

Paul Poiret's Fashions in Harper's BAZAR



Charming Boudoir Cap and Pendent Ornaments by Poiret.

IN the January number of HARPER'S BAZAR, Paul Poiret, the leading man dressmaker of Paris, contributes his second fascinating article upon the philosophy of fashions, illustrating it with his own sketches and photographs of his gowns.

Some of these exquisite dresses are shown on this page by permission of HARPER'S BAZAR, together with excerpts from M. Poiret's interesting text.

By Paul Poiret,
in HARPER'S BAZAR.

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THE articles written about my trip to America have been shown me, now, upon my return to Paris, and I am quite aghast at what I am supposed to have said. Happily for me, I hope that the public will judge me by my work; not by my words, for the latter have, in most cases, been singularly distorted. The only statement in all these articles which I wish to repeat—and again and again—is that all styles are admissible, provided they suit the women who wear them. *Eclectisme* is my watchword.

Those who understood me to make such statements mistook my meaning entirely. I said that a woman should wear whatever is becoming to her, and nothing that is not becoming. That is my first, last and only principle.

It may be enlarged, of course, and developed. But it is the fundamental principle of good dressing. For good dressing, as I have said, does not lie in following the fashions, but in wearing whatever is suitable. And since I so firmly maintain the principle, I could not possibly have said that women should dress in this, that or another fashion.

I am not opposed to trouserettes. I think that in many cases they would be convenient, preserving the slim outline around the ankles of which the modern women seem so fond, while, at the same time, they would give ease in walking. And they would not make a woman look masculine, as has been averred. Far from it. I have always found that the more masculine the attire a woman wears the more feminine she really looks. Take the tailor-made suit, for instance. When it was first *lancé* hands were raised in horror at it. And yet, to-day, who would say that it is an unwomanly style? Isn't it, on the contrary, not only the most practical but the most becoming of feminine fashions? And the sailor hat—surely that is a masculine style of headgear. But did it ever make a woman look masculine? I always think there is nothing so feminine as a crop of dainty curls showing beneath the brim of a jaunty sailor hat.

But while I am not opposed to trouserettes, I would not advise a woman to wear them unless she is so situated that she can, in the beginning, at least, brave conventions. The world is slow to adopt innovations, and the woman who dares to launch the trouserettes must be prepared to take the consequences which the wearing of these garments would undoubtedly bring upon her. If she does not fear criticism, then I think it is the right fashion for her.

As to the slit skirt, I have this to say: The slit skirt is the only form



At Left—Striking Poiret Evening Gown. Cuirass of Dull Gold Metal Embroidery on Yellow Brocade. Ballet Skirt of White Tulle, Under Skirt, White Satin.

Centre—Poiret Red Velvet Gown; Tunic and Bodice of Lace, Chains of Pearls.

At Right—Biscuit Colored Satin Gown, Rich with Metal Lace and Girdle of Rhinestones.

in which the extremely tight skirt can be worn. Many women like the extremely tight skirt. I can understand this is a measure. If a woman has a beautiful figure, the tight skirt gives her a very graceful line. I would not advise other women to wear the extremely tight skirt. If it is brought so tightly around the lower part of the limbs as almost to reveal them, then, of course, the skirt must be slit to permit the wearer to move about. And as I have said

above, if a woman desires to dress in this fashion, and if it is becoming to her, I advocate the slit skirt.

But I should not dream of asking all women to adopt it. For the majority I should advocate a skirt of medium width—wide enough to walk in. I think, however, that it is not necessary to take very long strides. They are most ungraceful. I consider a skirt about a yard and a half to two yards wide suitable to most women, and in skirts of that width

a woman can learn to walk gracefully. If the two-yard skirt hampers the feet to the degree of awkwardness, a wider one should be worn. The designs illustrating this article are some of the gowns I have planned since I returned to Paris from your country. You will notice that they are all different, and it will be very

hard to point a dominant idea.

It is my theory that there should be as many styles of dress as there are women. Although I am considered the high-priest of fashion, its system of rules has no more bitter enemy than myself.

One of these sketches shows a majestic gown for opera or large recep-

tions. It is composed of a heavy brocade drapery caught in a wide diamond-studded belt. It is an adaptation of the gowns worn by the *grandes dames* of Venice, in the days of its splendor, and it brings to mind the sumptuous glories of the Renaissance. It is of old rose and silver and was worn by Madame la Comtesse de Beaur.

The gown of black velvet has a circular *basque* effect, and on it is fastened a crinoline of white chiffon embroidered with heavy black dots. The train is formed by three long points.

This fascinating article will be found in full in the January number of HARPER'S BAZAR.



Above is a Poiret Gown of Back Velvet with Crinoline of White Chiffon.

Below is a Poiret "Majestic Gown" for Opera or Large Receptions. It is of Old Rose and Silver, and Worn by Madame Le Comtesse de Beaur.

Both Are Sketches Made by Poiret Especially for HARPER'S BAZAR.



"An adaptation of the gowns worn by the grandes dames of Venice in the days of its splendor."

Tea Serving and Tea Making—By Mrs. Frank Learned,

Author of "The Etiquette of New York To-day."

IN our great cities, where distances and many interruptions prevent frequent meetings, the threads of friendship may be taken up at teas; plans may be formed among friends for future social pleasures, and pleasant acquaintances may be made. In small cities, or in the country, and in college towns informal teas may be very delightful occasions. A hostess who understands how to bring people together, and who has the firmness to make a habit of staying at home one afternoon in the week during the season, may create a centre of interest which will aid in her popularity. Friends will gravitate toward a centre where they are sure of a cordial welcome, a pleasant

chat, the chance of meeting agreeable people, and last but not least, where you may find a good cup of tea.

Truly it is a mark of courtesy and hospitality that a hostess should have tea carefully made. She should be as sensitive about having a poor cup of tea served in her house as to have a badly prepared dish offered at her dinner table. Nothing is more discomforting to a guest than to be given tea which is strong and bitter with tannin from long standing, or which is tasteless and watery. It is far from being "the cup that cheers." It has not "the power of calm, placid and benignant exhilaration" claimed for it

and which is its due, and the unfortunate guest is forced to choose between swallowing the mixture or finding a "place where the offending cup of tea may be put down unobtrusively on a table.

A critic has remarked that life is a success in the home where tea is brewed to perfection. Thus is the mistress of the household proved to be a thoughtful provider of essentials and one who understands the philosophy of life in the dispensing of her hospitalities.

Tea served in the afternoon is an established custom in England, in great houses and in small. The time for relaxation after the occupations, amusements or sports of

the day makes the interval before dressing for dinner very enjoyable. The tea table seems laden with a variety of delectable things, and it goes without saying that the tea is well made and of a delicious flavor.

In many houses here tea is served every afternoon, whether visitors are expected or not. The tea tray is brought in at about five o'clock and is put on a small table over which a linen cloth has been placed. On the tray should be a hot-water kettle with alcohol lamp underneath, a teapot, sugar bowl with sugar tongs, cream jug, tea caddy, several cups and saucers with teaspoons laid on the saucers. Sandwiches, biscuits, toast, muffins and cake are

served. Small plates and little linen doilies are in readiness for use.

Tea should be of a superior quality and delicate flavor. The rule for making tea is one teaspoonful for each person and one for the pot. Before putting in the tea the teapot should be scalded. Freshly boiling water should be poured on the tea. The decoction may stand a few minutes, then more boiling water added and the infusion should be poured immediately. If one is receiving a number of guests fresh tea should be constantly made and two teapots provided for the purpose. The hostess may pour the tea herself, or ask a reliable friend to take this duty.