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The newspapers of the day voiced this feeling of their readers in tones which, though a little blatant, were certainly in tune with the times. They wrote elaborate reviews of the events of the past century, and forecast with rosy adjectives the progress of the next. Truly yet naively they advised, "Save up your to-day's papers. They will be interesting a hundred years from now."

The Clinton *Age* declared that the "old century that is now past and gone was the greatest in the history of the world, and the dawning one promises to eclipse the records of the past, in the advance in scientific improvements, researches and in many other ways, including education". Another paper was sure that Cedar Rapids, "The Parlor City", would be "more reluctant to say farewell to the year and the century that has just passed away but for the belief founded on practical assurance that the year and the century ushered in will be better and will treat us even more kindly than its predecessor has done."

The *Iowa State Register* of Des Moines predicted that "horseless carriages", however rakish, could never travel faster than ten miles an hour, and seemed to regard mastery of the guitar a social accomplishment par-excellence. "At this time", the editor urged, in a more serious vein, "it is well for the individual to stop long enough to 'take stock' and to lay his plans for the future. National life is composed of the grand total of the units and each

individual however obscure and humble enters into the great composite of life and events which is called history. Life has never been so complex as it is to-day. If we could instill one lesson on this morning of the birth of the new century it would be the lesson of simplicity. This is the need of the hour and if this should be the direction given to life in the growing century the integrity of our institutions would never be menaced."

Iowa City, according to the *Weekly Republican,* was proud of the past and crowing for the future. "There has not been a working day in the past year but what every able-bodied man resident in Iowa City could find plenty of work and at very remunerative wages." The paper praised the new "Collegiate Building" (Liberal Arts), as being "perhaps the most elaborate and expensive Building within the limits of Iowa City, and undoubtedly, next to the Capitol building at Des Moines, the finest state structure in Iowa." Of the new $100,000 courthouse not yet completed it predicted that the structure would "be the most gorgeous piece of work in the county", and called attention to the adjacent jail, with its "several magnificent new steel cells". Stimulated perhaps by these improvements, the editor ventured to voice the needs of the new day by favoring "a rattling, substantial, harmonious, everlasting, pushing organization of business men with business interests to serve."

But all the prognostications were not so sanguine.

It seems that there are always some people who would rather look backward than forward, and find more beauty in the sunset than the dawn. Such a man, being quoted in a weekly newspaper, furnished food for argument by declaring that he did not believe the twentieth century would be as "prolific in inventions and in other respects as the nineteenth." He said that there were more inventions in the nineteenth century than in all the other centuries together, citing the sewing machine, the friction match, electrical appliances, surgical instruments and drugs, the modern printing press, the X-ray, ocean cables, the railroad, and the phonograph. He did not believe that the twentieth century could be any better than its predecessor "except, perhaps, in perfecting the flying machine and improving on the present noted inventions and making further applications of electricity and other agents of motive power."

What were the people of Iowa doing on this remarkable day of prophecy that flooded the snowy prairies with all the glory of "brightest and healthiest winter weather"? Probably most families were huddled indoors about the "Radiant Home" which glowed like a big ruby in an ornate setting. Folks were stuffing themselves with food without much of a strain on the family budget, for those were the "good old days" when frozen meat hung in the woodshed and hump-shouldered jars sagged the pantry shelves; when mince pies were three for a

quarter, eggs seventeen cents a dozen, butter twenty-two cents a pound, dressed rabbits two for a quarter, corn thirty-six cents a bushel, oats twenty-four, and wheat seventy-two.

Mayhap the ladies were in the kitchen talking among themselves as they washed the dinner dishes. They told of their experiences with Jello, the "new desert that pleases all the family." They recommended Peruna or Cherry Pectoral according to the advice of their favorite senators who had pictures and testimonials in the advertisements. They praised the town photographer who invariably advertised that "you are sure to be satisfied, whether comely or homely — we take your picture just the same — and endeavor to do only the very best kind of work." Undoubtedly they exchanged January sale news, and found that there was a big reduction on "cloaks, capes and collarettes", that high topped kid shoes were $1.29 a pair, that ladies' scarlet underwear was reduced to 75 cents, that black taffeta was $1.10 a yard, serges 69 cents, and silk and wool plaids 47 cents. (Twelve yards was considered enough for a dress.) They learned that men's high class eighteen- or twenty-dollar suits were reduced to $12, and that fifteen-dollar suits, "suitable for the man of business or the social lion", could be had for $9.90. A "swell raglan" cost only $6.98.

The men were probably in the parlor or the "sitting room", their dark mustaches looking as artificial as the waxed flowers on the corner what-not.

They swapped stories about the weather, and all agreed that the day was the coldest of the winter. In Cedar Rapids and Iowa City the mercury had dropped from 21° above to 10° below zero. Some one reported that at Des Moines it reached 3° below, while Dubuque boasted 11° below, at Davenport the temperature hovered at the zero mark, Clinton was frozen at 7° below, and Monticello received the icy laurel wreath for a minimum temperature of 19° below zero.

