

Lady de Bathe (Mrs. Langtry) owns one of the most charming gardens in England, though not as famous as some. It is attached to Regal Lodge, her place at Newmarket. The Blue Walk is something to remember, with its walls of blue lavender flanking the blue paving stones, between the cracks of which lovely bluebells and larkspur spring up in irrelevant, poetic license.

Lady de Bathe digs and climbs and clips and gathers, therefore she wears easily laundered garments; a white linen or cotton skirt and blouse, a Chinese coat to the knees, of pink cotton crêpe and an Isle-of-Jersey sun-bonnet, a poke with curtain, to protect the neck and strings to tie it on. So while she claims never to have consciously considered being a decorative note in her own garden, her trained instinct for costuming herself appropriately and becomingly brings about the desirable decorative effect.

II. WOMAN DECORATIVE ON THE LAWN

When on your lawn with the unbroken sweep of green under foot and the background of

PLATE XIV.

Madame Adeline Genée, the greatest living exponent of the art of toe dancing. She wears an early Victorian costume (1840) made for a ballet she danced in London several seasons ago. The writer did not see the costume and neglected, until too late, to ask Madame Genée for a description of its colouring, but judging by what we know of 1840 colours and textures as described by Miss McClellan (*Historic Dress in America*) and other historians of the period as well as from portraits, we feel safe in stating that it may well have been a bonnet of pink uncut velvet, trimmed with silk fringe and a band of braided velvet of the same colour; or perhaps a white shirred satin; or dove-coloured satin with pale pink and green figured ribbon. For the dress, it may have been of dove-grey satin, or pink flowered silk with a black taffeta cape and one of black lace to change off with.



*Victorian Period about
1840 Mme. Adeline Genée
in Costume*

shrubs and trees, be a flower or a bunch of flowers in the colour of your costume. White,—hat, shoes and all, cannot be excelled, but colour has charm of another sort, and turning the pages of memory, one realises that not a shade or artistic combination but has scored, if the outline is chic. Since both outline and colour scheme vary with fashion we use the word chic or smart to imply that quality in a costume which is the result of restraint in the handling of line, colour and all details, whatever the period.

A chic outline is very telling on the lawn; gown or hat must be appropriate to the occasion, becoming to the wearer, its lines following the fashion, yet adapted to type, and the colour, one sympathetic to the wearer. The trimming must accentuate the distinctive type of the gown or hat instead of blotting out the lines by an overabundance of garniture. The trimming must follow the constructive lines of gown, or have meaning. A buckle must buckle something, buttons must be used where there is at least some semblance of an opening. Let us repeat: To be chic, the trimming of a hat or gown must have a *raison d'être*. When in doubt

omit trimming. As in interior decoration, too much detail often defeats the original idea of a costume. An observing woman knows that few of her kind understand the value of restraint. When turned out by an artist, most women recognise when they look their best, but how to achieve it alone, is beyond them. This sort of knowledge comes from carefully and constantly comparing the gown which is a success with those which are failures.

Elimination characterises the smart costume or hat, and the smart designer is he or she who can make one flower, one feather, one bow of ribbon, band of fur, bit of real lace or hand embroidery, say a distinct something.

It is the decorative value gained by the judicious placing of one object so that line and colour count to the full. As we have said in *Interior Decoration*, one pink rose in a slender Venetian glass vase against a green silk curtain may have far more decorative value than dozens of costly roses used without knowledge of line and background. So it is with ornaments on wearing apparel.