

IN THE DOMAIN OF WOMAN.

FOR EVENING WEAR.

New York Opera Season Reflects the Decrees of Fashion.

NEW YORK, Dec. 12.—The days are past when the American woman went to the theater in a cloth afternoon gown. The European custom of elaborate evening dress for the theater has come across the water, and it has probably come to stay. Only when the opera season in New York is in full swing does one know what wealth has dictated for the season's wear in the evening. The costumes of the multi-millionaire's wife can be followed in full by comparatively few, but with a little ingenuity every woman can make changes in her theater attire that will bring it more up-to-date and cause her to be fashionably gowned without being extravagant.

Magnificence is the keynote of the costume, and when the entering wraps are thrown back bodies cut to the lowest limit are revealed. These are held on by the merest excuse for shoulder straps—a strip of tulle slipping through diamond clasps, a chain of rosebuds, a scrap of velvet or ribbon. Sometimes with a white lace or velvet gown the entire shoulders are out, the line of the rounded neck slipping below them in the old-fashioned way. With this the bertha fall, which covers the top of the arms alone, is the only artifice for sleeves.

Comparing such styles with the more modest ones of the orchestra, the ribald mind interrogates: "Must one show all one's collar bones to get into society?" Even the toilettes of very young girls are cut low to some degree, though the best models in these show a charming simplicity in their material.

Effective Combinations. White chiffon with Greek borders of gilt braid was the combination of choice in the toilette of one fair maid who wore a unique headdress. This was a long bow of white gauze, folded to imitate ribbon, with a fall of gilt wheat ears at either end. The adjustment of the bow was straight across the head, which brought the bunches of grain becomingly behind the ears.

This same simplicity is often displayed in the toilettes of the younger matrons, whose charms are enhanced by plainness. With one opera gown of ruby velvet worn by a pale, dark woman, bodice drapings of white tulle and other ornaments of white lace, pearls and other gemstone jewelry are sometimes very impressive and low-cut gowns in many gala materials show not only in the boxes, but here and there in the orchestra chairs.

The heads of the wearers reveal numerous styles of hair dressing set off with wired bows, aigrettes, and other dress displays and combs of many sorts. This holds good with both the elderly and the young, for the theater hat, as it was once understood, no longer exists. If gray hair will insist upon a bonnet, the structure is everywhere most modestly proportioned.

During Dress. New York engagement parties in every detail what the elegant New York woman feels is correct for theater wear. Skirts almost invariably were trained, and, mixed in with more splendid creations, were dainty little gowns which the wise woman wears to the theater to be home made. Delicate and cashmere, either in white or fair color—pearl gray, azure, dull rose, or pale green—composed some of these pretty frocks, whose models ran chiefly to a flounced skirt and blouse waist. Always there were lace or beaded insets inserted in some novel way, with many drooping shoulder effects, and unlined stocks, the lower edge of which took the present downward dip at the front.

Much hand tucking was observed. In one instance it shaped an entire founce for a frock in dull blue velveteen. Yellow lace insertion, in a sort of Maltese pattern, ornamented this. The big squares were detached and set at a diamond angle in the bodice and sleeves. The front of the blouse bodice was of killed mousseline (white), tucked in a drooping line across the bust to give a voluminous look. The under puffs of the bell sleeves, which slashed up at the back, were of the same material, and all over the yellow lace insets a light sewing of black French knots provided effective contrast.

With this costume and others the introduction of a fragment of the gown stuff in the lace stock was a neat trick for becomingness. Against a touch of black velvet would be used, or both black and color, and the sleeve finish would repeat the scheme in a straight wristband, cut or edge.

Dashes of Color. The fact that most of these evening skirts are detached from their linings makes it possible to use one silk drape for several costumes, and a careful search of the shops will reveal many cheap laces of choice design. The Maltese imitations are especially desirable, and if a good tone of yellow can be found in them, they can frequently deceive the most knowing.

Cloth in white or pale colors, fallis and velvet, are popular theater materials, with here and there an all-over lace frock or one of crepe de chine. This last texture, indeed, is much seen and every species of lace and variety of handwork may go with it. For example, on one bewitching crepe gown in the tenderest pearl—that misty tint which seems so much white as gray—

pin tucks had been used to imitate the petals of flowers. These radiated in swirling lines from centers of white lace seeded with black knots, the design forming a sort of big Aubrey Beardsley sunflower. Inquiring eyes looked in vain for any puckering of the crepe by this curious tucking, which narrowed to nothing at the outer ends. Careful pressing had left it perfect, and as the wearer moved her sunflower borders were for all the world like the finest braiding or embroidery.

The elegance of these gowns depends on all sorts of little details, indescribably simple in themselves. Even when the costume comes home from the dressmaker the woman of invention can add many novel touches. The new Byzantine and Bloude laces, fashioned in entire waists, are very handsome with plain velvet or silk skirts and such a get-up is as suitable for opera as theater.

