



**A Cool Summer Dress—The New Bodices
—A Discovery—The Latest Folly—
An Old Custom Revived—A
Protest Against Veils.**

A cool summer dress will soon be very acceptable—at least we will hope so—though the bouts of coldness that come with the occasional rain showers make us still a little unwilling to don the thinnest of materials. Last year we were overrun with what was called Russian net, and certainly it was a useful fabric until it became vulgarized by being made in a poor material, which turned brown and rusty looking very soon, and became very shabby. However better makes of net are now manufactured of silk, which not only preserve their colour, but drape very prettily when arranged over silk. I therefore give you this week a model of this kind of thin summer costume, as it may be reproduced in other colours according to your own taste. This one you may please imagine has an underdress of "Opbelia" coloured silk. If you do not remember that tint, I may remind you that it is the pinkish-mauve of a



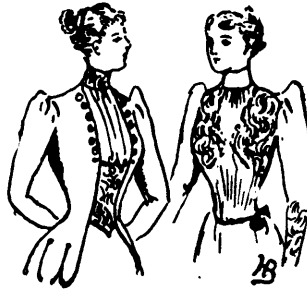
light shade that is sometimes called peach. The net itself that veils it is black, and is worked with a wide border round the hem of the green velvet—a bright emerald shade—in designs *applique* on to the net. The bodice is made full from the neck, and drawn into the corselet which is

composed of green velvet trimmed with jet. At least I should say that the silk fits plainly and tightly to the figure, whilst the net is pulled over it. And now to tell you a little more about the corselet. It is finished off at the lower edge with a fringe of a lovely kind of jet that is wonderfully light, and yet brilliant. It is a new thing, and each strand is like a fine round ruche made of jet, very thick and bushy looking. The sleeves are of the silk, covered with net, the lower part being of green velvet slightly trimmed with jet. I find I omitted to say that there is a flounce of the silk on the under skirt, so as to prevent the velvet embroidery of the upper one from falling inwards at the feet.

The new bodices are so wonderfully various that it would be quite impossible to describe a quarter of them. There seems an increasing preference for various kinds of chemisettes, whether made of lace, net or gauze. Here is a model of quite a new way of wearing a chemisette in a dress. The material of the costume may be of foulard, surah or any of those light kinds of silk. You will please



notice that the sleeves are put on without any foundation piece on the shoulder. I gave you some weeks ago a low dress treated in this way, and it is equally becoming to high costumes. The dress is opened back and front, but only in a short point behind. In front it reaches to the waist, where it terminates in a waist-band of black velvet, and a pointed band of the same is tacked down to keep the



pleats, or fulness in place across the chest. I remark, that as a change from the now rather overdone long jacket, the place of the basques is taken by those of the waistcoat, and the jacket is reduced to a short bodice almost of the dimensions of a little Figaro or bolero jacket. This should end in coat-tails or square basques behind, under which those of the waistcoat lose themselves. This style is suitable to woollen or plain silk fabrics. So also is the third little figuring, which has the chemisette of white silk—surah or foulard—drawn into a pretty corselet of the same material as the jacket—or one of a contrasting colour, if preferred—braided with gold. The same embroidery is seen on the collar band, and rows of gold ball buttons adorn each side of the upper part of the jacket. The division between each lapel of the basques is headed by a similar button. The last of the four shows a loose fronted chemisette of silk or gauze with Figaro fronts of passementerie or lace, the sleeves being similarly trimmed.

But before I go further I must tell you that I have made a discovery that may be useful to my kind readers, namely, that one can wash chiffon, and iron it without spoiling it. With many other people, I had supposed that once this lovely material was soiled, it was ruined and done for, but after making the experiment the other day, I was delighted to find it was really possible to wash it with the best result, and I was quite charmed at my success. Of course it requires care and delicate treatment.

The latest folly I think, is the injection of perfume hypodermically. Ladies may be very fond of scent, and weary of having to renew it often, but surely it is the height of absurdity to have it put into the skin. However, now there is a little inspissating machine invented by which the silly ones of our sex may be perfumed in this truly barbarous manner; it consists of a tiny syringe which contains six drops of an essence, and this can be pricked into the skin with the right hand. A medical man found out this possibility from having used a strong smelling drug for a consumptive patient by injecting it; and remarking on the manner in which it affected the skin and breath of the person, he was led to use scent to overcome the odour. He assures us that there is not the very least fear of blood poisoning. Once a week is all that is necessary for the operation. Pride feels no pain—it is said—so perhaps there will be found people foolish enough, and vain enough to try the experiment.

An old custom revived is that of hanging pictures by ribbons. I saw it mentioned in a ladies' paper quite recently as a new idea; but some eighteen years ago I remember it was quite the fashion, particularly in a small drawing-room, where large and heavy pictures would be quite out of place. It is well in such cases to hang the pictures by chains or cords, and then to so arrange the ribbon as to entirely cover them, ending with a rosette or bow to hide the hook or nail, from which they are suspended. Ribbon, however strong, is not quite fitted for the strain of the whole weight of even an ordinary sized picture. A great deal of taste may be displayed in the colour chosen, which should be repeated elsewhere in the room. I am dreadfully tired of those little Oriental cloths that people dab on to the backs of easy chairs, and crumple up in the middle by the way of draping them. Far prettier is the old fashion that used to accompany the picture ribbons of former times, namely, of soft, white muslin caps or covers to the tops of the chair-backs, edged with lace or daintily gaufréd frills, and caught up with bows of ribbon to match those that hung the pictures. If your room was papered with a grey tint, you had yellow or salmon pink ribbons; if the walls were of terra cotta in a pale shade (than which nothing is prettier to show off china or pictures), pale blue or a rich maroon would be suitable, and so on. Of course the curtains should sympathise in some dark, rich colour, with which the furniture should be covered; whilst the muslin curtains with their frills should be caught back with broad ribbons to correspond with those about the room. I generally found in the country, that with care a set of ribbons (unless of a very evanescent colour) lasted me a summer or winter season. The ugliest room may be beautified in this way, and with very little expense turned into a cosy home-looking apartment, from which the usual stiff, upholstered look, so dear to inartistic people, is happily banished. Muslin covers also have the advantage of being easily washed and "got-up," which the Oriental cloths, once dirty, do not stand at all successfully.

A protest against veils has been made by a lady in one of our weekly papers, and I think not without reason, for the so-called "bird-cage" arrangement that literally ties one's head up in a bag of lace or tulle is neither elegant nor comfortable. No veil should be worn that is not easily turned up and readjusted. This poor lady has been such a martyr to her appearance as to have declined "many a refreshing cup of tea" because she dared not interfere with the arrangement of her veil. Imagine being a slave to this degree of a piece of net! The old-fashioned plan of wearing just enough tulle to lightly cover the hair, and nearly reach down to the mouth is quite the most useful, as that is nearly all that is required to keep the hair in order from the ravages of the wind, and dust from the eyes. I hope we may never again see worn those terrible old-fashioned long "falls," as they were called, that were tied round the front of the poke bonnets of our great-grandmothers. The only remnant of anything like them is worn by the members of some Roman Catholic sisterhood, who walk out in large black cloaks, with white collars, and the real old-fashioned poke bonnet, with long black veil. It is in such a matter as this that common sense is shown by each woman adapting the fashion of the day to her own requirements without preserving its eccentricities.