



OLYMPIA, THERMOMETER of LONDON FASHION

By ADELE M. GIANELLI

Scene I. "The Great Fashion Show at Olympia" blazing from a poster. Mayfair dashing there post-haste.

Scene II. Outside the Olympia a large banner in words of flame "For the Trade Only." Mayfair collapses.

Scene III. Mayfair, revived by a bit of the Irish spirit, is seen mysteriously whispering to the haughty major-domo who announces in a grandiose manner, "Certainly not, miss, h'its as much as me life is worth. H'only Buyers h'admitted. H'its the wholesale show of h'advanced styles. Even retailers h'arn't h'allowed in, except their Buyers. They come from all over the world, but the noospapers cah'n't tell the 'arf of it."

(Curtain drops to rise upon an entr'acte depicting a Canadian city filled with anxious-eyed women, desperately turning the pages of Mayfair looking for London's latest.)

Scene IV. Major-domo greatly affected, not by the tip which he grandly refused, but by this last sad picture.

Scene V. Mayfair enters the sacred portals, to penetrate the secret veil disclosed only to the great Buyers of the world. (End of Act I.)

Act II. What Mayfair Saw

KIOSKS of black and gold lacquer in futurist design, scarlet Japanese temples, Elizabethan cottages, *Palais de danse*, *Promenades du bois*, shops masquerading as hat-boxes, Moorish balconies, Spanish patios, Egyptian harems—but rarifying the exotic luxury, there pervaded over all the tang of Scottish moors, the lilt of Irish skies and the goodfellowship of English country life. For even the *Rue de la Paix* comes to London for its sports clothes and at this first showing of all advance styles for autumn and winter, the buyers of the world convene to select British designs—especially for Sport.

Mannequins people this little City of Fashion. They parade its streets and have no hesitation in revealing all their charms—and more. Audaciously challenging admiration they lure the flaccid Buyer within their web where he or she becomes hopelessly entangled in the meshes of wool or velvet, tulle or tweed, lace or leather, as the case may be. These are the outstanding materials of the season. A kiosk as green as a leaf of lettuce, has two gold cages where Angora rabbits nibbled. Have you never seen an Angora? Its coat is plucked five times a year for the wool you love to wear. And the rabbit is five times more beautiful than you can imagine! A pistache green—green is very smart—jumper and skirt, with little pin tucks diagonally crossing the soft folds of the latter, was a precious model. By the way, most of the trimming seems confined to skirts, either for sports or evening wear. But one cameo-colored (another new shade, flushing pink) jumper in Angora was banded with a zig-zag border of beige to match the skirt.

This zig-zag design—rather like a flash of lightning—is *le dernier cri*. It was used with great character on the jumper of Milanese boucle—a new knitted silk, shot in two colors. In cornflower blue, glinting with yellow, a sapphire leather design flashed across the jumper. The applique looked like suede but is that latest interpretation of leather, Gazelda, a skin that only requires wire-brushing to eradicate the soiled spot. It is extremely supple and composed many sleeveless jumpers which had cut-out borders.

Velours Lyonnaise, plush-like in quality, was featured too, and the Milanese comes also in Alpaca, a finer texture for [See also page 76]

Even the *Rue de la Paix* comes to London for its sports clothes, and at the Olympia, which offers the first showing of all advance styles for autumn and winter, the buyers of the world convene to select British designs—especially for Sport

The *Bridge-coat*, the maiden's whim but never the matron's refuge, is a bizarre conception. In velvet, printed tinsel, stockinette and felt these saucy sleeveless adjuncts make up in trimming what they lack in size

All the nuances of brown are good—even for the ball room. Some lovely ladies promenading an Italian terrace emphasized the shades from apricot to bronze

Cameo is a new shade—a flushing pink. Imagine a cameo jumper in Angora, banded with a zig-zag border of beige to match the skirt. This zig-zag design—rather like a streak of lightning is *le dernier cri*

Gazelda is the newest interpretation of leather for applique work. Gazelda is a skin that requires only wire-brushing to eradicate a soiled spot. It is extremely supple and is employed for many sleeveless jumpers with cut-out borders. Velours Lyonnaise, plush-like in quality is also featured

For evening wraps, nearly all on dolman lines, pink is favored. They are enriched with furs of course and rely upon their sleeves for distinction

Necklines vary, but a charming innovation for a young girl is a round one, like an old-fashioned yoke of gathered point d'esprit. It has a Quaker Girl effect

Wool or velvet, lace tulle or tweed, lace or leather, as the case may be. These are the outstanding materials of the new season. Most of the trimming seems confined to skirts, either for sports or evening wear

Continued from page 7



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Velours Lyonnaise, plush-like in quality, was featured too, and the Milanese comes also in Alpaca, a finer texture for warm climates. A smart little outfit sighing for the Riviera was one shot blue and gray, with mauve sleeveless jacket of Gazelda. Again this latter was a companion jumper, in the latest nutmeg shade, to a striped brown and orange skirt in a specially woven tweed called Buranic Moire. Upon variations of these, will assuredly depend our informal winter togs.

