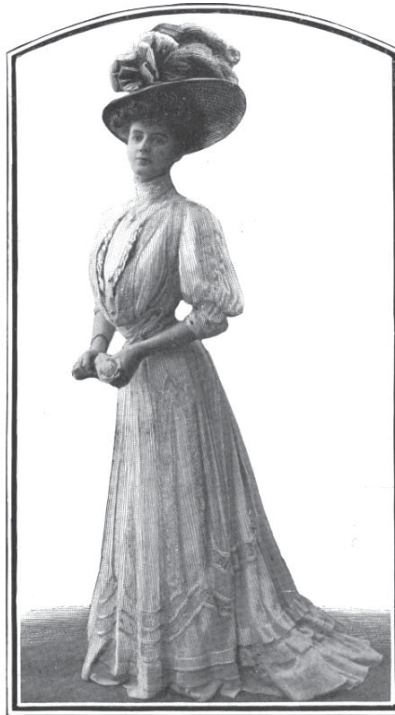


## WORLDLY WOMAN

FRANCE should never have been a Republic. She owes it to us to provide a brilliant example of the fashions she enforces—an example, by the way, we are not likely to get in the estimable wives of her Presidents. Since she has taken it on herself to foist her ideas on an obedient world, the least she could do was to give us a leader we could copy without misgivings. True, we have any amount of leaders—too many, and in their multitude there is little wisdom. Instead of a queen to guide us, we have a bevy of actresses, and a few notorious beauties belonging to a world which, by no stretch of charity, we could call the great one. The harm done by these models of Fashion, for whom nothing is too exaggerated, or too expensive, is greater than one imagines. All the world flocks to Longchamp in the spring and autumn, there to seek inspiration, and it derives it, alas! from the things that “jump to the eyes.” Naturally, it copies the clothes that are too *chic* to be *comme il faut*, rather than those too *comme il faut* to be altogether *chic*. Quiet distinction on the person of a mere aristocrat cannot compete with the screaming novelties flaunted by the others. Those who are “in the know” are careful; but even Bond Street has been known to make mistakes.

Now, if there were a queen in France, those fine ladies, with their forty-guinea hats and their five-hundred-guinea coats, would cease to be leading lights. Even were she more *grande dame* than *chic*, her ways would still impose themselves. In France one adores Royalty. The cut of our King's waistcoats, for instance, is law in that Paris *très snob* that orders its coats in Piccadilly. Once, I remember, how implicit faith in the good taste of Royalty led to uncomfortable results. There was a picture on the walls of a certain year's Academy which represented the King in a frock-coat and patent leather boots. Unfortunately, the artist had seen fit to paint the latter with distinctly brown reflections: there is no dictating to the eye of the painter. No allowance, however, was made for artistic license, and the news went round Parisian circles that the “first gentleman in Europe” wore brown boots with a frock-coat. Accordingly, nothing else appeared on the Boulevards for many a day, and in the depths of some obscure *coin de province*, no doubt, they are wearing them still.



A skirt of pastel blue chiffon has insertions of *filet* lace edged with *rouleaux* of satin in the same shade; the becoming bodice opens over a chemisette of Malines. Revers in black satin and Irish lace. Model by La Bie. Photograph by Henri Manuel.

THE CHARM OF SIMPLICITY

I wish I had some convenient Royalty, or some *canard*, to blame for the cut of the newest skirt. Evidence points to a famous *couturier* of the Rue de la Paix, for the skirt is more or less on First Empire lines, to which period he has been faithful for more than two years. This autumn he has gone back to the Greek idea that originally inspired the *Premier Empire*. Instead of a skirt, he is giving us an *effet de statue*; a cloth as supple as a kid glove is dragged round the hips, moulding as tightly as possible the limbs of the unlucky wearer, whose proportions, too often, are far from classical. Besides, a statue is allowed to remain comfortably on its pedestal, while we are obliged to drangle our skin-tight draperies over unsympathetic pavements. If only Monsieur X, in all the glorious freedom of his incomparable trousers, would have the kindness to remember this, and abandon his studies from the antique! I have small hope of such benevolence; the new skirt has come to stay, at least all the winter. It is skin-tight, rather high at the waist, without the accustomed dip in front, and without a wrinkle to give it ease over the hips. There are to be no petticoats; of course, none are possible; besides they would leave too much to the imagination, and that would be altogether unfashionable. Instead there are satin knickers, either in black or in pink, all fluffy with lace, and bows, and shining with diamond buckles. But one must not imagine that the absence of elaborate silken *frou-frou* is an economy; I have heard that those satin trifles cost a mere nothing of ten or eleven guineas. But these are Paris prices.

Luckily, the classical sheath is not universal, and there are tunics, double skirts and draperies for the timid and the stout. These are the *dernier cri*; and, as things go nowadays, it is a *cri* that is likely to last. Silk fringes for day, and pearl and gold ones for evening dresses play an important part in all these arrangements. If we want novelty this season we must look for it in the skirt. Bodices have hardly changed at all, only they are so laden with embroideries and lace that they contrast too much with the skirts they accompany. It is an effect to be aimed at, all the same, by those who aspire to

the latest. The sleeves, of which great things were expected, remain practically unaltered. They are still rather Japanese, and very often still short, only a trifle longer than they were last summer. The lace mitten has not had the success that was promised. It goes admirably with Princess gowns of heavy brocade, but all those arrangements are apt to have a *Mélanide* look, rather trying in a prosaic age.

Hats are growing more picturesque daily. Almost all of them are in satin, generally purple, and lined with white, or the lightest heliotrope. They are really very pretty, and the only objection that might be raised is that they are almost too beautiful to go with the severity of the present-day tailor-made. To correct this, or perhaps only for a change, we are promised small hats of soft felt and absolute simplicity. Underneath them the hair must be more elaborate than ever. This means a Pompadour pad, a plait, and a great many curls, as well as the hair one happens to have. To be successful one must be able to convince the beholder that all this improbable quantity is one's very own—not the least difficult of tasks nowadays.

I notice that no woman with any claim to a temperament ever dresses her hair, as we understand hair-dressing to-day. Fashionable clothes, it seems, do not prevent emotions, but a carefully waved head was never yet known to cover a soul, that is if a soul may be covered. Sarah Bernhardt, in her modern plays, undulates through her scenes in gowns that are poetically fashionable, but her hair remains the same tousled mop we have always known, and would forgive in no one but in Sarah. Nor is she the only one; it seems as if the *Ondulation Marcel* were incompatible with genius, and a well-brushed head a certain bar to immortality.

L. S. R.

It is a pleasure to be able to recommend woollen underclothes that are soft, elastic, and really do not shrink. Doctor Rasurel has invented a kind, made of pure Australian wool and peat, particularly useful for rheumatic people; but they are equally delightful for everyone, and the only things that make an English winter bearable. His new depôt is at 112, Shaftesbury Avenue.



Broadtail is the fur of the season, and for softness and suppleness it cannot be surpassed. This charming coat is a good example of its *chic*. Model by Grünwaldt. Photograph by Henri Manuel.

A BROADTAIL COAT



A black cloth skirt edged with a Greek key pattern, and a long coat in chiffon velvet embroidered all over in raised motifs of grey and silver, make up a gown that is both magnificent and *distingué*. Model by Martial and Armand. Photograph by Henri Manuel.

TOILETTE DE CERÉMONIE