

## WINTER CLOTHES AND HOW TO MAKE THEM.

By DORA DE BLAQUIÈRE.



LIKE to see every-one looking nice, especially girls, and a m o f opinion that no small part of their future happiness depends upon their complete understanding of the whole "Art of Dress."

The subject is indeed a wide one, from the choice of the materials to the right methods of cutting-out and making them up for use. Economy, wearing-qualities, colour, suitability, and last, but not least, that which we have only lately begun to study—the hygienic principles of dress—should all form part of the education which fits a young girl for her battle with life.

This winter Dame Fashion favours those who have to make the best of half-worn garments, for the jackets, mantles, and paletots worn differ but little from those that were fashionable last season, and the universal adoption of short walking-dresses is an admirable assistance in renovating and remodelling old ones. But I must begin, I think, with the

### HAT OR BONNET,

and here we are fortunate too, for the "poke" bonnet—the favourite shape of the last spring and summer—will be quite as fashionable this winter, and those amongst "our girls" who had them in black straw can use them, re-trimmed, throughout the next season. They are now most generally lined with a coloured satin, and are trimmed on the outside with black velvet, or satin, or else with a scarf of coloured Indian-looking material, in various rich hues. Half a yard of this is enough to drape round the bonnet in folds, with a small tie. Strings need not be added, as they are more worn by elderly ladies than girls. Even, if the "poke" bonnet be white, it is not necessary to despair, as it will dye very nicely. The only difference in the shape this winter is that the front is wider and more flaring. The handkerchief-crowned hats, with gathered velvet rims, are still worn very much, and they are exceedingly pretty when made of the same stuff as the dress. Almost any girl could manage to make one of them if she purchased the foundation, which only costs 6d. The first thing to do is to bind the rim with velvet cut on the bias, slightly gathering it at each edge. This velvet may be had cut from the piece on the bias, and I think half a yard should be found enough, cut into two lengths and joined. The lining of the hat is put in next, and for this, if great economy be desired, old silk will answer as well as new. Lastly, the head-covering should be put on, and this should be cut in an oval shape, and larger than necessary. The gathered or puckered effect of the top is easily produced by taking a few irregular stitches on the wrong side, and drawing them lightly together. A little observation will enable a girl to make a very pretty hat out of cheap materials, if she have the determination to succeed.

I have commenced with the hat, as a prin-

cipal part of the winter clothes, because it is sometimes one of the young girl's greatest difficulties; but it is one which may be surmounted, just at present, with more ease than usual, as the fashions worn are simple and easily understood. The out-of-door garment is much more troublesome, and I think that a wise and prudent maiden will first try her "prentice hand" upon the alteration or turning of an old

### JACKET OR MANTLE.

By this simple means she will learn the proper method of making-up cloth. She will find the seams, after being sewn, were flattened with a hot iron on the wrong side, and afterwards laid over with a narrow galloon hemmed down on either side. The edges are also generally finished with this narrow galloon, which is the best and neatest method of treating all seams that are intended to be durable. Black linen-thread should be used for sewing all thick and dark materials—not cotton, which cuts and wears rusty. For stitching seams, which are intended to be seen, and also for buttonholes, tailor's silk twist must be procured. This is sold by the yard, in all colours, as well as black. Buttonholes are a sad trouble to most amateur workpeople; but I hope that my readers have already passed through a complete course of careful instruction, and that, as regards these tailor's buttonholes, experience will soon teach them the right method of making them strongly. They are cut in the shape of an elongated ., the wide end at the outside edge, to allow of its lying flat when buttoned, and to give room for the shank of a large button. The quantity needed to make an ordinary jacket of tweed, for a girl of fifteen, would be one yard and a quarter, three yards of serge or linsey, and a little more of diagonal or coarse frieze.

### PAPER PATTERNS.

One of the things which must be learnt by all girls who desire to be comfortably dressed on small allowances, is cutting-out, and this seems to me not nearly so difficult a matter as people are inclined to make out. A few experiments should be first tried with newspapers, in the following manner:—Take three or four sheets of it and paste the ends together in a long length of several yards, the whole length to be, say, 24 inches wide. Then lay your paper patterns down on this, remembering that all backs, fronts, sleeves, and skirts run up and down the selvage, and that any deviation from this settled rule will spoil your dress or jacket. The right and wrong side of the stuff must also be remembered, as well as the pattern, and if it run up or down.

