

Near-Spring Furs and Near-Nothing Lingerie



The "Blue Bird" Costume, Developed in Blue Velours de Laine. The Straight Front Waistcoat and Cutaway Jacket Are Most Chic.

LADY DUFF-GORDON, the famous "Lucile" of London, and foremost creator of fashions in the world, writes each week the fashion article for this newspaper, presenting all that is newest and best in styles for well-dressed women.

Lady Duff-Gordon's new Paris establishment brings her into close touch with that centre of fashion.

Lady Duff-Gordon's American establishment is at Nos. 37 and 39 West Fifty-seventh street, New York

By Lady Duff-Gordon ("Lucile")

JUST how far and fast the fur fad will last is an open question. I am inclined to think that fur will disappear with great suddenness as soon as the Riviera season opens. This fad started last August and it "took" so violently that, of a verity, it must be shortened.

The minute a fad becomes popularized, its death knell sounds. Fur is not only used in gowns and hats, but in lingerie and night gowns! But of this, I will tell you later in my letter.

Bearing in mind the thought that fur will go with the winter winds, I am sending you some first Spring designs, and as you will see, there is less evidence of fur than in the winter costumes. But the muff remains, of course.

The Blue Bird costume is a favorite of mine. It is created in a dark blue velours de laine. The skirt is one of the few plain models on which fashion delights to smile. It is the coat which brings happiness. Is it not delightful? And withal, so simple. It buttons snugly to the collar, across the chest. The cross piece fastens with two buttons over a waistcoat of bright sulphur woolen cloth. The whole effect is severe but most smart.

Rather a contrast is the "Dinar" afternoon wrap, of mustard colored cloth and brown skunk fur, which is an excellent model for early Spring. The muff, of the fur, may be a bit oppressive in appearance, but it is necessary to complete the costume.

In the next picture there is a muff which is more suggestive of Spring. It is made of brown and green plaid silk, edged with dyed fox. The costume with which it is worn is a simple little affair, designed for a very pretty debutante. The fabric is the serviceable charmeuse and the shade is apple green. The bodice, so girlish in its design, has a novel neck decoration and a new button arrangement. These buttons extend down the skirt several inches. The fold on the left side is an offset to the fur edged slit.

The bell shaped hat, edged with fur, is suggestively demure and girlish.

More pretentious in fabric, if not in design, is the purple plush costume with its white turn back collar, and stunning waistcoat of lined velvet. The whole costume is white with violet satin. The hem is turned up at the back and sides so as to show this lining.

Of course, my lady wears a purple hat with an oprey fantasia and, of course, she carries an ermine muff.

More than a hint of the Spring fashion is given in the blue-gray taffeta costume which I have named "Woods in Spring." The short, rounded coat is excellent; the skirt, draped in the back and gathered at the feet is equally excellent. The belt or girde outlining the waist is decorated with a queer gold and silver ornament.

Taffetas are to be very chic, in fact a taffeta season is immediately ahead of us.



Dinar Wrap of Mustard Colored Cloth, Trimmed with Brown Skunk Fur. The Open Neck Effect is Becoming and Will Remain Chic for Many Months.

naturally enough, the very shapes of our undergarments are changing to conform with the shapes of our outer clothes.

The very newest nightdress is slit up the left side from the hem—almost to the knee, the opening being edged or softened by a little frilling of the lace which figures again on the very low-cut neck and the short sleeves.

But really the said slit is not as noticeable as you might imagine, for the reason that the nightdress itself is made of the faintest flesh-pink nylon and is of such a flimsy transparency that it is hardly visible to the naked eye!

However, the fact remains that the fashion for the slit skirt has now—and is the fullest and most literal sense of the word—reached its limit! Then there is another new style and sensation in the way of the robe de nuit—really the merely ordinary term of "nightdress" is hardly applicable to such an exquisite and ethereal affair!

And this, you must know, is made with a fish-tail train, whose long point is edged with the lace, which is then continued in curved insertion form right up the sides of the closely clinging semi-transparently of palest pink nylon to be joined together eventually in the centre of the very décolleté corsage in the bonds of a beautifully embroidered true lover's knot.

So, altogether, the answer to the riddle of "When is a nightdress not a nightdress?" will emphatically and truly be "When it is nylon—for then it is nothing!" And there are times when it is made of chiffon!