It was a chilly topic and they soon took up another, talking spiritedly of the new inventions and wondering what the world was coming to next. Perhaps one of the company tilted back in his chair and told a story which was certainly "of the moment". It seems that a man looked out of the window and said to his wife, "Did you see that auto — auto — auto-New Orleans that rushed by just now?"

"No," she answered, "but I did see an automobile."

"Sure, that's it! I knew those pesky things were named after one of our Southern cities, and New Orleans isn't such a great distance from Mobile, so I wasn't far out of the way at that."

Then of course followed an animated discussion as to the merits of the new "steam autos". A store was quoted as having the "safest, surest, speediest and most stylish of steam carriages", but the men were skeptical.

Perhaps the gentlemen were civic minded — inter-

ested in beautifying the straggling streets of the town; in replacing the wooden and brick sidewalks with concrete; or in erecting three-story brick buildings with elaborate stone trimming to take the place of the sham-front, frame structures which faced Main Street. At any rate every one was looking forward and feeling very modern, making all sorts of speculations as to the coming Utopia — unless of course somebody dampened their spirits with the current comment, "Talk is cheap — especially if a man patronizes a five-cent barber shop."

As conversation dwindled the children on the dining-room sofa came in for their share of importance. They were looking at the pictures in the daily paper, and quickly passed over the ordinary advertisements illustrating their mammas with round muffs and rambling flower gardens on their saucer-sized hats; or their fathers in short top-coats that belled at the bottom, derby hats, and the inevitable canes. What interested them most were the baking powder and coffee advertisements, usually labeled "Not made by a trust", and portraying magnificent premiums which could be obtained for "ten cents and ten coupons". The boys selected a valuable knife with "two blades, a cigar cutter, a glass cutter and a cork screw." The girls wavered between the "latest Parisian Cluster Brooch, set with a very pretty colored center stone surrounded by Parisian diamonds, very handsome and brilliant", and a pair of hat pins "set with jewels very brilliant and

showy; a very useful addition to any lady's jewel case."

When the choosing was exhausted they were momentarily interested by an advertisement of a local cigar store which showed old Father Time enjoying a huge black stogy, and holding the box out for them to share. At the turn of the page their attention was attracted by a picture of the new Edison phonograph. It was praised as being "better than a Piano, Organ, or Music Box, and it sings and talks as well as plays, and don't cost as much." They all pushed each other to get a chance to see. There — they'd like to have the twentieth century beat that!

But of course all the New Year's celebrations were not as quiet or as typical as this family gathering. Perhaps some tousle-haired newspaper man realized this, and as he sat in his office clipping items from the sea of papers which surrounded him. A half-ironical, half-humorous smile played about his mouth as he thought that some day folks might depend on his scrap-book as a cross-section of society on that "never-to-be-forgotten" date.

He found that on January first Des Moines was particularly gay and bright. The Savery advertised that a delicious New Year's dinner would be served from 5:30 to 8 P. M., and the "famous twentieth century electric sign" would be on exhibition. Foster's Opera House was pleased to present David Belasco's "most perfect and popular play", "The Heart of Maryland".

The Y. M. C. A. was a center of interest, being the scene of a big reception graciously sponsored by fifty of the well-known ladies of the city. The parlors were elaborately decorated in olive and white, evergreens and holly were laced through the chandeliers, and pink and white carnations adorned the tables. Music was furnished by the Capitol City Commercial College Mandolin Club and other local talent. Over a thousand persons attended, and all agreed that the "Y. M." was one of the "jolliest places in town".

In another part of town the Central Church of Christ held "open house" all day. Appropriate refreshments were served, and toasts were offered to the new church, the young men, and everything which augured for a successful future.

The Octogenarian Society gave an informal reception in honor of Noah Brockway Bacon, who was one hundred and one years old. His age was the more remarkable because he had lived in three centuries — one full year in the eighteenth, one hundred in the nineteenth, and one day in the twentieth.

It was interesting to find that many friends made their annual New Year's calls together, though the custom was beginning to decline. The pioneer fathers of Des Moines, Phineas M. Casady, George M. Hippee, and Hoyt Sherman, had made their calls in this way for years, but at the first of the twentieth century they adopted the practice of sending cards together through the mail.

Dr. George W. Adams, the new president of Des Moines College, arrived from Kalamazoo, Michigan, very appropriately on New Year's morning. In an interview he said, "Yes, I think that Des Moines College has a great future before it, along with all the other small colleges of the country. I am a believer in the small college. It is the only place in which a student can get the training in character that is necessary for him, no matter what profession or business he proposes to take up."

The man with the scissors was quite intrigued with the two leading social events at Clinton. One of these was the reception and ball given by the "Twentieth Century Dames" at the Wapsipinican Club rooms. This was a new organization composed of the elite of Clinton's society, and the ball was their first party. The rooms were profusely decorated with pale roses set upon small tables which were covered with green and white satin centerpieces. There were numerous divans and artistic couch covers about, which lent an "oriental atmosphere to the whole".