It would be difficult to mention a single article of dress of which a paper pattern may not be procured in the present day, at prices which vary from sixpence to a shilling. I remember a little girl of my acquaintance, some years ago, being fired with the ambition of making a dress for herself. She bought, out of her own pocket-money, 8 or 9 yards of print for 4s., and after arduous study of her own dresses, she managed one day to produce, to her mother's astonishment, a dress for herself, which could only be regarded as wonderful for a maiden of the age of 13! She had received no help from any one over it, and the cutting-out and making had been entirely her own work. I am inclined to think that many girls might be induced to attempt dressmaking for themselves if some small prize were held out, by either father or mother, as a reward.

### THE DRESS.

The three materials most suitable for the ordinary every day dress of a girl are tweed, serge, and French merino. The latter, which has just returned to fashion, is more suitable for best dresses, perhaps; but it is, without exception, one of the most durable and

charming of materials, and bears hard usage, washing, dyeing, and turning, as long as it can hold together. Tweed has the great drawback of being frequently mixed with cotton; but when quite pure, all wool, and not too fine in texture, it is also interminable in its wear. Serge is open to the same objection, and, in addition, is sometimes so badly dyed that the hands are embued with a blue hue as long as the dress lasts. It is also liable to fade, and wears white; and when torn it makes such an ugly jagged hole, which the wearer will find most difficult to darn. It should always be bought at a good shop, and, if possible, the cheaper kinds should be avoided, as unsuitable to those who have little money to spend, and must have that money's worth. The large loose-grained serges are said to be the best, and the prices range from one shilling to five or six per yard. From five to seven yards, fifty-four inches in width, are needed for a skirt-bodice and jacket. The most suitable trimming is flat mohair braid of good quality, and wooden buttons. The skirt is generally made with a deep kilted flounce, which is unlined, the kiltings being kept in place by two tapes, to which each kilt is sewn in their due order. The bodice is shaped with a plain long basque, and to hide the meeting of the skirt and bodice a folded scarf is tied round the hips. The out-of-door jacket to this serge suit, if nicely made, and well cut, should answer for other dresses, and any extra warmth can be added by putting a small knitted woollen waistcoat underneath.

### CAPES.

The present mode of wearing coachmen's capes is a very pretty and a very economical one, especially to young girls, as they can manage with a lighter and, perhaps, an older jacket for the winter, when they have secured the additional warmth of the pretty and becoming fur cape. They are not expensive either, and are quite within the reach of a small allowance. The best to choose are, I think, those of black fox, though, of course, the coney skins are the cheapest. The drawback to the latter is that they will not bear wetting, and that the hairs are very easily plucked off in tufts, leaving an ugly bare place.

### SHOES AND STOCKINGS.

It is a peculiarly good thing for those who must think of how to spend their money to the best advantage, that nearly every fashion of this year tends to assist the thrifty. Shoes, for example, which are so much worn, are far cheaper than boots; and a good strong and nice-looking pair can be purchased for five or six shillings, where equally good boots would have cost ten. Black stockings, too, are both becoming and economical, and the pretty deep-red ones are very much affected by young girls, who, with a morsel of red in the hat, thus contrive to lighten an entirely black costume. It is singular how opinions change. A few years ago it was considered quite an unheard-of thing for a young girl to wear a black dress or bonnet.

