

The New Feathers

Lady Duff-Gordon Describes Their Use On and Off Stage, and Gives an Expert's Advice Upon the Proper Dressing of Actresses

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

JUST a little talk upon feathers, especially the new feathers and the feathers as they ought to be used off the stage and on.

Ever since I first seriously started in business, some eighteen years ago, in London, it has been my privilege to dress practically all of George Edwards's gorgeous productions, and he has had such faith in me that I have sometimes been consulted as to lighting and scenes and the making up of the girls' faces as well as their hairdressing. There are two entirely different kinds of stage dressing, both in their way equally attractive to an artist, though I think myself I prefer a musical comedy with peculiar and eccentric effects more than the drama, in which so many characters are tied down to a more sober and everyday type of people.

In musical comedy one can make the most wonderful general scheme of color, in which the "it" is just dotted by the principle appearing in the finishing touch to the color scheme which may be in turn either demure or eccentric as the play calls for. I shall never forget the pleasure that I myself got on the first appearance of Miss Lily Elsie in the "Count of Luxemburg," when the whole scheme was completed by the cloak and astonishing hat she wore—one of the first of its type, since made popular in this country by Gaby Deslys—it having an enormous fan-shape aigrette of sapphire blue.

Feathers have always played a most important part in fashions on the stage—possibly because they naturally have the most beautiful lines and are splendid mediums for introducing height as well as color. And it is really extraordinary to see the number of things that now replace the almost forgotten paradise and aigrette. I have three hats

here, each in itself extraordinary. Two only appear on the stage or restaurant, while the last reminds one of a weathercock more than anything else. It is formed of peacock wing feathers that are stripped almost to the end and joined in the middle by a couple of loops formed from the strippings.

This was so amusing to me when I bought it that I placed it straight upon the black shape exactly as one sees the weathercock on the top of a tower, and anything more attractive than the lines it makes when the wearer turns her head cannot be thought of. Her dress is of black woolback satin, made with an apron with bib straps. Over and under dress of black and white striped taffeta, with a muslin collar in front. The high black satin "choker" is tied with a knot, the ends of which fall down the back. The coat, carried on the arm, is lined with the same material as the underdress, with a couple of lines of bright green satin to give it a touch of color.

A real theatre gown is composed of white satin and draped through a belt of gold tissue and emerald green. The large scarf of green net is embroidered all over in a face design in bright gold. The train is of white satin lined with green, while

a separate train matching the underdress is of Persian blue chiffon.

This dress is made entirely for movement, as the draperies show every line of the body in whichever position the wearer may be. The upstanding feather of blue shaded to green springing from the band of violet is essentially for the stage, and gold slippers with green heels complete the costume.

A little dancing frock of pale gray satin is short and rather Victorian in shape, with a full skirt and little balances of silver lace caught at different points with small bouquets of silver flowers and green leaves. A girdle of green and white check encircles the waist, while the hat is composed of silver net on green silk wires, with two enormous golden pheasant feathers perched on the crown.

My model making in America necessitated me opening a separate studio from my exclusive Fifty-seventh street house, and such a full success has it been that it is now necessary for me to retain this as a theatrical as well as a model making department. Here, down on Fifth avenue, I spend many delightful hours in decorating your most beautiful American actresses. It is a work I love—just as much as I do dressing those who are not on the stage.



One of the Enormous New Feathers Used Mostly for the Stage. The Gown is a Little Dancing Dress. The Feathers Are from the Golden Pheasant. ("Lucile" Model)



Theatre Gown of White Satin and Green. "Volcano" Feather of Blue Shaded to Green. ("Lucile" Model).



"Weathercock" Hat of Peacock Feathers Stripped to the Ends. The Dress is of Black Woolback Satin, with Apron and Bib Straps. High Black Satin "Choker." ("Lucile" Model).