Those other flowered silks, transparencies, of which you had early news, are having the most extraordinary success, so much so that a new model is being introduced to enter into friendly rivalry with those first and absolutely plain creations which banished all trimming save



Debutante Costume of Apple Green Charmeuse, Showing the New Buttoned Effect on Bodice and the Looped Display on the Left Side.

Just the little flat ribbon which was used—and necessary—to catch together, in the centre, the slight fullness of the folds which took becoming and comfortable curves over the bust.

This later—and, some may think, lovelier—shape is still made in nylon, with a floral device patterned on the flimsy white or flesh-pink ground. But its rather deep round at the neck is

followed and formed by a narrow edging and a rather broadly scalloped yoke of fine Valenciennes, the same dainty finish being given to the sleeves, which end their brief and beautiful career just above the elbow.

And then, finally, a narrow insertion of lace pursues its curved career some few inches above the nylon at the hem, and where the flimsy flowered fabric is slit up the right side (for only a modest nine or ten inches in this case!) the lace is carried to the edge, so that its shadowy curves show up prettily against the ankle.

And as to undergarments—they also are arriving at the vanishing point! For they start late and end early, and the newest and most elusive fabric for their working is fine net!

A typical pair of combinations in this particular fabric is such a light

burden that only two long and narrow shoulder-straps of satin ribbon are needed for its upholding. In fact, anything else is rarely used now, as chemises or combinations, whose fabric was continued over the shoulders and there finished off in the once ordinary and universal way with lace edgings and ribbon threadings, would be unsightly and impossible as worn with and clearly visible through the seamless, semi-transparent curves of the fashionable corsage.

For the rest, this particular and pretty net garment is arranged with alternating groups of graduated tucks and tapering insertion of lace and hand-embroidered sprays of flowers, the same decoratively combined design being repeated on the short and narrow legs, and the whole thing being so lovely that it will certainly be worn over the corsets and an inner vest, and so do the duty of camisole and petticoat or knickers as well.

For three garments—one of these being the corset—represent the maximum of underwear which the woman who wants to be fashionable and slender will consent to don this season. Wherefore the sale for chemises and knicker sets has come to a sudden and almost complete end, so far, at any rate, as the lawn and cambric garments are concerned.

Fascinating frivolities in net and nylon and crepe de chine are cer-



"Woods in Spring," a Delightful Morning Costume of Blue-Gray Taffeta Lightly Trimmed with Sealskin.

tainly secured sometimes for wear when corsetless and tea-gowned ease is to be enjoyed; but as the necessary completion for daytime and evening costumes, a very closely fitting and short chemise and outer knickers or culotte of milanese silk or crepe de chine are the invariable and really rather sensible wear.

No attempt is being made to popularize a new "jupon-culotte" of milanese silk, which, by means of a couple of inner and simple fastenings, can either be worn as knickers or petticoat.

It is very cleverly and closely shaped, and it is all bordered with a very slight and flat gauging, which follows its upward curve at the sides and its opening up the front. But, on the whole, I think the actual knickers are more practical as well as smarter.

Some women, however, do not like the constriction of the elastic gathering which finishes them off at the knees, and so a good many are now being made to hang loosely there and are edged with a tiny belting of lace or ribbon, their slight opening at either of the outer side seams being surmounted by a true lovers' knot bow or a wreath of wee flowers.

Altogether, our every item of attire is so delightfully dainty this season that dressing is a special joy—to say nothing of an expense!

But in spite of—and in strange contrast to—the present vogue for essentially feminine and fascinating garments, this present season is also giving more than usual prominence to the pajamas which were once monopolized by the "mere man," but which now, as designed for women's wear, are being made in white, pink, blue or black (tricot—and made to measure, too, please note!)

Others are being modelled in crepe de chine, but, though a certain and very youthful type of girl can manage to look exceedingly piquant in such night attire, it is hopelessly unbecoming to the majority of women. And, really, even for travelling purposes, there is no necessity for it to be adopted, as the very plain night-dress of crepe de chine—modelled on pajama lines, as regards its fastening at the neck and its finishing with a breast pocket—is just as practical and infinitely prettier and more suitable.

And my final word, at the moment, on the subject of underwear and night dresses will be to proclaim crepe de chine as the ideal material and the simplest style of making as the smartest.

I have often previously drawn attention to this particular and perfect fabric, and so I take a certain amount of personal pride in being able to tell you now that it is the success of the season, it being already certain that it will supersede all the ordinary and once universal white laws and so forth.

