

A Crusade For Sensible Hats

Following the Movement for the Universal Dress Comes the Campaign for the Universal Bonnet That Any Woman Can Wear at Any Time and Still Be Pretty



Neither Artistic nor Becoming—an Utterly Senseless Barbarism.

NEW YORK clubwomen, did they need to justify their existence, would be doing so by their present movement for the adoption of a sensible hat for all occasions and all women.

The Polymuriel plan, explained in detail by this newspaper last week, for the universal gown for women, has been followed by another practical step looking toward the universal hat. As the Polymuriel gown is one suitable for any hour in the day and any event of the day, so the Polymuriel hat should be one that any woman can wear at any time.

The same rules obtain for the contest for the prize Polymuriel hat as for that of the gown. The designers will send their sketches of hats to the Polymuriel Prize Fund Committee, No. 526 Riverside Drive. The sketch will be signed by a fictitious name. In a sealed envelope, bearing on the outside the assumed name, will be a slip containing the real name of the designer. Thus the

judges will be freed from any implication of favoritism, for the real name of the winner will only be known after the decision has been reached. While the prize for a Polymuriel gown is \$150, that for the hat will be \$50. On May 31 the contest will close and on June 15 a check will be sent to the successful designer.

Miss Florence Guernsey, former president of the New York City Federation of Women's Clubs, with a membership of 50,000 women, is a member of the Polymuriel Committee, and selected for this newspaper specimens of the fit and unfit hat and analyzed a hat that is suitable and becoming to the majority of women, comfortable and durable, so meeting the aims of the committee.

"It will be even more difficult to agree upon a model hat for all women and all occasions than upon a gown," said Miss Guernsey, "for the reason that faces differ even more than figures. A figure is a matter of line. A face is not merely to be con-

sidered from the standpoint of contour, but of coloring and expression. The round-faced woman cannot be comingly wear the 'shape' that would be suitable for the woman of angular countenance. The pale woman would look her worst in the hat that is a foil for the high-colored one. Expression also enters into the subject. The round-eyed woman of childish expression would not be adorned by a hat that is a proper foil for the person of sedate visage. The face is the index of individuality, and it will be no easy task to inclose all the varying individualities within one frame. But American women are clever. We expect them to furnish a solution of the long vexed problem, 'What kind of a hat shall I get?'

"Ever since the Duchess of Devonshire was painted by Gainsborough in a large black velvet hat, worn very much on the side and crowned by a forest of plumes, the picture hat has been admired of women and more or less worn by them without regard for suitability.

"The picture hat is not becoming to all women. For instance, it makes the little woman look over-weighted. It is not becoming to the tall, thin woman, for it causes her to look like a lamppost which some mischievous boy has crowned with a farmhand's harvest hat. The picture hat is open also to the charge of lack of durability, since it is usually built of velvet, and to the still more serious charge of unhealthfulness, since, being too heavy, it torments the nerves of the scalp and overheats the head. Both effects produce the further one of causing the hair to fall out.

"The hat on this page, one of the many modifications of the picture hat, is attractive; but, being made of fur, is too heavy and hot to be healthful. Furthermore, it isn't practicable, because on a windy day the wearer would be tormented by the wind; that, being unintelligent, might mistake the big flat hat for a sail. The woman who wears a large hat is generally in torment. If indoors, some one is rattling at her more or less audibly because the hat obscures the view of others. If out of doors, the elements tease her. Nearly always the large hat means discomfort.

"Guided by less intelligence and sense of suitability is the choice of what may be termed the tower hat, one which might in this case be styled the Tower of Pisa hat. Its crown a mere tight swathing of the head in silk, having no top or covering, and the incomplete frame surmounted by monstrously high plume, it is neither artistic nor becoming, an utterly senseless barbarism.

"The hat that comes low over one side of the head, fitting closely as though it had intended to be a cap, and then, changing its mind, ended somewhere about the middle of the crown, and was completed by a tuft of feathers of exaggerated height, certainly does not conform to the Polymuriel idea of suitability, comfort and durability. The wispy-like feathers would not survive one brisk walk in the face of a wind. It is a very silly shape, and its high plumes makes it impracticable.

"As between the close-fitting and the flaring or wide-brimmed shape there is no comparison for utility and for beauty, if you regard neatness as the indispensable form of beauty it is. The hat among the four that is sensible and not unbecoming to any woman is one of medium high crown. The crown is round and large enough to fit the wearer's head size. The trimming is floral. Flowers are becoming to any age and any type. There is enough of this trimming to brighten the hat and the face of the wearer, and yet not enough to render the hat heavy. It lies close to the hat, so offering no temptation to the wind to rend it.

"Moreover the brim turn up slightly, affording a glimpse of the hair, as every hat should.

"I have in mind a hat that seemed



Photo by Grouse.



