

London Says

These London Fashion Notes were specially written for the "Radio Record" by Maie Webster.

ON THE WAY to Ascot roads were hedged with rhododendrons in full bloom, masses and masses of them. The King and Royal Family were, of course, absent, and the royal box was covered in flowers, delphiniums and hydrangeas of blue. The new judge's box in red and white, the attendants in their Ascot uniforms and gold braided top hats, the lovely green lawns, beautiful women in "garden party" frocks, blue skies, blazing sun; a perfect, unforgettable picture.

HATS WERE in every possible, and sometimes impossible, shape! A crown of black cire straw had a brim of glass 26in. wide—no—I didn't measure it, but I couldn't help overhearing the wearer's proud boast. Large-brimmed hats predominated. Bunches and sprays of flowers on the tilted brims. But there were bowlers with veils, chimney pot shapes, flat pancake straws, square high-in-front crowns, rather smart worn with square-toed shoes, shovel brims and white satin "toppers." Toques made entirely of flowers graced the heads of the older women. One gracious and beautiful white-haired lady wore a toque made from fresh flowers—cyclamen-shaded stocks—I think that was the most charming headgear on the field!

THE TRADITIONAL diaphanous creations were more picturesque than ever, the materials enchanting. Broderie Anglaise staged a "come-back" this Ascot. One frock in white had blue velvet ribbons at neck and sleeves and velvet buttons on the scalloped front. Another attractive model was combined with organdie. The full skirt of the embroidery was applied to the plain fabric in points, and the high-necked button-down-the-front bodice of open work had plain sleeves. A blue sash with enormous bow in front finished the model. White frocks were very popular with the debutantes. Redingote coats of taffeta or tulle were sometimes worn over these and were most picturesque, and very smart.

MID-SEASON BRINGS the most exciting evening clothes of the year. There is a movement to show more of the legs these nights—a black tulle frock was slashed to the knees; another had a deep net frill on the front of the gown only. Short slips are worn under long transparent frocks. Contrasting coloured bands are inserted on day and evening gowns, and all the exclusive designers are exploiting this theme. Molyneux showed a wool suit with pleated bands in the skirt, and Rochas inserted red bands down the skirt of a white lace.

SIMPLE, ROMANTIC and picturesque styles are worn at night. Velvet cape-scarves make a useful and delightful complement to "period" evening gowns. Flowers are in greater profusion than ever—they grow everywhere. Suzy hats have poppies, nasturtiums, tulips, and hydrangeas; Molyneux uses peonies and lilac and Schiaparelli paints roses on evening gowns. I saw a lovely dinner gown of lilac satin patterned with extra outsize chrysanthemums; the hem and belt were quilted.

COATS WITH long basques, rather resembling men's "tails" are new, elegant and elongating. An example of this mode in navy blue silk worn with a matching skirt showed a waistcoat in white satin. A useful style for the short woman who prefers tailored-looking clothes. This is definitely an individualist season with personality clothes—there are so many styles—but keep carefully to the correct lines and then adapt them to your own particular needs, with accent on detail.

THE GENIUS of casual chic was expressed in a two-piece of black and white cloque; the gown of black with white design, belted in white, and a white choux. The jacket was of the Eton variety in white lined with black taffeta. Worn with this suit was a flat sailor hat in white, banded with black petersham.

AMONG THE NOVELTIES I have seen lately are daisy buttons, mari-gold buttons and buttons of painted china; clips of mother-of-pearl and paua shell; pockets and cuffs of oil cloths; bead-encrusted belts, and lovely jewel-studded evening slippers. And glittering gold sequins covering court shoes.

FLARES ARE COMING back, particularly on the new autumn coats; bodices are tighter, waists normal and high; collars seldom seen; lapels and shoulders broad. Pockets much in evidence. Nightdresses are made of chiffon trimmed with pin stitching and frills. The frills are finished with a narrow hem, the hem being caught up every few stitches, giving a petal finish. I tried this hemming and found myself repeating the old formula of childhood's dancing classes—"one, two, three and a hop," the "hop" being the "caught-up" stitch!