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Lace...! For every woman its very name conjures up both a desire and an echo. Has not lace from time immemorial been the dream of every bride! The follies and crimes committed to secure famous «points» led the wise King Louis XIII of France to issue an edict prohibiting the use of lace; his idea was to put an end to the prodigal exaggerations of the ladies of his Court. Alas! Such edicts were never obeyed in France and that clever statesman Colbert repealed the law and lace universally became the principal adornment of dress. Price was not a deterrent. Collars, cuffs, gloves, even knee-high boots were lace-trimmed; furniture, carriages were decorated with frills and furbelows... So great was the vogue, that the Senate of Venice decreed that death would be the punishment of any person who betrayed to foreign craftsmen the secret of Venetian point.

Today, in our unromantic XXth century, lace — guipure, insertions, braids, fabrics — is still the most feminine of adornments. Modern industrial technique has placed this exquisite product within reach of all women, rich or poor, and has won new worlds for it. The delicacy and perfection of modern lace can rival with the historically famous points of England, Belgium, Venice...

This year's fashions — turned once more towards femininity — record another triumph for this age-old product of human skill. Lace still remains the poetic essence of fashion. Gossamer-light, it moulds itself to every fantasy, idealises feminine contours, flows over a flounce, cascades like a fantastic waterfall, a zephyr of femininity. Romantic, too, when a collar of lace trims a velvet gown, reminiscent of the demure loves of bold adventurers.

Lace is no longer restricted to gala evening wear; it embellishes that «little afternoon frock», a demure bodice, a bolero, a sober dinner gown... Lace too on skirts, tunics, «aprons» and bustle-reminiscent draperies. A taffetas flounce reveals a wide lace skirt, a severe tailored satin gown contrasts its simplicity with the intricate delicacy of Chantilly... every couturier is using these enchanting arabesques to idealize womanhood and stress the eternal feminine...

The writer of these lines has viewed an amusing creation in *pekin faille*, styled as in the days of the Empress Eugénie, lightened at the neck and wrists by a heavy, chalk-white guipure. Another model sported a black lace «mantlet» worn over a severely cut cocktail gown; and again on a sober velvet ensemble, the transparency of «blonde» lace formed a pleasing contrast. And — of course — evening gowns, mysteriously romantic, of which *Infantas* may have dreamt...

On any gown, lace confers exquisiteness: poised over the sheen of satin or velvet, its mysterious arabesques are revealed, its delicate garlands weave the melodies of a waltz... garlands so delicate that it seems as though a breath too lusty might make their petals fall. Wherein lies the secret of the delicate charm of lace? Where lies the source of its poesy and romantic lure? Its story is legend, its secret is bound by a golden strand woven through the filigree weft...

Winter elegance this season will flourish under the sign of lace: from head to toe... every accessory, even to gloves and handbags, umbrellas... womankind will wear this delicious symbol of newly won femininity. When Christmas and New-Year bells ring out, lovely flower-like gowns will glow in lighted ballrooms. The rich hues of dahlias and chrysanthemums, the chalice of white convolvulus, interpreted in velvet, tulle, satin and lace, will flow and intermingle under the designer's magic wand.

COMTESSE DE SEMONT.

Fashion in Laces



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