INTRODUCTION

ALTHOUGH it is best when possible to have personal instruction from a competent teacher, there are many who have neither the time nor opportunity thus to gain the knowledge necessary to success in millinery; it is for such as these therefore that these lessons are compiled.

Millinery is very wide in its scope; this series of lessons might easily be doubled and still leave something to be said; it has therefore been the writer's aim, from the fund of many years' experience, to confine herself to the chief essentials of this fascinating art, which, when thoroughly mastered, will enable the student to work out successfully any new ideas or problems she may encounter. Each season brings new modes, and with these, new methods of handling the materials; though indeed neither may be "new," but merely a revival of some old, old fashion, both in style and workmanship, cleverly adapted to the modes of the day. The technicalities once mastered, the unusual will present no difficulties, and novel ideas will be easily absorbed.

Millinery consists of two branches, the design and the composition. The design is the art of the work; the composition is the technical putting together of the design, most of which can be done by the "maker;" but it takes an artist to evolve the design. The designer must understand the work of the whole or she cannot direct the maker, and both must have
an intimate knowledge of materials and their possibilities, and of these not the least important are what the uninitiated would call "trifles." It is often just one of these "trifles" that give the final touch of true art to the design.

Remember that the mere going through these lessons will not give the requisite proficiency. The examples must be done many times to ensure deftness, lightness of touch, and the speed necessary for acceptability in any workroom. Only the self-confidence that comes with much practice will assure the pupil of her ability to copy Parisian models. This is not only the test, but a most desirable completion to her education as a milliner; an education that will develop her own ability to design, to originate. It may be slow work, but the goal with its fine emoluments is worth all the time and labor we can give it.

The young woman who desires to make her own hats, and those of her family, will find in these,—when the lessons have been mastered,—enough practice to lay the foundation of an accomplishment that, should it ever become necessary, will prove a pleasant and profitable means of livelihood, and in the meantime enable her to evolve accurate copies of Parisian creations at a small part of the importers' prices; though such prices, all expenses taken into consideration, are perfectly fair. Thus, then, to The Artist and The Amateur this book is dedicated by The Author.