

LONDON AND PARIS FASHIONS.

PARAGRAPHS ON PARASOLS.



ET again we are reminded that quantities of lace are used on this season's dresses, much of it real and costly, but most of it imitation. The perfection to which it has been brought has for some months been the wonder of experts, and the novice may well be deceived by the beauty of the fabric and the exact reproduction of the varied stitchery. Narrow lace is used by the mile to trim the skirts of fashionable dresses, which are covered with tiny tucks or flounces, each edged with narrow Valenciennes, tuchon, or guipure. The yokes of such dresses are often covered with lace and edged all round with a frill of it. The revival of the



pelerine is another cause of the abundant use of lace, the long ends being almost invariably finished with a deep fall of it. Black lace mantles are still in the greatest possible favour, and will become almost a livery with elderly women now that the Queen has appeared in public wearing one. Her Majesty's is set into a yoke of finely-cut jet, and is of the fashion known as half-length.

The bonnet which forms the subject of my first sketch this week is composed of a very small cap of green velvet, jetted in black, and finished with large, bold bows of black lisse, lightly jetted with black, and arranged fan-fashion.



The green velvet strings are fastened under a rosette of the same. It is one of those eccentric shapes that suit but a limited number of heads. One of these was worn at Sandown Park, in orange velvet and deep Tuscan-tinted lace, by a brunette, whose vivid colouring was well suited to the proximity of such brilliant tints.

Though very few birds are worn on bonnets, the aigrette is only too often seen, and frequently above faces so gentle and eyes so kind as to produce the conviction that the wearers cannot know the cruelties practised on the unfortunate birds in order to obtain these ornaments. Barbarously torn from them in the nesting season, the dainty plumes are brought away to deck the fashionable bonnet, while the bird father and mother are left to die a lingering death from pain and thirst in sight of the nestlings who cry to them for food. The little ones die of starvation. That is the story of the delicate, feathery ornaments that are used by the hands of West-end milliners. Surely it needs but to be widely known for our tender-hearted sisters to abjure the wearing of them. There are so many other beautiful trimmings that there is no real self-denial needed in the matter, even supposing that such would not be exercised on behalf of the miserable birds. Aigrettes of flower buds are particularly pretty, and have no associations with slaughter. One would fancy that no woman could feel really happy while displaying in her headgear a silent but eloquent witness of the inhumanity of man to the innocent

and helpless creatures on whom Nature has bestowed this beautiful adornment.

The pretty gown shown in my second illustration is made of pale blue crepon, with a vest and fore-sleeves of Indian muslin crepon drawn together in little puffs. The rosettes are in cream coloured lace, and the dainty little bonnet is in the same. The skirt is quite plain, and fits with accuracy on the hips, though made with sufficient width to be very full round the ankles.

If only Englishwomen will follow a bright example that is now being set them by a mother and daughter of exalted rank, and give a chance to the production of English looms, there are bright days dawning for many a humble British home.

My third sketch shows a gown of fawn-coloured summer cloth which is suitable for dress occasions, such as weddings, garden parties, etc., and is yet sufficiently simple to be appropriate to girls whose financial circumstances are not of the most brilliant description. The sleeves and yoke are in tucked cream coloured silk, with black velvet epaulettes and bands of the same terminating in the now indispensable rosettes. A frill of cream coloured lace falls over the arms and finishes the top of the cloth bodice.

Sunshades are remarkably delicate and fragile this season, chiffon being largely used as trimming, and sometimes composing the entire parasol. Striped silk is in much favour for sunshades, but perhaps the most fashionable are those made of stripes of moiré, alternating with those of guipure or Chantilly.

A woman of fashion is now distinguished by the costliness and decoration of her parasol handle. Those of carved ivory or dyed mother of pearl inlaid with silver or gold are most exquisite; so are also the long tortoise shell handles costing from £2 upward.

There is a slight flattening on the top perhaps, and a preponderance of transparent effects. The ivory tips are



a novel addition. Most of the ribs are now covered to match the outside. Also some original ideas are introduced in the form of flat ribbon and passementerie tassels and bows of hemmed silk.

