

Fascination as Fine Art

Some of the Subtleties of Dress Described by Lady Duff-Gordon

I HAVE often wanted to write a long article upon fascination as a fine art. Of course, I mean those elements which can be incorporated in a woman's dress which will be the "dynamo" that starts the subtle currents that produce the condition we call "being fascinated."

A statue of Venus with a certain colored light falling across the white marble and staining it may bring out all its fascination and make it curiously intimate; the same statue with a red rose on its head is a rather charming grotesque, and the same statue with a garter around its knee is a shocking thing. Yet light and rose and garter are only inanimate things, as the statue is. In themselves they are nothing, but in conjunction they can start within the mind of the onlooker a chain of extraordinary vivid ideas.

The same rule holds true in dress. Gowns are nothing but fabrics and color, and a woman is, *per se*, what Kipling has called her. But what Kipling failed to consider is that because woman and dress are much more than this in the minds of those who see her, she is really what the eye mind pictures her—no more and no less. It would seem, therefore, intelligent for every woman to study how she can bring up in the minds of people the best image, and so become to so many such a charming

complex creature. Nothing could be fairer than that.

It can be done by conversation, by brains, by physical as well as mental charm, and it can be done by dress. Dress is most important, though, because it can also intensify and bring out all the other fascinations.

Now, a dress can be a very beautiful dress and still have nothing about it that makes a definite "fascinating impression." Here, for instance, is a black silk three-piece suit. The fascinating factor of it is its collar and the little saucy feather. The high collar at once draws attention to the perfect profile and the charming hair. The little feather pointing downward like an arrow guides the eye the same way. Picture this dress in your mind with an ordinary low collar and a flat hat, and see how different the model looks.

Again "fascination" can be spread like butter all over the bread. Such is the case in this white satin afternoon gown, in which a studied simplicity radiates from every line.

In the scarlet chiffon evening gown the "fascinating" elements are, first, the collar, second, the mystic mysterious wideness of the skirt and the white neck and shoulders rising up through the filmy bodice.

The dominant note of "fascination" in this rose-trimmed net evening gown is the cuirass waist. There is here a hint of stiffness, or, shall we say, defence. All the rest of the dress is soft and yielding. This note of the cuirass intensifies the yielding note, and at the same time by its suggestion of militancy stimulates the interest in the wearer. The dress is called "Gather Ye Rosebuds While Ye May"—but the effect of the cuirass is rather "Gather Ye Rosebuds If Ye Can."

LADY DUFF-GORDON, the famous "Lacile" 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.



White Satin Gown "I Cannot Tell"—Whose Fascination is Studied Simplicity



A "Fascinator" Gown of Scarlet Chiffon, Whose Dominant Note is Wistfulness



Gown of Rose and Sequin Trimmed Net, Whose "Fascination" Lies in Its Cuirass Waist



A Black Silk Three-Piece Suit, in Which the "Fascinator" Are the High Collar and Saucy Feather