The other affair was the Locomotive Firemen's Annual Ball. This was held at the Davis Opera House, and the building fairly burst with noise and fun. A novel decoration was the showing of the "head end of a locomotive thrust through the large flags used as curtains on the stage. The engine was numbered 1900 until midnight, when the figures were changed to 1901."

From a Creston paper of January first the self-appointed historian gleaned the following item of the perennial conflict between public interest and private gain. "But for the generous provision of providence, Creston tonight would be without light. The mellow rays of the moon furnish the illumination for the city this evening, the Creston Gas and Electric Company having parted company over the making of a new contract. Both sides are firm, and when the moon hides its face the introduction of lanterns will probably occur."

Another misfortune, but one which achieved the proportions of a tragedy, occurred at Burlington. The clipping reads: "Everybody was rejoicing over the fact that the 20th century was beginning so auspiciously for Burlington, when above all the din of bells and fireworks and noisy shouters, there roared forth the mighty voice of the water works whistle, to which the fire-bell tolled a harsh accompaniment. Many heard and heeded not, until the rush of the carts from the stations, and the reddening glare that lighted the whole city, startled them, and ere long they crowded toward the scene of destruction in motley array." It was about 12:30 A. M. when the alarm was sounded for the Connor Mercantile Company, a large overall and shirt factory. Trouble with the fire plugs became apparent and it was decided that the only thing that could be done was to try to save the adjacent buildings. The fire was intense, however, and soon the wholesale

dry goods store of Schramm and Schmieg was belching smoke. By two o'clock the only thing that was left to show for the buildings was a total loss of $130,000 and a mass of smoking ruins. Many a New Year's party was broken up by the conflagration, and men in evening dress climbed over the slippery roofs of near-by stores, extinguishing the pieces of burning tar paper which fell there, or worked side by side with volunteer firemen in laborer's garb. One immaculately dressed young man, silk hat, white gloves and all, stepped in the way of one of the hose nozzles and was thereafter an amusing spectacle for the crowd. The owners of the embers were interviewed, and both declared that they would start rebuilding immediately. Every one rejoiced in this attitude which was so "genuinely American, and typical of the spirit of the new century."

The preserver of Iowa news twenty-eight years ago found that not all of the residents of Council Bluffs spent the day celebrating. The local typographical union took time to meet and appoint a committee to "push along the fight for free textbooks before the next general assembly."

He noted that there were midnight services in the churches of all the larger towns of the State. The Catholic pontifical high mass in the cathedral at Dubuque was particularly solemn and impressive — a special devotion ordained by the Pope which would not occur again for a period of one hundred years.

"The Friendly Islands first saw the Twentieth

Century", reported the Boone *Daily News*. "They were considerably in advance of other peoples, as they had been living in the Twentieth Century some hours before the rest of the world saw its light. The first dawn of the Century broke upon a point just to the east of the Friendly Islands along a line conforming in general to the meridian of 180 degrees east and west longitude from Greenwich. On this meridian is the date line, and it is at the date line that the change of day comes which navigators in the Pacific Ocean experience. When the Twentieth Century dawned in the Friendly Islands it was only breakfast time in Boone while San Francisco was still asleep."

Boone was favored on New Year's evening by a "rare treat" at the Arie Theater, which consisted of a "refined and artistic entertainment, including feats in magic, spiritualistic tests and wonderful illusions." There were also presented the "latest moving pictures, war scenes, calcium light views, the great Oberammergau passion play and beautifully illustrated songs." The prices of ten, twenty, and thirty cents were calculated to attract a large audience.

At Sioux City, one of the wettest spots in Iowa, a significant concession was made in the interest of temperance. "All saloons" were ordered to be "kept closed on New Year's." On the evening of New Year's day Sioux City was entertained at the Grand Opera House by the appearance of Mrs.

Fiske in "Becky Sharp", the play which was based on Thackeray's great novel, "Vanity Fair". And in the announcement of the Sioux City Traction Company that after January 1, 1901, no more complimentary or free transportation would be issued to any one, the observer of twentieth century conditions might have sensed the spirit of a new era.

In Cedar Rapids the corner of A Avenue and Third Street was the scene for a novel ceremonial, perhaps the first of the new century. There the Elks gathered to lay the cornerstone of the "splendid new Jim block", which was to boast three stories and a basement, and to be faced with brick, with plenty of stone trimming. The lodge had leased the entire upper floor and it was therefore deemed proper that members of that order should officiate. At exactly midnight "a gun was fired into the still zero air, and while the bells of the city tolled and clamored joyously, the corner stone was dropped into place." After the ceremony the men put on their hats and quickly dispersed for warmer and more convivial haunts.