All the nuances of brown were good—even for the ballroom. Some lovely ladies promenading an Italian terrace emphasized the shades from apricot to bronze. A gold kid bodice (leather again, sometimes it gleamed with diamante) shimmered into the petals of bronze tulle skirt. The gold lamé coat made the ensemble complete by its lining of bronze velvet.

Deliciously airy was the frock of narrow tulle flounces (gowns are lengthening perceptibly if only to reveal transparent hems) blending from pale cinnamon into mushroom brown—the color of the sash with gold-lined loops. In all the grandeur of *la haute monde*, a gold tissue was embroidered around the edge with intricate wheels of dull gold soutache—a quaint little coat, stiff with the same.

The Bridge-coat, the Smoking-coat, what you will—the maiden's whim but never the matron's refuge, were bizarre conceptions. In velvet, printed tinsel, stockinette and felt, these saucy, sleeveless adjuncts made up in trimming what they lacked in size. Velvet ones had floral designs in wool and simple wool crochet edging; silk and sequins glitteringly overwhelmed the surprised stockinettes; leather appliqued the felt in fantastic designs—they sang a jazz of Flaming Youth.

But an echo of Lohengrin came down the aisle with the advent of the autumn bride. The loveliest was a medieval gown in ivory chiffon, velvet over a pink slip which blushed through the fragile velvet. Its square neck, also the hem, had a narrow but thickly encrusted pearl embroidery—a bow knot of the same across the bodice. Pink orange blossoms were a modern note to match the pink-lined train of velvet.

Necklines vary, but a charming innovation for a young girl was a round one, like an old-fashioned yoke, of gathered point d'esprit which finished off the bodice of a periwinkle blue taffeta. Its Quaker girl effect was enhanced by a belt of wide mauve velvet ribbon primly fastened by a large gold buckle.

For evening wraps, nearly all on dolman lines, pink seemed to be favored. Two lovely ones rich with platinum fox, relied upon their sleeves for distinction, heavily banded as one was with silver paillettes and the other showered with diamante. As for furs, they ran the gamut from pony to sable, depending upon mosaic design of workmanship rather than line, for individuality. A coat of gazelle substituted triangular patterns of brown silk braid for trimming on collar, sleeves and hem—and there were luxurious examples of summer—ermine and sable-dyed squirrel as well as white fox dyed pink.

What were the novelties of the exhibition? Perhaps the aviator's costume

intrigued most. In all rose-colored leather, the thick jumper with steel zip fastening, "longers" gathered into rose moccasins wool-lined and leather helmet with diamond aeroplane pin—it was the last word for this tricky sport. A motoring hat brought back chiffon-swathed days, as a long misty veil fell from the skull cap of flecked pheasant feathers, which had a buckle of felt across the front. Literally as light as a feather, a hat of closely clipped ostrich spelt distinction with its clever inlaid design. In competition with the colored shoes, stockings are taking unto themselves a new verve. With colored feet, they extend this audacity to a point above the heel and for evening they are flower-painted.

Among the little etceteras which give a *chic* so charming, beaded collarettes—encrusted petals laid on a velvet band, or tiny coquilles, were amusing. Cufflets of tulle ruffles were pretty conceits enhancing the hands and wisps of chiffon muffs hid the vanities. Ermine tails were uniquely employed as the sole trimming on a black velvet afternoon dress where they clustered in little bunches at the wrists and formed a prim jabot down the bodice. Another afternoon model was in the new lava shade, an uncertain gray-green, developed into the latest spongy, woollen material called Frisca.

Of certain popularity are two exquisite innovations for day coats, Chenille, a ribbed plush woven with a silver thread and Arlington leather which comes in mottled designs almost as soft as the new shadow velvets. In fact, it is novelty in material and not line which gives new life to fashion this year.

There were no children mannequins, but two of the most artistic achievements were inspired by tiny tots. The small boy-figures had on a cerulean blue outfit of brushed wool, its note of distinction being two square inset panels of the white angora on the coat and toque and each panel was worked in blue wool. The wee girl was a sprite in her brushed wool coat with inverted side pleats and knitted collar and cuffs in orange edged with brown. The unbrushed wool dress of beige, too, sported a turned-back orange knitted collar with orange embroidered tabs like those catching the pleats of her brushed wool tam. Children in England are dressed *ensemble* in a fascinating manner.

Next door to the children's shop was an hotel lounge where marvellous models performed in pantomime for they were but show-figures. Worked by electricity they made graceful little gestures, fluttered fans, languidly drew on wraps and one modern Cleopatra sat smoking a cigarette—quite realistically blowing puffs of smoke from between cherry lips. Her tight-fitting gown of Nile-green velvet had at the left side alternate green and blue flounces which cascading around to the right, formed a billowy train—one of the few to be seen at the Exhibition.

Just a tantalizing glimpse of what the future holds for one's wardrobe! *Mayfair* pictured certain pet ones hung in her own cupboard—to her they were the high-lights of the Show. A three-piece suit of the new hazel-nut shade in glorified corduroy, supple as chiffon velvet, angora jumper to match, the



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