CHAPTER III

HOW TO DRESS YOUR TYPE

A Few Points Applying to All Costumes

NEEDLESS to say, when considering woman's costumes, for ordinary use, in their relation to background, unless some chameleon-like material be invented to take on the colour of any background, one must be content with the consideration of one's own rooms, porches, garden, opera-box or automobile, etc. For a gown to be worn when away from home, when lunching, at receptions or dinners, the first consideration must be becomingness,—a careful selection of line and colour that bring out the individuality of the wearer. When away from one's own setting, personality is one of the chief assets of every woman. Remember, individuality is nature's gift to each human being. Some are more markedly different than others, but we
PLATE VI

It is by Andrea Verrocchio, and now in Metropolitan Museum. We have here an illustration of the costume, so often shown on the person of the Virgin in the art of the Middle Ages.
Metropolitan Museum of Art

Woman in Art of the Renaissance Sculpture-Relief in Terra-Cotta: The Virgin
have all seen a so-called colourless woman transformed into surprising loveliness when dressed by an artist's instinct. A delicate type of blond, with fair hair, quiet eyes and faint shell-pink complexion, can be snuffed out by too strong colours. Remember that your ethereal blond is invariably at her best in white, black (never white and black in combination unless black with soft white collars and frills) and delicate pastel shades.

The richly-toned brunette comes into her own in reds, yellows and low-tones of strong blue.

Colourless jewels should adorn your perfect blond, colourful gems your glowing brunette.

What of those betwixt and between? In such cases let complexion and colour of eyes act as guide in the choice of colours.

One is familiar with various trite rules such as match the eyes, carry out the general scheme of your colouring, by which is meant, if you are a yellow blond, go in for yellows, if your hair is ash-brown, your eyes but a shade deeper, and your skin inclined to be
lifeless in tone, wear beaver browns and content yourself with making a record in harmony, with no contrasting note.

Just here let us say that the woman in question must at the very outset decide whether she would look pretty or chic, sacrificing the one for the other, or if she insists upon both, carefully arrange a compromise. As for example, combine a semi-picture hat with a semi-tailored dress.

The strictly chic woman of our day goes in for appropriateness; the lines of the latest fashion, but adapted to bring out her own best points, while concealing her bad ones, and an insistance upon a colour and a shade of colour, sufficiently definite to impress the beholder at a glance. This type of woman as a rule keeps to a few colours, possibly one or two and their varieties, and prefers gowns of one material rather than combinations of materials. Though she possess both style and beauty, she elects to emphasise style.

In the case of the other woman, who would star her face at the expense of her tout ensemble, colour is her first consideration, mul-
tiplication of detail and intelligent expressing of herself in her *mise-en-scène*. *Seduisant*, instead of *chic* is the word for this woman.

Your black-haired woman with white skin and dark, brilliant eyes, is the one who can best wear emerald green and other strong colours. The now fashionable mustard, sage green, and bright magentas are also the *affaire* of this woman with clear skin, brilliant colour and sparkling eyes.

These same colours, if subdued, are lovely on the middle-aged woman with black hair, quiet eyes and pale complexion, but if her hair is grey or white, mustard and sage green are not for her, and the magenta must be the deep purplish sort, which combines with her violets and mauves, or delicate pinks and faded blues. She will be at her best in shades of grey which tone with her hair.