And so, in various ways, the first day of the twentieth century came and ended in Iowa. The people launched joyously into a new era, wondering how many of the toasts and rosy auguries would come to pass. To none was vouchsafed the privilege of envisioning the changes, the sadness and the happiness, that the first quarter of the century would bring. But as the stars slipped by in their courses

and the dawn broke redly in the east — as people yawned themselves to bed — all could find comfort in the thought that they were qualified to tell those stories beginning, "Why I remember on the first day of the twentieth century when . . ."

PAULINE GRAHAME

Fashions in the Fifties

Suppose it is a wintry evening of December in the fifties. Burlington, or any other Iowa city, is alive with people and the gay Christmas spirit. Society is on the verge of a brilliant season. It is the time of year when balls and parties are the order of the day — and night.

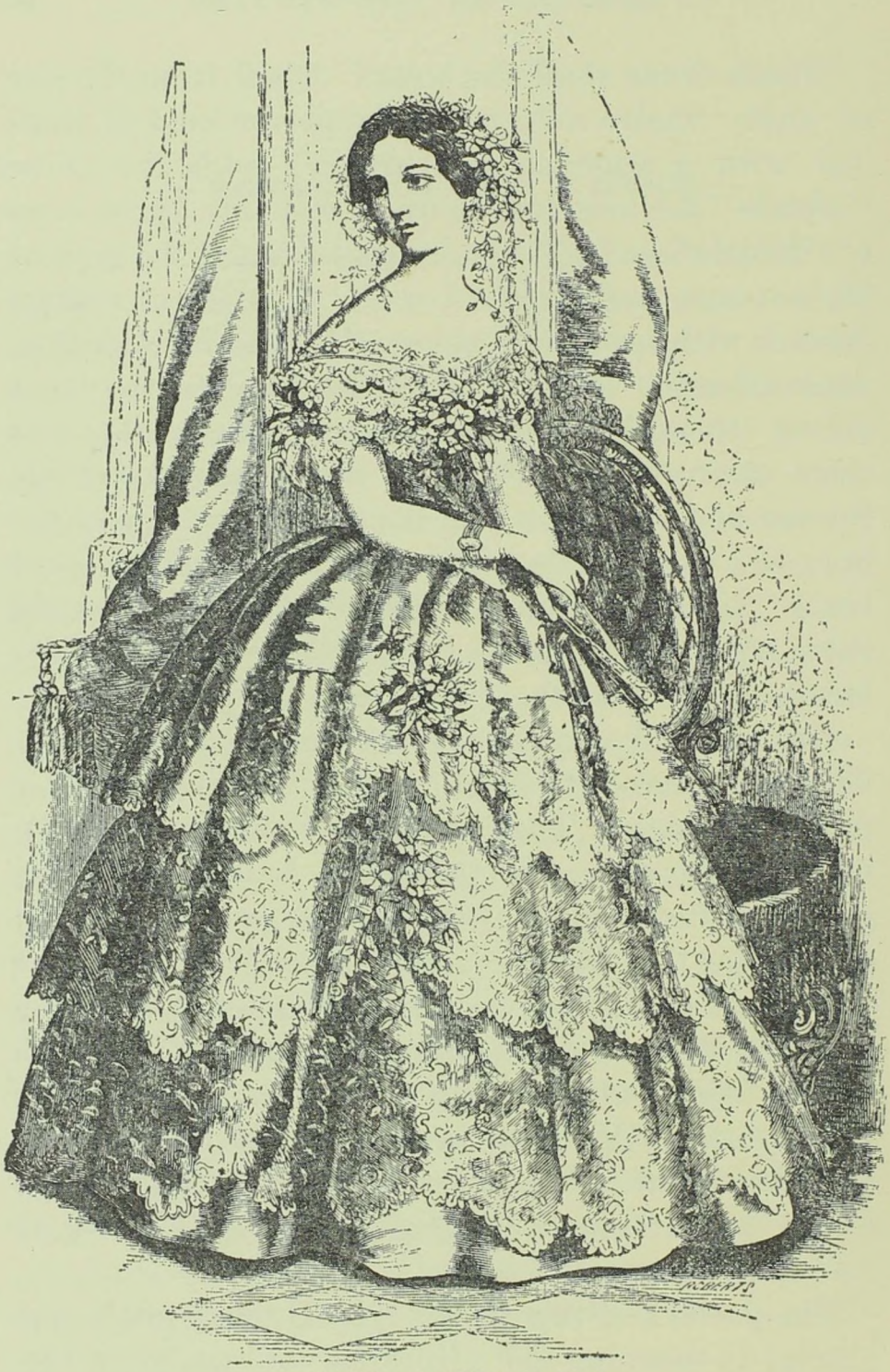
Milady of fashion hurries into her chamber all a-bustle. She has been delayed in her shopping downtown because of the Christmas crowds. Here it is six o'clock and the ball begins at eight. To milady this is the most important social event of the season. It may be a formal reception for Governor Grimes, perhaps it is a celebration of some civic achievement, or, more likely, it is the occasion of an announcement of some lady's engagement or the début of a popular débutante.

