



A Winter Evening Dress—Zouaves, Figaros, or Boleros—Mrs. Grimwood's Book—Pretty Stationery—A "Novel" Novel.

A winter evening dress is a very necessary thing to put in hand against the cold weather. It is not very easy to have a costume that looks at once plain and dressy, and such an one is thoroughly useful and saves a great deal of trouble. The model I give you is one that would be quite smart enough for a dinner party in the winter months, and yet plain enough for home wear. It may be made of rich or simple stuffs, and keep its characteristics as much with one as with the other. Suppose for the former that this is made of pink—salmon pink—*crêpe de chine*, and for the latter of pink *crêpon*. The skirt, as you see, is perfectly



plain and long at the back. It may be made lined at the back. It may be made lined with *taffetas*, which is the French name for thin lining silk, if of *crêpon*, or if of *crêpe de chine* the whole foundation may be of cream satin or white silk, in which case the fur border would be laid upon it. For my taste I should prefer the *crêpe de chine*, particularly one of the new brocaded kinds which are so pretty. The corselet is made of the same stuff, edged with lace that appears in a tiny puff all round the waist fur, and worn over a blouse chemisette of cream

just beneath it. Fur forms the *bretelles* or braces and bands of the sleeves and neck. It should be dark fur for a light coloured dress, and light for a deep tinted costume. Should the sleeves be required longer than those in my sketch, an addition might be made in a puff of lace falling over the elbow from beneath the band round the arm. Sleeves for the evening do not reach below the elbow, where they are nearly met by the long gloves. The model I give you is quite new, and has not yet become common in London, where it has but recently arrived.

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Zouaves, figaros, or boleros, by whichever name you like to call them, are exceedingly popular just now, and charming little garments they are, and very useful. But besides their usefulness, they are worn as simple ornaments to an evening costume, as you will see in the accompanying illustration. By way of an example I will tell you of a lovely dress trimmed with one of this kind that I saw the other day. The material was a beautiful greenish blue satin of a light shade, scattered over with true lovers' knots in white. The perfectly plain long skirt was merely trimmed with a flounce of cream lace, put on in festoons, and apparently caught up at each point by a medium-sized, full-blown pale pink rose. The low bodice was covered with cream lace in blouse fashion—that is, slightly full on back and front. It was headed by a row of the



pink roses, and a pointed belt of them kept the lace in place round the waist. The bodice was further adorned by a figaro jacket as in this sketch. It was made of rose pink velvet, edged round with gold lace, and revers of the light blue satin, back and front. Simply puffed sleeves of the light blue satin completed the lovely toilette. These dainty figaro jackets may be made if liked with long sleeves, and of any material, but velvet is the most enjoyed in such colours as black, pansy purple, deep brown, blue, or green. Shot velvets also are a favourite variety, and often gleam with three different colours. All are richly trimmed with jet, in medallions, drops or fringes, and for the daytime generally with fur. They are delightful things to slip over any ordinary dress bodice if a suddenly cold day comes and a little extra warmth is needed. Of this I give an example in the second little figure of my sketch.

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Mrs. Grimwood's book, entitled "My three years in Manipur, and escape from the recent mutiny," everyone ought to read. It has just been published by Bentley and Son, and, as may be imagined, though so simply told, it is full of great and thrilling interest. Here and there it is interspersed with many a humorous incident, for instance, her trying to persuade her Naga servants, who wear the simplest of attire, in fact the most primitive, namely, their skins, to clothe themselves.

It appears that some spinster lady friend of hers was so horrified at this fact that she specially sent Mrs. Grimwood for their use nine pairs of bathing drawers. These were accordingly presented to her nine Malis, with the following result, that on going into her garden in the evening, where two of them were working, she found one of them had very artistically arranged his pair of breeks as a turban and the other was wearing them like a little jacket, his head through a hole he had made in it, with his arms through the legs as sleeves. Her accounts of the preparations for the fatal durbar where her husband and his brave companions were so barbarously murdered, and her sudden flight just as she was, in the little thin shoes, white blouse and serge skirt which she had put on the easier to help in hospital, are deeply interesting. To their shame, be it said, there have been found people who could insinuate that Mrs. Grimwood was a burden to her companions, and it is instructive to know how she meets these cruel assertions. "To me, a woman, solitary, and alone amongst so many men, the march had been doubly trying; but to hear them say that I had not been a burden upon them was some reward for all I had endured. It has been said lately by some, that this retreat to Cachar was in great measure due to my presence in Manipur at the time, and that my helplessness has been the means of dragging the good name of the army, and the Ghoorka Corps in particular, through the mire, by strongly influencing the officers in the decision to effect the stampede to Cachar. But I scarcely think they would have allowed the presence of, and danger to one woman to deter them from whatever they considered their duty; and had they decided to remain at the Residency that night, I should never have questioned their right to do so, even as I raised no argument for or against the retreat to Cachar. I think that the honour of England is as dear to us women as it is to the men; and though it is not our vocation in life to be soldiers, and to fight for our country, yet, when occasion offers, I have little doubt that the women of England have that in them which would enable them to come out of any dilemma as nobly and honourably as the men, and with just as much disregard for their own lives as the bravest soldier concerned. (Bravo! Mrs. Grimwood!) But such an insinuation as I have quoted is not, I am happy to think, the outspoken opinion of the many to whom the story of Manipur is familiar. It is but the uncharitable verdict of a few, who are perhaps jealous of fair fame honestly won, and who think to take a little sweetness from the praise England has awarded to a woman. That praise has been bestowed is more than sufficient reward for what, after all, many another Englishwoman would have done under similar circumstances."

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A "novel" novel is a very curious and interesting thing in the way of authorship and publication, which is about to appear in the pages of a ladies' paper called *The Gentlewoman*. A short time ago such a story was written in its columns by amateur authors, each chapter being by a separate person, and every one of the writers a reader of the paper. This was such a success that the enterprising editor has conceived the idea of having a similar novel written by professional pens on the same principle, a chapter by an authoress and an author alternately, without consultation or pre-arranged plan. It has, in fact, already been accomplished, and the first chapter of this literary curiosity, called "The Fate of Fenella," will appear in the Christmas number of *The Gentlewoman*, continuing week by week, and specially illustrated. Mrs. Reeves (Helen Mathers) is the writer of the first chapter, and as agreed, she will be succeeded by Mr. Justin H. McCarthy; then come in the following order Mrs. Trollope, Conan Doyle, May Crommelin, F. C. Philips, "Rita," Joseph Hatton, Mrs. Lovett Cameron, Bram Stoker, Florence Marryat, Frank Danby, Mrs. Edward Kennard, Richard Dowling, Mrs. Hungerford, Arthur a'Beckett, Mrs. Macquoid, G. Manville Fienn, &c., &c. I think it is a splendid idea, and it will be very interesting to see how all these varied minds will combine to bring it to a conclusion.