This fact is, indeed, being so fully realized by the buyers of all the leading outfitting departments that they are, I hear, making their arrangements and placing their orders accordingly.

Let me give you a "tip," however, which will insure some permanent satisfaction with every such newly acquired crepe de chine garment. Be sure to always choose them in pink shadings, as the pure white is apt to acquire a yellowish tinge after a certain amount of washing, whereas the pink will in course of time only grow slightly and still attractively paler.

Some Points Concerning Invitations and Answers

By Mrs. Frank Learned, Author of "The Etiquette of New York To-day."

THE winter season brings a host of social duties which must be fulfilled if one would keep up one's reputation for politeness and keep in touch with friends and acquaintances. It may be a duty to entertain a little in return for hospitalities. It is always a duty to be prompt in replying to invitations. The recognition of the civilities of others is one of the fundamentals of good manners.

Invitations need to be sent out well in advance in order to secure guests in the whirl of the season; three or four weeks in advance for formal dinners and at least two weeks ahead even for very informal luncheons.

The formal card of invitation is used by persons who entertain frequently. It is engraved in script, with open spaces where the name of a guest, the date, hour and the words "at dinner" are written. For a dinner or any evening entertainment the names of host and hostess appear on an invitation. For day occasions, except weddings, the name of the hostess alone is used. An engraved card for evening bears the words:

Mr. and Mrs. Robert Hall request the pleasure of your company _____ on _____ at _____ o'clock.

The engraved address follows. There may be a line written in a lower corner, "To go afterward to the _____ Assembly," or "to the _____ play." The various dances, hitherto called "cotillions," are now to be

designated as "Assemblies," the time-honored "cotillon" having vanished from fashion and general dancing being in favor.

Although invitations for formal dinners are usually engraved, it is more the custom to write invitations for semi-formal affairs. Certain rules are observed. Note paper of best quality, with address engraved at the head, is used, words are carefully spaced, names are written on separate lines.

Dinners and luncheons in honor of debutantes are the order of the day. An invitation in that form; if in the first person, that formula is required.

While the rules of etiquette govern the form and may be learned, it must be always remembered that courtesy and consideration for others are principles which underlie social customs. There should be no delay in replying to an invitation which requests the pleasure of one's company. To wait to send an answer on the chance of receiving a more desirable invitation in the interval is extremely discourteous and is a selfish disregard of the convenience

of the hostess, who wishes to know whom she may expect. Although the social world takes refusals as a matter of course and fills up the gaps with eligible substitutes and not be compelled to have an ill-assorted collection of guests. Acceptances or regrets, therefore, should be sent within twenty-four hours after receiving invitations to dinners, luncheons or card parties.

An invitation to a dinner suggests a greater compliment than is conveyed by an invitation to any other social affair.

An acceptance of a dinner invitation makes it obligatory not to allow any but the most serious cause to interfere with being present. Illness or very unexpected reasons may arise, if it is true, and in a case of the sort a note of explanation or a telegram must be sent immediately to the hostess.

It is never allowable to enter into any discussion or pro- vision with an invitation to dinner, even when the invitation may be semi-formal. It is

not courteous to say that one will come if in town, or if one has recovered from illness; nor is it permissible for a wife to accept and for a husband to regret, or vice versa.

A reply to an invitation should be explicit and decisive. The custom is to repeat the date and hour when the occasion requires definite punctuality, thus:

Mr. and Mrs. _____ accept with pleasure Mr. and Mrs. _____'s invitation for dinner on Tuesday evening, January the Sixth at eight o'clock.

When writing a regret it is customary to say that "Mr. and Mrs. _____ regret that a previous engagement prevents them from accepting Mr. and Mrs. N. _____'s kind invitation whenever it is possible to do so.

Answers to invitations are written on note-paper, not on cards. It must be remembered that an acceptance or a regret is written in the present tense. It is not correct to write "will accept," or "will be unable to accept," or that "a previous engagement will prevent," etc.

Answers to invitations are addressed invariably to the hostess alone. Friends or acquaintances who are in mourning are not invited to formal dinners or luncheons, but they should receive invitations for weddings, receptions, "coming-out" teas for debutantes and for all affairs of a general nature when it is proper and courteous to notify them of any important social occurrence in a family.



There must be no delay in answering an invitation.



It is not permissible for a wife to accept and for a husband to regret.