A good thing that Mary had laid out her clothes while milady was gone! As quickly as possible she takes off her afternoon dress. Off comes petticoat after petticoat and at last the brass hoops are removed. These are replaced by a bodice-shaped, sleeveless waist with whalebones in it which is combined with a short, skirt-like garment containing whalebone hoops. Several petticoats, highly starched, are tied into place and then she is ready for the dress.

Which dress shall she wear? Shall it be the one of white "moire antique" (a superior kind of thick silk with a watered appearance) with the three "blonde" flounces looped up at one side, three rows of "blonde" (a kind of silk lace) around the neck of the corsage, and trimmed with "clusters of orange flowers with branching sprays"? The black taffeta dress trimmed with the black lace flounces, the black velvet "berthé", and the velvet flowers does not seem appropriate. Perhaps she should select the "dress of satin, of a rich deep American primrose hue, the skirt made plain and very full, *en petit train*", trimmed with a "fulling" of satin ribbon the same color as the dress, a "fall", or ruff, of white lace around the neck. Should she wear it?

No, she will wear the white dress. It has more flowers on it and the head-dress to be worn with it is more becoming! Then she must wear a white tulle under-dress over the petticoats before the skirt proper is fastened on. The basque, or bodice, is put on last — the basque made beautiful with the "blonde" around the low, heart-shaped neck and a bouquet of orange flowers at the point of the neck line in front and at the right shoulder. The basque is pointed at the front and back, not too sharply. How beautiful is the sweeping skirt with the three dainty white "blonde" flounces, the top two draped up with the orange flowers!

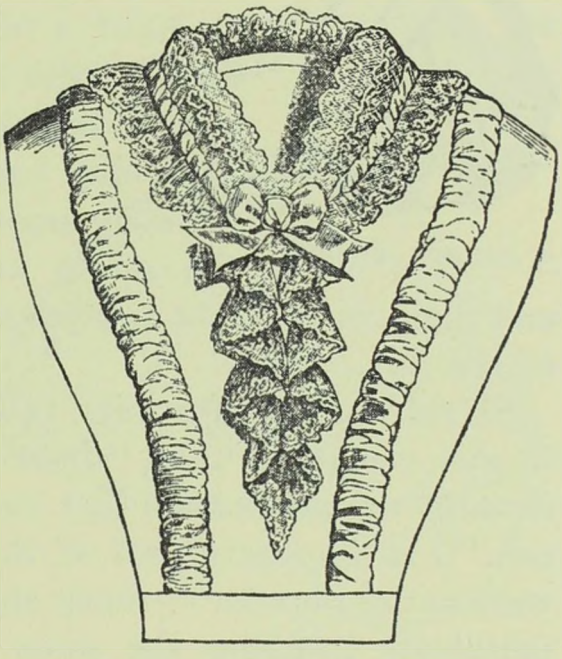
The pattern of this rather typical party gown was similar to morning and afternoon dresses, yet a sec-



A PARTY GOWN OF 1854

ond glance would reveal obvious differences. The evening dress was made of more beautiful and costly material; it was trimmed luxuriantly with lace, fringe, flowers, marabout, or ribbons; there were no sleeves; and the "chemisette" of common dresses was also lacking.

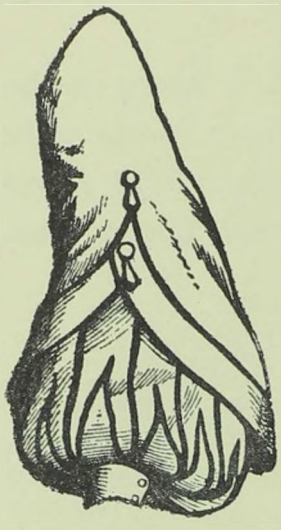
The "marquise" waist, so universally worn in the decade of the fifties, was a tight-fitting basque with a heart-shaped neck that formed a point in the front and back — sometimes as low as the waist line. With such a waist a lace "chemisette" was usually worn. A "chemisette" was really another waist without sleeves, something like the "guimpe" of later times. The "marquise" waist was very popular for a long time because it "could be made to answer the purpose of full or plain dress by a change of chemisettes and undersleeves."



A PLAIN CHEMISETTE

The "pagoda" sleeve was the popular type of the decade. It was "demi-long" with a very full under-

sleeve, sometimes caught in to a tight band at the wrist, sometimes left free. These undersleeves were made from various materials, sometimes the same as the dress and sometimes different. Laces and embroidery were much in vogue. Plain materials were frequently tucked, plaited, and gathered so as to keep the type from becoming monotonous.