And now, having disposed of the hat, bonnet, jacket, dress, and shoes, for walking purposes, we must return to the in-door raiment. And here it is that I must especially charge my readers to endeavour to be neatly and prettily dressed—tidy hair, shining from the constant care bestowed on it, clean cuffs and collars, and, above all, neat shoes and stockings, are none of them too expensive luxuries for girls to aspire to possess. But perhaps, even as you read these words, there may be some shabby old dress which seems hopelessly "done for" staring you in the face. Even of this you need not despair, with the present pretty fashion of aprons and pinafores to help you to hide all defects. Your own fancy may also be called into play to invent something

which shall be inexpensive, and yet pretty and quite original. I saw such an elegant pinafore-apron the other day, made by a young girl to hide her old winter dress. The material was a cheap sateen, of a dark pink shade, decorated with little flowers, and trimmed all round the edge with a cheap embroidery. The bill was triumphantly produced for my inspection, and amounted to two shillings and tenpence half-penny! The cheap cottons, with blue or pink stripes, are very pretty for the making of these winter pinafores; or, if these should be thought too cold, or their washing too expensive, there are so many pretty flowered Pompadour-like materials, that no difficulty will be found in selecting something pretty and inexpensive.

And now I am going to conclude my chat on Winter Clothes with a few explanations, and a little advice about purchases, and the cutting-out of

#### MATERIALS.

It may be thought that I have suggested a very short list of materials from which to select a winter dress. To tell the truth, the essential part of economical dressing, both for young and old, is to choose good all-wool, and quite unremarkable materials, avoiding mixed fabrics of wool and silk, or wool and cotton. So with this view I have left out all such combinations from the list for your choice. Everything *prononcé* in style, or at all peculiar in shape, must be avoided, and for two reasons—that it shows the date of its purchase, and the true lady should be neither dowdy, nor antiquated. All peculiarities of dress are sure to be commented upon, and however good-natured our friends may be, we should endeavour in this way to avoid giving them subjects for either discussion or caricature.

#### CUTTING-OUT.

In cutting-out a costume, first cut out the skirt, then the bodice and over-skirt. With the aid of a little ingenuity, the under portions of the sleeves will probably come out of the pieces. Leave the trimmings to the last, at any rate, and use-up the scraps for it. It will frequently be found that, by facing the fronts, instead of turning down the hems, of jackets and bodices, and by adding small pieces where they will not be seen under the arms, both the fronts may be cut from the same width of material. The safest way of proceeding is to lay all the pieces of a pattern on the material at once, as it will then be possible to judge of the most advantageous method of cutting it out. When it is a striped material, try to place a perfect stripe in the middle of the front, and in the centre of the back, if there be no seam. But, in any case, be sure that the stripes, or checks, match, and that those of the two sides correspond.

The straight part of the sleeves should come above the elbow, and the bias part below. Whenever anything has to be cut on the "bias," be sure to do so *exactly*, or it will not hang nor sit nicely. In cutting out a skirt, the front sides of the gores must always be straight, and the sloped or bias sides towards the back, carefully avoiding a seam either down the back or the front breadths.

In cutting materials that are figured, or that have a nap, be very careful to have all the parts of the pattern cut the same way of the material, that is, with the figures placed all the same way, the nap of the cloth running downwards, and the pile of velvet running either all up, or all down, as may be preferred.

And in conclusion remember three things:—that, to be really well dressed we must select such clothes as will be suitable wear when we pursue our daily avocations; that we must be comfortable, both in and out of doors, and that we must always strive to look exactly what we are; as true and upright girls, without silly vanity, or foolish finery.

## HEALTHY RECREATIONS.

### NO. I.—SKATING.

By the Author of "Skating and Scuttling."



HAVE taught many girls of various ages how to skate, and it would be unjust to them not to say that they were far better pupils than boys of the same ages. They seem to have a better idea of balance, and they mostly do as they are told, which is more than can be said for boys in general. And, in consequence, when they are taught to be skaters they rarely degenerate into scuttlers, though they too frequently abandon the ice altogether.

Some years ago lady-skaters were at a disadvantage. Numbers of girls learned to skate very creditably, and if they had pursued their ice-studies steadily, they would have developed into good figure skaters. Now, even with male performers, figure skating is the very poetry of motion, and no more graceful sight could be imagined than the figures when performed by a "set" of eight accomplished lady skaters.

Yet, scarcely any of these girls ever learned even to execute the alpha of figure-skating, *i.e.*, the figure 3, and I never yet saw a female skater who could take her part in a "set."

