

DRESSING FOR THE SILHOUETTE

(By "Rua")

NOWADAYS, as never before, the woman is fitted to her clothes. Each item should be chosen not as a thing in itself but in relation to its context and to the whole. *Toujours le tout ensemble*. Above all, the general line is most important and the smart woman to-day dresses for the silhouette. First, a good-class foundation is of the utmost importance, the essential of all chic dressing.

The unwise dresser breaks what ought to be a flowing line with fussy, floppy, and flyaway items. Her patterns are too insistent, their mammoth scale making her look a pygmy—or else, worse still, on one small person there is a pitched battle of checks, stripes, and florals.

The Rotund

A stout woman allows herself to become top-heavy with furs; or she will make a family vault of herself under a bulky fur coat. So too you see a short girl breaking her outline to fragments with wide, total-extinguisher hats, jerky short coats and fluttering scarves when she should be going like the dickens for an uninterrupted line and plain or vertically designed fabrics which will capax the idea of height. Never carry a huge bag if you are petite. You'll look like a bag accompanied by a morsel of flesh. You see how much it is a matter of simple common sense.

That large bag, on the other hand, can be used as an asset by the large woman by drawing attention away from her own largeness.

How many stout women think they have beaten the band by squeezing themselves into a thirty-eight inch when a forty-inch would make them look pounds thinner? If the fabric clings too tenaciously to a curvaceous figure, it places too heavy an accent on well advanced curves.

Pearls or necklaces must not drop too steeply over the cliffs of the corsage, but the eye must be encouraged upwards—to something, say, in the hair, something tasteful and intelligent of course. Material would be better to be darkish and discreet—unpatterned stuffs, of dull surface, that melt into the background.

No trailing draperies, please, for over-generous proportions. Trailing wisps make any but the very thin look as big as a house and justify the unflattering description of trailer on a pantechicon. I'm afraid the possibilities for romantic flights are not so good for the stout. But massive clips, rings, bracelets can be worn whereas they might look like manacles on the slender.

Shoes for the stout must not be too sensible, but not too flighty either. Be careful that excessive bulk should not totter on two heaven-high bayonet heels. A large waistline may be cut up with diagonal lines or with partial belts: big hips may be disguised by attention being called to the shoulders with padding. A woman with a large equator may also distract attention from it by flaring her skirt.

The Angular

For the angular figure these ideas would naturally be reversed. If you have no curves, you want all the curves possible in your clothes. For instance, avoid box jackets, straight skirts, swagger suits. A skirt bellling out from a nipped-

in waist will give grace and will reduce considerably that bleak cupboard-is-bare look. Padding on the shoulders and finely rucked corsages which swell out over the chest are flattering.

Necklines if they are bony can be camouflaged with high lines at the neck, fichus, frills, or even Elizabethan ruffs. The unduly slender, like the unduly plump, should never wear any clinging

fabric. Frilly blouses, ruffs, flared skirts, laced bodices, ruffled or tucked yokes, ruches, flounces or sashes can all be worn by the thin girl, but never a too severely tailored hat. You might as well wear a police helmet or a Salvation Army bonnet. No, you could do well with soft little berets, caps trimmed with flowers, a touch of fur or provocative little veils.

In your case never wear long pointed toes as it all adds to that attenuated look. What you want is a high heeled, short vamp shoe. And always the lightest stockings to give ankles and calves more contour.

For the average good figure, of neither extreme, the silhouette, being there to start with, can be easily managed.

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