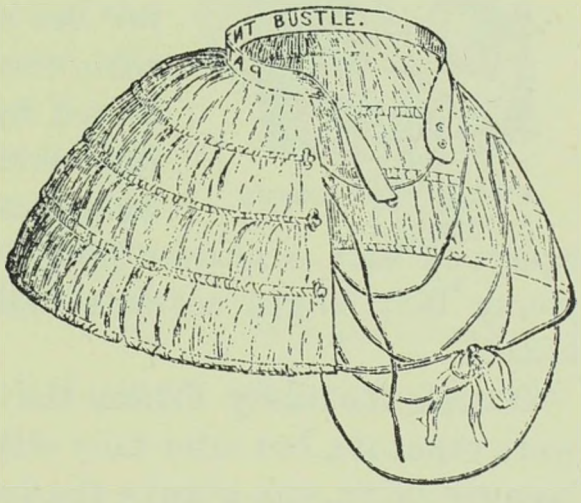
A PAGODA SLEEVE

The skirt usually had three flounces on it. If it was not flounced, a favorite ornament was used to trim the sides of the front seam from the waist down. For every-day use, however, and particularly among the poorer people, the skirts were made as simple and plain as possible and yet simulate the fashions of the day.

Skirts were always very full — although in 1850, it was remarked that "dresses are made several flounces narrower than last year, and more numerous." In the early part of the decade hoop skirts were not so popular — many starched and crinolined petticoats fulfilling the same function with much more rustling. In 1856 one magazine stated, however, that "in spite of our prediction to the contrary, we are constrained to admit that Hoops are increasing in favor, diameter, and number", the most approved mode being to place one hoop mid-way from

the top to the bottom of the underskirt, and two others above this. These were arranged so that the several pieces of whalebone of which each was composed slid over each other, making a complete circle or leaving a gap in front. Either manner of adjustment made the dress more pliable. To hold the outer skirt down, a heavy cord was inserted in the bottom of it.

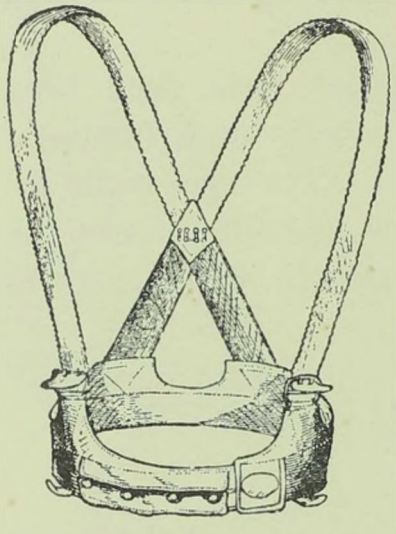
The "patent adjustable bustle" was used to a great extent. It recommended itself "on grounds of health as well as convenience." The size could be "regulated by means of a lace passing across the back." It was made either separate or attached to the skirt, but the "pliableness and elasticity" of either kind would permit the whole garment to be "compressed into a small bonnet-box" and yet it would instantly expand on being released from pressure.



AN ADJUSTABLE BUSTLE

Because of the weight of the combined hoops and skirts, it was necessary for the ladies to wear skirt supporters. One type was "a novel and exceedingly useful article, designed to relieve the person from

the burden of the skirt'' by means of a ''projecting fender'', which was ''sustained upon the hips by netted pads''. This was thought to be a valuable invention from the ''hygienic point of view''. Another type of skirt supporter was well liked because of its ''extreme lightness and simplicity''. It consisted of a ''girdle of three parallel slips of watch-spring steel, furnished with a slide so as to be readily adapted to the size of the wearer''. From this girdle small hooks projected to serve as points of support for the skirts. This girdle, with the skirts, was ''sustained by light braces passing over the shoulders.'' Sometimes the girdle was equipped with a narrow pouch in front where the young lady might carry valuables, quite secretly indeed.



A SKIRT SUPPORTER

During the early fifties, the basques and skirts were separate, but later they were fastened together because there was always the trouble of the basque raising up, when the young lady might be dancing with ''her young man'', or the basque might be too loose for the skirt and droop — for it was very hard for the seamstress to ''adapt the under-dress to the fullness of the upper portion of apparel.''

To omit the story of the fad of "bloomer dresses" would be to leave out an interesting part of costume evolution in the middle decade of the last century. The so-called Turkish costume was copied by some of the extremists as being a very useful form of dress. This costume had a shortened skirt, with long, full bloomers coming to the ankles. It was thought by some that "health and good taste would "demand a reform," and that common sense would "doubtless second the demand with powerful effect". The "bloomer" costume was the answer to this "demand", but the women who espoused the cause were ridiculed in cartoons as well as in writing.

A BLOOMER COSTUME

A clever parody of Hamlet's soliloquy concluded in favor of long skirts:

> To wear or not to wear the Bloomer
> costume, that's the question.
> Whether 'tis nobler in us girls to suffer
> The inconveniences of the long-skirt dress,
> Or cut it off against these muddy troubles,
> And, by the cutting, end them. . . .

Who would the old dress wear,
To groan and toil under the weary load,
But that the dread of something after it —
Of ankles large, of crooked leg, from which
Not all escape, puzzles the will,
And makes us rather wear the dress we have
Than turn out Bloomers.