Again, one sees odd bodies in plain and

to fill some place that has been left vacant at the last moment. In fact there is a fad for telephoning messages of this sort nowadays. When it first gained entrance to residences the telephone was intended as a means of communication between a man's office and his home chiefly; then it began to be used for the ordering of cabs, for marketing, for hurrying up slow tradesmen and the various uses connected with housekeeping.

By degrees friends began to make use of the quick method of communicating with each other, and it was no delightfully informal that it became a vogue. Of course, old-fashioned persons regarded with horror the idea of transmitting messages of a social nature in this way, but the age is in such a hurry that the time-saving method has grown to be accepted as quite the proper thing.

The informality of the telephone method of communication is what appeals to the younger generation of society. An invita-

band's people, no help was to be looked for from that quarter, and the chance discovery, through a friend, that her husband had written to his father from Seattle, where he was living with his daughter, was the first light she had on the subject. But Seattle was at the other end of the continent and poverty barred the way.

To satisfy herself that her information had been correct she wrote to the adjutant of the Salvation Army in Seattle, stating her case and asking help to ascertain the whereabouts of her child. In a few weeks the answer came that Josephine had been found in the home of a Mrs. Coffin in Seattle. The photograph sent by her mother had served to identify her. From that moment the determined woman set herself to save the necessary money to travel out west. It cost two long years of toil, but she never faltered.

When she had saved \$300 she started west. She kept her secret well. Throughout those weary months she shared her case with none. Those who knew her best thought she had abandoned hope of ever seeing her child again. Her husband's relatives were lulled into security by her departure, ostensibly on a trip to visit friends in New York and Brooklyn, around no suspicion.

Arrived in Seattle, she registered under an assumed name and began inquiries. Through the Salvation Army she had



OPERA AND THEATER WRAPS.

owered silk, combined with lace or chiffon, whose high, long-sleeved cuts are made more festive by the elegance of accompanying details—the hair ornament, a tiny spangled or painted fan, and immaculate gloves.

Silk Bags. Many huge silk bags are carried, some of which, with their superbly worked silk and brilliant colors, would make the plainest toilettes gay. The newest models in these are in chalcid design, with handsomely gilt and silver trimmings, often gem-set. The ostensible purpose of the bag is to hold the libretto, fan, handkerchief, glasses and smelling salts. The incidental object is distinctly beautifying.

Some women make a fad of this fashion. One night the bag is of pompadour embroideries and cut-steel beads; another time it is of lace lined with white silk, and again it is of the same material as the wearer's gown.

Some very plain cloaks of white cloth, seen both at the theater and opera, are worthy of detailed description. One of these may be owned by any woman who is not an absolute pauper, and she has only to visit a good playhouse once to see that white evening wraps are the rage of the hour.

A stunning white cloth model is in loose saque shape, with bell sleeves and a shaped skirt founce. The rest of the trimming is confined to the shoulders, over which drops a deep cascade edged with a founce of killed chiffon. Above this is a narrow line of brown fur and above that a deep border of gurgles grapes.

Many quite simple caps and coats in pale-tinted cloths are fad of the fashion. A light something more lavish, a quaint cloak in pale gray cloth has telling graces. The loose model of this is almost skirt length. A scarf of gray chiffon and epaulettes of white Irish point make the shoulders appear very low and simulate an Empire effect at late front and back. The wide, almost founcing, sleeves have several undereleaves of the chiffon and a band of the Siberian squirrel, which lines the high collar borders. A cravat of chiffon and Irish point finishes the throat.

MARY DEAN.

INVITATIONS BY TELEPHONE.

Another Blow to Letter Writing Among Women. One reason why the art of letter writing is dying out is that the telephone is being used more than ever as a means of communication between friends in the matter of invitations for the announcement of important events and for the sending of messages of congratulation and condolence.

Those who cling to the old forms seem to be in the minority today. The younger generation refuses to be hampered by the time-consuming methods of several years ago, when a note of invitation, for instance, could not even be sent through the mail, but must be delivered by hand. The modern youth or maiden picks up the telephone and dispatches an invitation to luncheon at the matinee, and even for so serious a function as a dinner it is quite common now for a hostess to call up a friend at the last moment, frankly admitting by the action that she only desires

tion given or accepted or rejected in this way has not the importance attached to the old method of a note delivered by a messenger. This was a serious affair, and a pondered over the answer to send, the extent of the social obligation involved and other matters.

But the message over the wire is different. One does not have time to study questions as to motives, dress, the people one is to meet, or any other of the small problems that frequently arise on the reception of a formal invitation.

The telephone bidding reeks of the up-to-

learned that Josephine had been transferred to the village of Dunlap, a short distance from the city proper. She took the trolley for the latter settlement and just as the car was drawing to its destination caught sight of a group of school children liberated for recess. In an instant she started to her feet with an irrepressible cry, and dashing like a mad woman to the door, leaped from the car before the astonished conductor could pull the bell. She had seen the child she had come so far to seek. Crown taller, prettier, older, but unmistakably her Josephine.

