

We have no inclination to enter into a description of some of the fashionable follies of the day which are springing into a brief existence. Democratic America is not the place to start a fashion; and we have full faith in the stern good sense of American ladies to think that they will ever adopt such a costume—one in which there is no beauty, but deformity, to recommend it. The human form was made for nobler purposes; and the aim of every lady should be to dress in such a manner that she will display its beauties to the best advantage, by dressing in a proper and becoming style.

There is such a restless surging to and fro in the dress of the present day, that we cannot help thinking we are on the eve of a complete revolution. Fashions change so rapidly that it is impossible for a person of limited means to keep pace with them. It does not matter to some individuals how unbecoming it may be to them: let it be fashionable, and they immediately adopt it without consideration. Our eyes are sometimes greeted with strange fancies. We have seen a small woman with a large head make it still larger by an immense chignon; and a short woman all flounces, making herself appear much shorter; and hats that are pretty to the young, round face, adopted by persons on whose face time has left its strong impress. Again, large plaid dress patterns are worn by others, which form a moving mass of bright colours and broken lines, at variance with all graceful motions of the body, not a spot on which the eye can rest and find repose. In this last particular, we think ladies too often err.

The eye soon tires of motion when exercised to excess, and notwithstanding the sublime grandeur of Niagara Falls, it would cease to please, and the eye would turn from it in quest of some quiet spot on which to rest, and like the harmonious contrast of two colours, the beauty of motion is brought in harmony by repose. Apply this law to dress and we soon learn the value of repose. If the dress is figured the shawl or cape should be plain, or if figured, then the dress should be the reverse; by this means the eye is not fatigued but rests upon it with pleasure, the contrary creates confusion. The long sweeping train that trails regardless of dirt, however becoming and graceful it may be in the drawing-room, is certainly out of place in the street, and we can assure the ladies, that if anything pleases the opposite sex, it is a neat and clean appearance about the feet, and certainly the short walking dresses recommend themselves for two reasons—convenience and cleanliness.

To the correct understanding of dressing well, two things are essential, first, a knowledge of the beauty of form of the human body, and secondly, the harmony of colour, and as you perfect yourself in these your taste will improve and instinctively you will avoid all eccentricities of that many-faced monster—fashion, appreciating only what is conducive to beauty of the human form and cease to admire the strong glare of inharmonious colour. The dress, as we observed before, should be a secondary consideration, for the body was not made for dress but dress for the body. Give it your study in a proper spirit—not one of vanity which leads to extravagance: let chasteness and simplicity be your motto. It is better to err in this than in gaudiness.