THE TRANSPARENT PARASOLS.

All sorts of white parasols will have an augmented value this year, not only at the sea-shore and in country places, but everywhere else. The rage for transparency is pronounced. In lace and chiffon parasols the variety is astonishing. Most of the full chiffons have a foundation of thin marceline silk, crepe de chine, or bolting cloth.

Open work bands of insertion are used, applied in fanciful geometric patterns. A most becoming light is thus thrown over the head and face. To be sure many persons object to this transparency first introduced last summer, and it is said that numerous such parasols purchased at the beginning of last season were returned at midsummer to be lined; but they are certainly very pretty and entirely appropriate for youthful complexions.

BLACK PARASOLS.

The shops are filled with innumerable designs in black parasols, for which there is a steady demand. One of black bolting cloth, with black covered ribs and ebony handle, is profusely spangled in a constellation pattern along the ribs.

A favourite black pattern called the 'Marquise' has an openwork band inserted in a satin bow at the top, and a carved ebony handle. Another of heavy gros-grain has a deep fall of lace caught up at each point in a graceful festoon, with a flat passementerie tassel; the handle is made of cut jet in encochous on ebony.

One of the very newest for half-mourning is of white crepe with an eight-inch band of heavy openwork lace in black, set on flat around the edge, and finished on both sides with a narrow band of black passementerie. A puffing of lace over crepe finishes the top. Those for deep mourning are still made of gros grain, faced with bands of crinkled crepe, although the inserted bands of black bolting cloth are equally as appropriate and considerably newer

LACE COVERS.

Covers of one-piece lace in Duchesse, point d'Alencon and other expensive laces are made up over bolting cloth, the ribs being covered with white satin; the handles for these admit a loop-hole for extravagance, being of carved ivory, or mother-of-pearl set with precious stones. Less costly covers of lace are shown in the Escorial patterns of black, white or ecru. One in the bow-knot design with a stick of French oak is purchasable as low as 30s.

Parasols of flowered grenadine, and in plaid gauze over cardinal, are also made very full. Those of black gauze striped with gold, blue, lavender or scarlet moiré are made in the same fashion, with English rustic sticks, and cost £2. Not a few white chiffon parasols, made in this way have bunches of violets or wild roses nesting amidst the soft puffiness at the top.

FOR COMMON USE.

There are many satisfactory designs exhibited quite within the reach of small parties. One of navy blue armure, striped with white, having a Whangee stick is cheap, also plaid taffetas having an ecru ground with satin stripes of brown, blue and gold. They have Wicshells sticks, an Austrian wood. These plaid parasols, by the way, are extremely difficult to make, and are only entrusted to the best workmen. They must be cut with extreme exactitude so that when sewed together the cross stripes will meet in radiating points, and present a harmonious geometric pattern. They are finished up in the coaching fashion, severely plain, with the hemmed bow at the handle. An old rose, black, and ecru taffeta, has a twisted Whangee stick with a bone top, and tips of bone. A puff of black satin ornaments the top.

The Empire design is prominent in an imported novelty, the cover being of plain gros grain in quiet shades, the handle being of woven wood and straw. The basket idea is also carried out in covers, where it is shown in figured satin, in which black is combined either with old rose, turquois, gold, or steel.

The Empire design is also made of figured satin, black with a colour. One of heliotrope and black has a three-inch box-pleating around the entire edge.

One imported parasol is made of ecru net and trimmed vertically, that is, along the ribs, with strips of velvet ribbon about two inches in width. These strips shade rather abruptly from deep petunia into light buff. A deep fluted fall of ecru point de gene ornaments the edge and fills in the spaces formed by the spreading of the ribbon trimming. Thus the top of the parasol presents only petunia velvet to the eye, while at the outside edge nothing but buff is seen.

Another, similarly treated with narrow gros-grain ribbons, was of black point d'esprit, the edge being finished with a narrow fall of lace, over which the strips of ribbon fell in loops.

In fact, so diverse are the materials and accessories utilised in parasols now displayed, that one can indicate to buyers only the salient differences in present styles over those for sale in the shops last year.

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