As the mother ran to the school yard the bell recalling the children sounded. The woman called her child's name. Josephine turned, recognized her mother, and, rushing into her arms, burst into tears. At this instant a city-bound car came along. Mrs. Stiles boarded it with the little girl and in town took her to a clothing store where she purchased a new outfit. She also changed her own hat. The hastily gathered her belongings from the hotel she started on her homeward way long before school was over.

The mother says that on the first night of her stay she was so tired that she fell asleep. Visions of detectives armed with warrants for her arrest kept her on the alert till she reached Morristown and safety. When she entered her own door at No. 18 Columbia street the other morning tears were streaming from the mother's eyes and her voice was shaken with emotion as she said: "I've brought my happiness home with me."

A FAD FOR SEADS.

How an Oriental Taste is Fostered in Many Ways.

Chains made from all sorts, hues and kinds of beads are worn this season. In fact, the chain fad is one of the pronounced fancies of the moment and has led cleverly and industriously inclined young women to try their skill in the fashioning of these modish accessories for indoor and outdoor costumes. In consequence some exceedingly artistic and original designs have been evolved by these ingenious amateurs. Muff chains, purse chains, necklaces and a host of other useful and ornamental varieties of chains represent the season's output, as seen in the shops and made at home. A tendency toward things Oriental and semi-Oriental, particularly in decorative way, has stimulated interest in the "bead fad" for gaily colored chains are invariably worn by the color loving Oriental.

A bright young woman is engaged in designing and making chains of beads, following out general color schemes and arrangements of Oriental character. She finds the occupation a paying one. The beads are of coral, malachite, crystal, jet, amber, pearl, turquoise and other semi-precious stones, the pearls being on the "mother of pearl" order. The turquoise chains are of fine beads, three strings being braided together.

A chain of deep green beads made by this woman has several ragged coral beads inserted at intervals. A coral chain of the round variety of beads shows near the clasp, crystal beads set in between the coral ones. A string of amber beads alternates with jet beads, while another chain, also of amber, has several jet beads placed near the clasp. A handsome turquoise string is combined with crystal and pearl beads. Silver and gold beads are also used in connection with the various stone beads, while crystal and jet beads are most effectively blended in some of the handsomest of the new long chains.

Frisis of Fashion.

Exquisite gowns are made of white panne with incrustations of black Chantilly on skirt and bodice.

Silk belts with tab ends at the back and covered with stitching come in a great variety of styles. Other black velvet belts of various designs are also being worn.

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Some costumes of white and pastel cloth are trimmed with lustrous showing spots of various tints. The border is edged with a narrow fancy braiding.

Black and white now on view in the shops are strikingly beautiful, all sorts and varieties of fancy neckwear being included in this collection.

Large black Alastair bows have not gone out of fashion altogether and you may wear a flyaway bow of white tulle if you like or one single rose at any point on your head, whichever adds most to your charm.

The latest gold chain purses are models of attractiveness and elaboration, most of them being inlaid with jewels and finished with clasps of exquisite workmanship.

The fancy belts in the shops are most attractive in silk elastic of different colors, studded with jewels and steel nail heads arranged in design and mounted on a handsome buckle, which is sometimes of velvet with the same jewel decoration.

Fast Time. At a recent wedding the bridesmaid carried bouquets that were a little out of the common. They were composed of French lilies with a row of scarlet berries around the bottom. Loops of delicate pink ribbon were mingled with the sprays of heather and the color combination of flower, ribbon and berries was exceedingly effective.

From Paris comes the announcement that velvet and crepe de chine are favorite fabrics for dressy toilettes in that city. An exquisite gown worn at a recent Parisian wedding was of black velvet trimmed with white velvet and gurgles grapes. The accompanying wrap was a choicest cape fashioned of three bands of lace, combined with white chenille and finished with long stole ends of sable.

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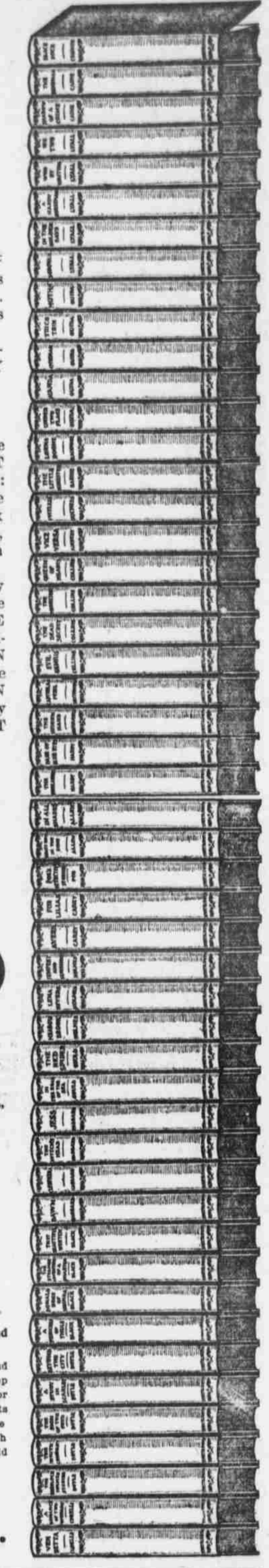
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