The long skirts at last won the argument, but not before the bloomers had commanded considerable attention. In cartoons the ladies were characterized as being bold, strong-minded females, while the gentlemen were pictured as modest, effeminate creatures being escorted home by their buxom sweethearts when "Mamma didn't send the carriage". Of course the girls were portrayed making proposals of marriage.

Besides Mrs. Amelia Bloomer, for whom the costume was named, Theodosia Eudoxia Bang was one of the principal advocates. "We are emancipating ourselves," she proclaimed, "among other badges of the slavery of feudalism, from the inconvenient dress of the European female. With man's functions, we have asserted our right to his garb. . . . With this great symbol, we have adopted others, the hat, the cigar, the paletot or round jacket."

Other suffragettes were not of the same opinion, however. On June 6, 1856, Lucy Stone Blackwell was reported to have "repudiated Bloomers and appeared on the Anti-Slavery platform in New York in a long black silk dress fashionably beflounced."

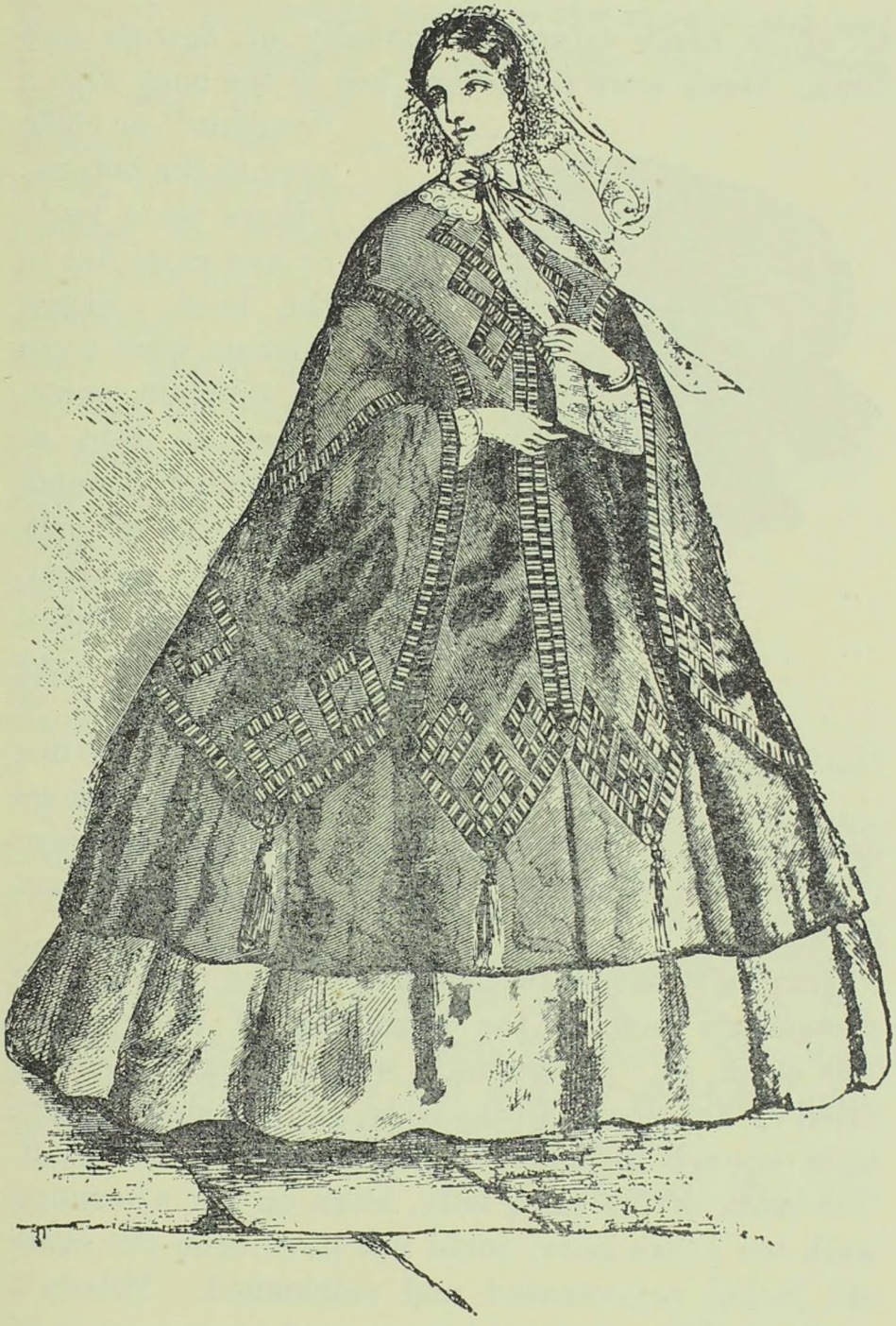
That style of feminine apparel was indeed much more in accord with the mode of the period.

There was a decided tendency toward a great deal of decoration on dresses. All kinds of flowers were used; fringe was fashionable; bows and ribbons of any size and of harmonizing colors were stylish; puffings of net and lace were very good; and even artificial bunches of fruit were used, such as currants, grapes, and small apples. Rûches of ribbon were very popular. In fact anything that might add to the ornamentation of the dress was regarded as stylish and in good taste.

