

Made In America Fashions from Made In America Goods

Suit of Kahki—American-Made Tussock, Lined with American - Made Silk. (Designed by Lady Duff-Gordon.)



Lady Duff-Gordon Explains That Americans Are Not Only Unpatriotic But Stupid When They Sacrifice Their Own Just as Good Products For The "Worship of the Imported Label."

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.



American-made Blue Gaberdine Suit, Trimmed with Black American Satin. (Designed by Lady Duff-Gordon.)

By Lady Duff-Gordon

I HAVE been told, and I have always thought, that Americans were the most patriotic people in the world. I am beginning now to doubt it.

For surely the essence of patriotism is to patronize, encourage and develop the industries and products of one's own country. Where such industries and products are inferior to those of other countries it may be a test of patriotism to turn our faces against the latter. Nor would I advise that, because in such a case it would be the duty of one's own countrymen to reach and exceed if possible the superior foreign standard. The standard would be put against them as a test and the injury done them by their own people buying the better goods would only be a lesson to them to make goods as excellent.

But what can we say of the condition of mind that turns away from most excellent domestic products to buy foreign made similar products that are not a whit better than those rejected? To me this seems not only an inexplicable lack of patriotism, but it is, potentially at least, treason.

I have in mind particularly the "American made silks," which are so good that you can stand up and fight the world anywhere with them. And yet these exquisite things must rest more or less unnoticed in the shade, all because of the absurd worship of the "imported." That is to me, one of the most puzzling things about America. When I came to this country last Fall, I became interested in these silks. Their manufacturers and others asked me if I would not stay and make an exhibition of dress models made from their goods. The idea so appealed to me that I consented, and I have had a most successful exhibition of models made entirely of American silks and woolsens. Each of these models—there were forty of them—were built entirely of American made goods, and sewed by American girls right here in New York. I desire to say that I have never made models that have pleased me more.

I did it to prove that I believed in what I said, and to help the "made in America" movement by showing just what could be done with these fabrics. I am preparing an entirely special new collection to show to selected dressmakers throughout the country. I am doing it to prove to the dressmakers that they need no longer bow to this idol of the "imported," but that they have right

here at hand everything they need for the most exquisite dresses. After I have done that I cannot really be expected to do more.

For myself, and to show just what faith I have in your American made goods, I desire to say that I am prouder of this exhibition than any I have ever done, and so beautiful do I consider the silks that I am staying right here and creating my own exclusive models for Paris and London right down at my studio on Fifth avenue among the glorious skyscrapers.

I think you'll agree with me that it is the first time in fashion history that fashions have been created and made in America, of American goods and sewed by American hands to be exhibited in Paris, hitherto the "Mecca" of the dressmaking world. I think it shows the quality of my faith, don't you? But when a thing is "the best," it is bound in the end to make itself felt, notwithstanding the deadly wall of prejudiced "importers" whose interest it is to say American silks can in no way equal those of Lyons manufacture. The one exception where these American made goods are not better is in the brocades with gold and silver tinsel introduced. That is an article that I regret to say the American manufacturers seem afraid to attempt; but a courageous firm has promised me to have some ready for my inspection in the near future.

And here, before I go any further into the reasons for this wicked neglect of your own products, let me describe the dresses I show on this page and that I made of these silks and woolsens.

The model in the right hand corner is a three-piece suit of coarse tussock, made by a New York firm. The silk with which it is lined is made by the same firm. The silk has a white ground with peacock eyes all over it in orange and grey outlined with black. The little sunshade is of the same silk. I consider this one of the smartest suits I have ever made. And it is all of it, mind you, made in America.

The suit in the other corner is of dark blue gaberdine trimmed with black satin—both made in America. The collar of the coat is designed to meet the sometimes nipping winds of Spring. The vest is quite catchy. The little evening dress is the modified hoop, which I have inaugurated as a made-in-America fashion and that already I see some of the Paris houses are copying. It is of tulle made by the leading manu-

factory of that product in New York. The tulle is bright emerald green over pale pink net embroidered with gold. The top part of the skirt is made of green and gold tinsel brocade which the American manufacturers have not yet been able to supply me with. This top part of the brocade is kept out by gold hoops to give it the proper sticking-out effect, which is the latest new looking effect that all my evening dresses are acquiring. The green tulle is quite transparent, showing a small tight skirt underneath. The remaining photograph is of a three-piece suit made of fawn tussock with thin blue stripes. Also it is all American.

There you see what I have done. And from time to time I will show you other things I shall do with your American made goods. And now for what it is that has blinded your eyes to the excellence of your own goods. There was a time, of course, when you were still young that you could not produce the same kind of silks and woolsens that are made abroad. People of discernment and taste equally of course bought the imported goods. Others, striving to imitate these people, also bought the imported. And so the label "imported" began to assume the value of "incomparable" and also of "exclusive."

Now that was all very well as long as the home-made goods were inferior, but the moment these products became as good as the imported these acquired values meant nothing. There was then no reason why women of taste should go abroad for her dress goods or pass over the American made products for the imported. Indeed there was not only the patriotic reason and the

reason of waste of time but also the utilitarian reason of lower prices. But the idea that because the fabrics were imported they must be better still persisted. And it has been to the interest of the foreign manufacturers and those on this side who market the foreign product to keep up this delusion. To you Americans, with your otherwise clear-seeing business sense, it must at once be plain why they do this.

Now is the time to prove to yourselves how good your own things are and to lay forever this expensive ghost of the "imported" label.

I can do nothing better in closing to repeat what I wrote in another article soon after I came to America. I then said: "Perhaps you wonder why I, who am an Englishwoman and love France, should read a lesson against 'importations.' And I'll tell you. I have a house here in America also, and my intelligence and sympathies touch hands with those of Americans. Further, I do not believe in 'labels.' I think to use homely phrase, 'every pot should stand on its own bottom.' Also I believe that excellence, good workmanship, truth and the first-rate things are not confined within geographical boundaries. I believe there will come a time when no one will ask 'Was this made in Paris?' Or 'Was this made in London?' and so on. They will only ask themselves—'Is this good? Is it the best?' And whether it is or is not, the matter of what country it comes from or what kind of national fingers made it won't matter a ha'penny." I have proven to my own satisfaction and to others that American made dresses from American made goods are good enough to be seen anywhere. Why not be sensible?



Emerald Green Evening Dress of American-made Tulle, Over Pale Pink American Net. (Designed by Lady Duff-Gordon.)



Fawn, with blue Stripe American-made Tussock. (Designed by Lady Duff-Gordon.)