The reason for this decadence is to be found in Fashion. Young girls dressed in a way which allowed fair freedom to their limbs, and so they got on very well with their skates. But when they grew up, the tyrant Fashion seized upon them and put them into crinoline, within which metal or whalebone prison no human being could skate.

Now, however, female dress has assumed a much more sensible form, and costumes have been made expressly for skating as they have been made for bathing; and, as no true skater kicks the legs about, but always keeps the feet close to each other, the close-fitting and short skirt of the skating dress does not in the least interfere with the necessary freedom of the limbs.

And, if the sensible fashion of feminine skating dress will only continue for a few seasons, we may hope to see the poetry of motion in its most perfect and attractive form, and that the coveted "Silver Skate" may be worn at a lady's necklace as well as at a gentleman's button-hole.

As I hope that every girl who reads this magazine will either wish to learn the art of skating, or to improve her style even if she be a tolerable skater, I will give a few hints such as I always gave to my pupils, and begin with stating what to avoid.

Of course, a beginner will have her skates chosen for her by some one who knows how to skate, and she should never hire skates from the men who infest the ice.

Their skates are always of the worst possible

kind, and made in the cheapest possible way. The edges are never sharp, so that there can be no hold of the ice, and the steel generally terminates before the screw instead of passing well behind it.

Then, their skates almost invariably have upturned points, which are not only useless but dangerous, and they have the heel cut off square instead of being rounded. In a good skate the steel barely projects beyond the wood in front, and is equally rounded at either end. The skate dealers will tell you that these sharp heels are useful in stopping suddenly.

Do not believe them.

Certainly, by raising the toes and digging the sharp heels into the ice the skater can stop herself within a yard or two, and at the same time cut a couple of long, deep grooves in the ice; but she can stop herself in half the distance by simply spinning round, as every skater knows how, and without damaging the surface of the ice.

I must not be understood to recommend expensive skates for a young girl, especially if she be a beginner. Girls grow, and so do their feet, and it is very seldom that a pair of skates will last a growing girl more than a couple of seasons. Besides, a beginner would spoil a good pair of skates in a few days.

As to length, the skate should be just the length of the boot. It may be a trifle longer, but in that case, it must be set rather backward on the boot, so that it projects *behind* the heel, and not in front of the toe. Boots, of course, should be worn by the skater, and they should be laced and not buttoned or fitted with side springs. They should fit exactly but easily to the feet, so that their tightness can be regulated by the laces. Skating in loose boots is almost impossible, and a tight boot will cause indescribable agonies.

Avoid the straps which cross the instep. One broad strap, with double ends at the toe, and one heel strap, are all that are needed. Indeed, if the boots are perfectly fitting, the heel strap is scarcely needed. I use it myself, but merely employ it as a safeguard in case the screw should break, and I always have it drawn so loosely that a finger can be passed between the strap and the boot.

It will be an advantage to buy the skates for some months before the frost comes on, so as to soften the straps thoroughly before they are wanted. New straps are great nuisances, as they are stiff and apt to stretch, while a strap which has been repeatedly soaked in warm grease or oil, and then stretched, and pulled, and rubbed, will remain as soft and pliable as silk, will accommodate itself closely to the foot, and moreover, will be impervious to wet and consequent rotting.

Grease should also be rubbed daily into the junction of the steel with the wood, as in that case there will be no danger of weakening the steel by rust.

Do not employ any vegetable oil for the straps. Colza oil will do well enough for the skates, but neat's-foot oil is best for the straps. In default of neat's-foot oil, clarified lard, perfectly freed from salt, will answer very well if the lard be heated. Straps thus treated are almost indestructible. I have before me a set of straps more than twenty years old, which have been used in sixteen skating seasons. They are now as serviceable as ever, and will probably be used again this season.

If possible, a special pair of boots should be kept for skating, at all events during the season. Then the skates can be attached to them, the straps placed lightly over them, and thus they can be carried in the hand-bag, which every skater ought to possess. They can be slipped on in a moment, the straps and boot-laces tightened, and thus the tedious and troublesome operation of putting on the skates can be avoided.