For party dresses, brocades, satin princesse, antique moires, Irish poplins, and heavy chiné silks were in vogue. Even organdi was made into pretty evening dresses. Some of the chinés were called Persian silk because of the Oriental designs. Along toward the last of the decade, striped, checked, and plaid taffeta became popular, though one authority on fashion believed this to be an "eccentricity" of only "two classes of society, the very high or the very low." A "real lady" should always prefer the plain and simple colors and styles with the "absence of everything, in color and ornament, so showy as to offend the purest taste".

A hat would have been a strange item in a lady's costume of that day. They wore bonnets or caps exclusively. The bonnets, made on a whalebone skeleton, or of straw, varied somewhat as to shape at the back but were always quite open at the front

A TYPICAL CLOAK OF 1850



A TYPICAL CLOAK OF 1859

to allow much trimming, usually of flowers and bows. Some were round and low in the back with a "curtain" or ruffle around the bottom. Others were higher and more flat in the back. Straw bonnets were worn in summer, sometimes as late as November, depending on the severity of the weather. For winter, velvet bonnets were very popular, and if one had some feather trimmings or marabout — how fashionable! To vary the open-front bonnet, some were dipped in the Mary Stuart fashion.

A STRAW BONNET OF 1850

Simplicity seems to have marked the mode of the promenade coat at the beginning of the decade. The cloak, or "pardessus", was of medium length, fitted rather closely to the body, and the sleeves were tight enough to keep out the raw December wind. The cloak of the same lady, worn on her afternoon walk ten years later, could not have been the same old jacket rejuvenated and retrimmed. Milady's cloak of 1859 contained ever so many more yards of

material. It reached nearly to the ground and had doubled in diameter to encompass the enormous hoop skirt of that era. Moreover, the master minds of decoration had evolved an ornate garment with tassels, fringe, embroidery, and silk braid. And it is no wonder that the young ladies of fashion had to wear long gloves, for without them their elbows would surely have been chapped — the sleeves of the cloak were almost as loose and shapeless as a cape.

A VELVET BONNET OF 1856

All dressed while we have been scanning the fashions! One final touch of powder and milady draws her white cashmere wrap about her shoulders. Descending the stairs to the waiting carriage, she complacently takes her place, and as the prancing span swings down the street she feels quite certain that she will look as charming and fashionable as any young lady at the ball.

RAMONA EVANS

Comment by the Editor

FASHIONS

Fashions change, like the wind, and the world of the commonplace is thus refreshed. Every generation laughs at the oddities of yesteryear, but devoutly follows the prevailing mode, unconscious of the paradox. That is inevitable, for variation is the law of nature. Progress is founded on change: novelty is the wine that gives zest to the heavy course of dull routine. If style were not forever new it would become insipid. Carrots, they say, are good for a girl's complexion, but think of a diet of nothing but carrots!

The mere mention of fashions directs attention to ladies' attire. To women the terms are synonymous, and even the most fashion-immune men are likely to have visions of dresses — dresses for morning and evening and Sunday; dresses to sit in and walk in, to work in and dance in — dresses, indeed, to do nothing at all in; dresses for winter, spring, summer, and fall; dresses all different in color and shape; made of muslin or silk, velvet, satin, gingham, georgette, and chiffon or other material quite as transparent and much more expensive; dresses designed with lace and insertion, twelve gores, and a flounce, smocked at the hips and flared at the bottom,

cut on the bias and embroidered by hand, with a rûche at the neck (or a vacant expanse), four darts in the waist, and sleeves that set out from the shoulder on the Rotarian plan to be bigger and better but return at the elbow quite disillusioned. To say nothing of cloaks, bonnets, petticoats, slippers, and hose.

But feminine apparel is not the only realm of style. Fashions change in almost everything. Last year's car with a statue on the steam cap of the radiator is practically useless now. If a whim of the Queen of France once ruined the whalebone market, the dicta of Fisher with respect to the form of other bodies are equally potent. As recently as 1901, the vogue of bridge and dancing had not entirely supplanted the pleasant art of conversation. That was the time when the Kaiser and a few college presidents, among others, were conspiring to clip a year from the nineteenth century and start the twentieth on the first of January, 1900, despite the protests of the Pope and the Czar and most every one else, particularly creditors, that ninety-nine is one short of a hundred. While the public in general was learning to count, the "white man's burden" was still being debated and bold irreconcilables were opposing the fashion of shooting the people who didn't speak English. Those were the times when applesauce and bologna meant nothing but food, when women wore shirtwaists and the total deforestation of the male countenance had not been com-

pleted, for Mr. Gillette was only beginning to make shaving safe for democracy.

Why continue the obvious contrast? The habits, ideas, and conditions of twenty-five years ago seem almost archaic. Fashions, indeed, are imperious but benevolent tyrants.

J. E. B.

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