the revers and lining to the novel beadings to sleeves being also of silk. The skirt to this stylish bodice might be either corresponding silk or velvet. Brocade may be used in place of plain silk.

This spring a woman's wardrobe is not complete without a shoulder cape. They hold their own with remarkable tenacity, which is not a little surprising, since large sleeves are no longer an excuse for their popularity. Capes are so easily and conveniently handled, and are so dressy and becoming to the majority of women, that they are still kept in the foreground. They do not, however, begin to have the style that a well-made and well-fitted jacket has, and there have been imported this season many that are particularly good examples of the style worn in Paris. A shoulder cape that has just been brought over for private use is composed of black accordion-pleated Brussels net, which was trimmed with many rows of black No. 1 ribbon before it was pleated. The ribbon had such a feathery edge that it was nearly all fluff, and so gave a very soft effect. Several of these ruffles composed the cape, over them fell in full folds some very old and heavy white Italian lace which once belonged to one of the late Popes. Around the neck extended a full ruffle of the net, with black double-faced satin ribbon, and black silk poppies with grass green centres.

So many of this season's bodices blouse at the back as well as at the front, although to a less prominent extent naturally. This should never be attempted unless by those of tall lithe figures with small waists. When it is possible to becomingly wear them they certainly give one a smart appearance and stamp the gown with the impress of 1897.

The departure of the 'sac' jacket is not yet, it seems. The Parisiennes are sporting some particularly handsome and dainty specimens, and an example recently from the gay city forms the subject of my last illustration. This coat is in piece with the skirt, both being of purple



SAC COAT FROM PARIS.

cloth. The coat, it will be seen, is cut to allow of an under front, fastening invisibly on the left side. This is of white velvet, embroidered with purple braid, the tabs and cuffs being of the same, and the fur edging is narrow black sable.

Although *le petit mot* from Paris is the disappearance of white glacé kid walking gloves, still the smartest shops there show just as many as ever. At the 'Carnival de Venice,' on the Boulevard, which is now considered authority for women's gloves as well as men's, there is a most tempting variety, the only difference being the scarcity of stitching on the back. Tan gloves are again fashionable, for they are too well liked to remain long in the background.

**HELOISE.**

How to become slender! Let the maiden inclined to embonpoint follow this advice, and her form should become as willow as she could wish. Rise early and take a cold bath, rubbing vigorously afterwards with a coarse towel or flesh brush. Take a cupful of water before breakfast. Take one small cup of tea at breakfast, some dry toast, boiled fish or a small cutlet, and a baked apple or a little fruit. At dinner, which should be at midday, take white fish or meat, dry toast or stale bread, vegetables or fruit, either fresh or stewed; for supper, toast, salad, fruit, and six ounces of wine or water. Hot water with lemon juice in it is also good for supper. When you have followed all these rules, and find yourself fairy-like in proportion, then you may begin to contemplate smart clothes such as only the slender can wear.

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