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THE TROUBLES OF THE TROUSSEAU

By ELIZABETH BURTON

WHEN one considers the wedding account as it appears in the papers, it is amusing to note how little space is given the bridegroom, to say nothing of the bridegroom's attire. The bride's white georgette crepe or duchesse satin is dwelt upon with enthusiasm, but not a word is written about the set of the bridegroom's coat nor the soft gray of his gloves. Yet the bridegroom does not object to his obscurity—indeed, his one aim seems to be to avoid notice and to adopt an unostentatious costume. Such an attitude is, no doubt, praiseworthy, for a wedding is so very important to the bride that she is grudging none of the flounces and flowers.

Then, one hears, among the many questions concerning the bride, "Was she pretty?" and "How was she dressed?" War, which has changed so many of our ideas concerning what we need and what we can do without, has not changed the bride's desire to look her best in the eyes of the man to whom she has given her heart—and, incidentally, in the eyes of her observant friends. Next to inquiries concerning the wedding gown and whether the bride wore a tulle veil with Juliet cap or with just the plain wreath of orange blossoms, we are sure to hear, "And what was the going-away gown?"

The matter of "what she wears" and "what she is going to wear" will never lose interest for the world of womankind, however wars may come and go. We may learn something of simplicity, but the wardrobe will always be one of woman's chief concerns. A woman was reproved one day for tying pink ribbons on her baby's white gown.

"The child doesn't really need any pink on that little dress," said the would-be friend in explanatory fashion.

"And God didn't need to put pink tips on the daisy petals," said the undaunted mother, "but I'm very glad that He gave them that touch of colour."

Woman is not ever likely to be restricted in her choice of garment by a sense of what is actually needed. If she were, this old earth would be a much duller planet than it is, in this year of much strife and yet much hopefulness. To the girl who is engaged, as the wedding day approaches, the subject of the trousseau becomes more and more engrossing.

THERE is no English word equivalent to trousseau. We borrow it from the French, the people so long noted for their mastery of the art of the modiste. Every girl wishes to have a pretty and complete trousseau, and yet her trousseau plans may be modified greatly if she take into consideration the income of her future husband and the place of her new residence. The former should be considered carefully before the purchase of the trousseau. If you are to become the bride of a man of modest means, it is very bad taste to have gowns very much more luxurious than any he will be able to purchase in the first married years. That does not mean that the trousseau should be niggardly. On the contrary, the best material possible should be used, but anything beyond the necessities of a matron of moderate means should be avoided.

Much discussion might take place as to the amount of clothing to be provided for the trousseau. One bit of advice may be given to the bride who is going on a quiet honeymoon trip, and that is to avoid being encumbered with too much luggage. A bride-elect was counselled in this fashion the other day by her married sister.

"I should take only a small trunk with me," said the latter. "You and Charlie are going to a small lake resort, where fashionable clothes are not in great demand. These extra trunks and boxes had better be forwarded to your new home. I tell you, there is almost a tragedy in too many trunks."

"Why, you had several," protested Beth, the bride-elect.

"That is why I am warning you. Tom and I went to England on our wedding trip, and I had six trunks. We almost quarrelled over them at Quebec and every day on the ocean voyage I worried over those wretched trunks. Poor Tom was worn out, looking after them in England, and we lost one on the way home. I've always believed that he did it on purpose. I saw then how foolish it was to take so much away with us, and anyway, I had too large a trousseau. It was a great mistake, for several of the gowns were

old-fashioned almost before I had worn them, and I gave them away or made them into cushion covers."

"We're poorer now," said Beth. "War taxes and things like that will keep my trousseau where it should be. But I had made up my mind to a comparatively limited trousseau, anyway, for I don't believe in having too much to begin with. It means that some of your clothes become moth-eaten or old-fashioned. Then we are going to a small house, and I don't want to have more than I can conveniently keep in the ordinary closet or wardrobe. I've put a good deal of money into fine shoes and a supply of lingerie, but there are not many gowns."

"You may be sure that Charlie will be glad," said her sister, "for men detest looking after trunks."

"I DON'T know whether he'll thank me or not," laughed Beth. "He will have to buy me frocks before the year is out."

"All the better!" replied her sister. "It almost spoiled Tom for me to have such an extensive trousseau, for he forgot there was such an item of expense as a wife's wardrobe."

"When I was a girl," broke in Aunt Clara, "there was a kind of unwritten rule that a bride should have a trousseau which provided that no new clothes should be bought for six months, at least."

"That seems about right," Beth agreed. "It is a mistake to allow a man to forget all about your hats and shoes. Charlie won't be worried about too many trunks on our honeymoon, but I shall certainly need a new gown before six months are over. What do you think of these?" showing three or four inexpensive but dainty one-piece gowns. "These are for morning wear in the house, and I made every one of them myself. I don't believe it is poverty which makes love fly out of the window. I believe it is slovenly dressing in the morning. There's no excuse for it, when you come to consider that a pretty, neat gown costs no more than an ugly, untidy one. These are not fussy, but they're rather pretty, if I do say it myself. And altogether they didn't cost twenty dollars, for, as I say, they are strictly home-made."

"You're a wise girl, Beth," said her sister with a sigh. "There is a great deal in beginning the day with a smile and a fresh gown, but it is sometimes hard to think of the little things which go to make life more interesting."

It is true that in these practical days the bride is learning to avoid buying anything which is so good that she feels obliged to put it away. For the wedding garments, themselves, there is always a demand for the delicate and dainty, and every one sympathizes with the bride who carefully puts away the filmy white gown, the satin slippers and white silk stockings to keep them for many a day, while the veil is one of her most treasured possessions. But it is idle folly for her to have lingerie so precious and perishable that it is too good for daily wear and is, therefore, put away to become yellow and undesirable. The modern maiden should have apparel that can be worn, rather than stored away and only brought out for very special occasions. There is a tendency in modern homes which is affecting what we eat and wear. Just as we have the living room to-day, instead of the drawing-room (the word really means the withdrawing-room), and the guest room rather than the old-time spare bedroom, so we have the afternoon gown and the tailored suit rather than the "best dress." There is very seldom any gown one can point to as "the very best" or as a kind of state garb. Thus the bride of 1916 looks upon every gown in her trousseau (save, perhaps, the wedding robe itself) as one for actual use.

THE bride-elect of whom I have spoken, wise Beth, who was not going to take away many trunks on the honeymoon, had, aside from the four simple morning gowns of her own make, five gowns in her trousseau—the wedding dress, the going-away gown, a pretty "creation" in old rose silk, which could be worn as an up-to-date afternoon gown, a dainty biscuit coloured evening gown of georgette crepe, and a gown of light weight blue cloth, which would make a charming afternoon gown for cool days. There were several pretty

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