

The New Spring Skirts

Wider Still Spread the Petticoats of the Evening Dress, and More Clinging Are the Street Gowns, Says Lady Duff-Gordon

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 Paris establishment brings her into close touch with that centre of fashion.

By Lady Duff-Gordon
("LUCILE")

HERE you see an example of my new Spring models.

Perhaps you will exclaim, "Why, the skirts are wider than ever!"

And so they are. This season the wide skirt will reach its apotheosis. And in some form or other, at least, I am sure that it will not leave us again. The big woman and the woman who is and can't help being stout will never let them go. Because, curiously enough, there is nothing that the big woman and the stout woman look better in than one of these wide skirts.

And let me put one misunderstanding at rest immediately. I have heard people say, "Why, I wouldn't dare to wear a skirt like this out on the street!" My dear lady, whoever you are, these skirts are not intended for street wear. If they were you would have to widen your Fifth avenue immediately. The effects are solely for evening dress. As a matter of fact, the street clothes, the walking dress and so on are going to be "skimpier" and even more relevant than ever.

I have said that the wide skirt in some manifestation or other will not disappear because the big woman and the stout woman will not let it.

Let us first take up the case of the big woman—I mean the wonderful creature who might have stepped from some old Norse saga.

She is so big and strong and eye-filling that in average dress she seems awkward and out of place. We think regretfully of how splendid she would look in the old full Greek draperies of the heroic age or the mail and armor of another heroic age.

In the same style of clothes that are charming on her smaller sisters she reminds us irresistibly of a giant in a boy's knickerbockers. She is of heroic mold, and there is no reason why she should not wear a dress which would interpret all her large grace and beauty.

"Similia similibus cutantur"—like cures like.

Therefore we would expect to see such a woman fit in at once with the life around us if she were draped in clothes that would have all her wonderful length of line and fullness. And this is just what happens when she dresses this way. Not only that, but she becomes actually a goddess! Dignity and largeness of frame are perfectly interpreted by the dignity and largeness of line of her clothes. She does not appear "tremendous"; she is only beautifully impressive.

It is the same way with the too stout woman. The too large hips are instantly thrown into a proper perspective by the wide and billowing skirts. They seem slender in comparison. And at the same time the too full bosom seems no larger than it ought to be. What has really happened is that, as the architects would say, she has dressed to scale.

In the smaller picture at the bottom we see an effect like this, which you can study at your leisure. The larger pictures show two views of one of the new Spring dresses, which happened, in this case, to have been created not for the Junoesque but for the smaller woman. Only a little adaptation, however, is necessary to make it harmonious to the heroic figure.

The largest picture on this page shows one of the newest Spring skirts. It is, as you see, more "bouffant," wider, than ever. Its effect is, nevertheless, charming, I think. It is of white tulle over a pink silk under dress. Bunches of hand-made roses decorate it. Beside it is a view of the same dress from another angle.

Please look now at the remaining picture. Here you can see exactly what I mean about the reduction of the hips through the lines of the skirt. There is real dignity here, and yet there is also given an effect of grace and lightness. This dress is of white embroidered flit over black satin. The garniture of red roses is arranged in long lines.



The large picture above is one of the new skirts of Spring—larger, wider than ever. It is of white tulle over a pink silk under dress. Hand-made roses embellish it. The smaller picture at the top gives another view of the same dress.

At the lower left is a "stately" dress for either the Junoesque type of woman or the stout one. It is of white embroidered flit over black satin.

("Lucile" Models)