A Very Silly Shape—and the Feather Plumes Are Impracticable.

to me to meet the requirements of a universal hat. In fact, I am the possessor of that hat, and wearing it gives me pleasure. It is a large turban, fitting well the head, and large enough to serve as a fitting frame for the face. It is made entirely of small, mauve-tinted violets. I wear it with a mauve gown, with black, with any color. I can wear it with any costume and at any hour of the day.

The Polymuriel Committee frankly avers that it cannot state exactly what a Polymuriel hat must be. It will quickly recognize, it says, a suitable design, and will as readily reject one that is unsuitable. By a process of elimination it will arrive at the right design. In the matter of brims the brim should not be so wide that it flaps in the wind or torments the scalp by dragging at the hair.

The trimming should not be easily injured or destroyed, as, for instance, delicate feathers or ribbons so delicate in shade as to be ruined by a flurry of dust or by the beating rays of the midsummer sun. Nor should they be so expensive that they

are beyond the reach of the person of moderate means. Most imperative is it that the hat be not so heavy that it torments the head either by weight or heat. If it is possible to dispense with hatpins, let that be done, although a hat should not so tightly fit the head as to disturb the circulation.

It should be, and this is the most difficult requirement of all, becoming to any face of any type or age. In the matter of materials, that is yet to be determined.

In color it may be a neutral black, or it may match the costume. Preferably it should not be of shade contrasting with the costume. Such effect is too garish. But the color is a secondary question and the committee may leave that to the choice of the wearer. In this respect permitting the exercise of the individuality of the wearer. In the matter of colors the Polymuriel Committee will probably not restrict the wearer's individuality.

The liking of some women for much color in the hat and little or none in the costume—for instance,

This is Attractive but It is of Fur and Is Too Heavy and Too Hot to Be Healthful.

On the Right is a Very Sensible and Not Unbecoming Design.



The Hats Which Make a Lamppost or a Butter Tub of You.



the wearing of a black gown with a poppy hat—may not be discouraged; for it is well known that you can advantageously wear a color above the face that you may not becomingly wear beneath it. For instance, a red hat may be becoming to a woman who could not by any law of fitness or becomingness wear a red gown. The hair is the peacemaker in this case. The intervening and softening line of hair separates the trying shade from the face, acting as a mediator and blender; whereas there is no such medium to intervene between the gown and the face.

Generally a woman may be depended upon to harmonize the colors of her costume. It is in the sense of line she is deficient. It has been estimated that of one hundred women fifty wear becoming gowns, not more than two wear becoming hats.

The hat become a cartoonist, cruelly caricaturing the wearer. A tiny hat on a stout woman, or an excessively large hat on a slender woman, will perform that office.

Don't forget that the hat is not

merely for the head, but for the figure. As you sit before the pier glass in a fashionable milliner shop you may be charmed with the effect of a hat. But rise and you will, if your vision be keen, be shocked by the figure that hat causes you to cut. Suppose you are generously built, your hips and shoulders broad, the size of your hat needs must be greater than that of the meagerly built woman.

The trend of ideas of the Polymuriel Committee is that while the size of the hat would necessarily differ according to the size of a woman's head and the proportions of her body, yet a shape may be found that will be "universally becoming." They incline, in their personal opinions, to the modified turban.

But they restrict the designers in no respect, save that the shape must be comfortable, durable and becoming, and suitable for wear at any hour of the day.

Up milliners and at it!

English Women as War-Time Farm Hands

THE women and girls of England seem to be missing no opportunity to make themselves useful while the nation's peril calls so many men away from their usual occupations. The suffragists seem to have forgotten their "cause" for the time being and are as busy as any of their sisters in working for the comfort of the soldiers and caring for the wounded.

And now, with the planting season at hand, these women are cheerfully answering the call of farmers throughout the United Kingdom, who are hard pressed for help to get their crops planted. One of the important London daily newspapers keeps a register to facilitate such employment.

New introductions of willing women workers, most of them with useful experience, are made every day to farmers who are short of labor; earlier introductions, brought about during the last fortnight, are resulting in engagements of women by farmers at an unusually rapid rate.

A gratifying development of the register is that, not only are women workers being found to take the places of men who have enlisted in the new armies, but farmers, seeing

the enormous amount of woman labor at their disposal, and the willing helpers introduced with such satisfactory effect by the Daily Express farm register to their neighbors, write that they now find they can release more men than they at first considered practicable.

The register, therefore, in addition to carrying out its original purpose by filling vacancies caused by men joining the colors, has also become a direct means of retraining. The work on the farms continues just the same; the only difference is that women now till the soil and feed the stock instead of the men who are fighting.

Early in April the newspaper announced that more farmers were needed to avail themselves of willing services on the land offered by hundreds of women on the register. A few days ago the register called attention to a number of vacancies for women on the Gloucestershire estate of a large institution which has its headquarters in London. The warden now writes that two of the candidates have already been engaged, two others are under consideration, and what is still more satisfactory, additional posts can be allotted to women if similarly suitable applications are forthcoming.