

# LA BELLE ASSEMBLÉE.

## FASHIONS

For MAY, 1808.

### EXPLANATION OF THE PRINTS OF FASHION.

#### ENGLISH COSTUME.

##### No. 1.—A WALKING DRESS.

A plain muslin walking dress, with Spanish spencer of celestial blue, or shaded lilac sarsnet, ornamented entirely round with the new Chinese trimming, and confined round the waist with a large cord, and tassels to correspond. A bonnet composed of the same materials as the spencer, with *tiara* front, and Chinese trimming. Shoes of pale blue, or lilac kid. Gloves of York tan.

##### No. 2.—A LADY AND CHILD.

A high gown of French cambric, with long sleeves, shirt front, and frill of scalloped lace. A French hanging sleeve; coat with slashed skirt, and Spanish lappells, formed of figured Imperial sarsnet or Chinese silk—its colour spring green, buff, or jonquille, ornamented with a floss silk trimming of agreeably contrasted shades. A Gipsy hat of straw, or figured Imperial chip, worn rather forward; a little French cap appearing beneath, and the hair formed in close curls, or a waved crop behind. The hat tied simply across the crown with a narrow white ribband. A nankeen slipper, or shoe of pale green kid. Gloves of pale Limerick.

CHILD'S ATTIRE—A frock, and short trowsers of cambric, with Turkish pomposas of jonquille kid. A wrapping coat with deep cape, formed of fine scarlet, or purple kersey-mere. A beaver hat and feather of pale brown, or dove colour.

##### No. 3.—EVENING COSTUMES.

A plain round robe of white gossamer satin, with a short train, round bosom, scamed

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back, and long sleeves. Crescent tucker of rich antique lace. A white satin *coiffe a-la-Mary Queen of Scots*, edged with silver worm trimming; ornamented on the top and at the point, in the centre of the forehead, with pearl drops. This unique head-dress is confined under the chin, where it is attached to a crimp lace, which is extended to each ear. The hair is ever worn with this head-dress in full dishevelled curls; and the most elegant and appropriate ornaments are diamonds and amethysts. Shoes of white satin, with silver trimming. White kid gloves; fan of carved amber; and short round Opera tippet of swansdown.

##### No. 4.—EVENING COSTUME.

A round robe of white or coloured Italian gauze, over a white sarsnet slip, ornamented round the bottom, bosom, and sleeves, with a fancy border of gold or silver, in tambour. The waist rather longer than usual, with round gored bosom, and rucked frock sleeve. A French cloak of figured or shaded sarsnet; the colour a silver grey, lilac, or peach-blossom, trimmed with a fine gossamer fur, or rich Chinese floss trimming. The hair drawn smooth from the front, and twisted in a knot on each side of the head, where it is confined with a comet pin; a full bunch of curls over the left eye, and a gold *bandeau*, or diadem, to correspond with the border of the robe. Pear ear-rings of pearl, with necklace, brooch, and bracelets to suit. Shoes of white figured silk, with gold rosetts. Gloves of French kid, below the elbow.

GENERAL OBSERVATIONS  
ON THE MOST ELEGANT AND SELECT  
FASHIONS FOR THE SEASON.

THE sweet season of Spring is rapidly advancing, and buds expanding into blossoms, put forth their varied hues in odoriferous beauty, while nature triumphs in the rich luxuriance of her train. The cheering rays of the Great Vivifier of our globe, awoken to new life the animal and vegetable kingdom. The dejected mind shakes off the lethargy of care, and feels its hopes revive; while the votaries of fashion, the frolic of spring, taste, and beauty, exulting in the splendour of their favoured isle, sport in the sunshine of rival grace and loveliness. So numerous and attractive are the combinations of attire offered in this gay season, that in order to give a delineation at once copious and select, we must forbear all digression, and pursue with our accustomed exactness and attention, the destined subject of remark. We commence therefore with the walking, or carriage costume.

We remark that pelisses and mantles of divers constructions, are here invariably adopted; these are chiefly formed of shaded double sarsnets, or Chinese silk, and we have seen some few of Italian crape, lined throughout with white sarsnet, which have a light and chaste effect. The most novel construction for these articles of apparel are, the Cassock, or *demi robe-pelisse*; it is formed to sit close to the person, embracing about two-thirds of the figure in length. It is constructed without a cape, flows in loose robes on each side from the centre of the back, and is occasionally confined at the bosom with an onyx, or cameo brooch. The long pelisse most distinguishing, is that which wraps plain across the figure on one side, meeting a loose flowing robe on the other, while a strip, the size of the throat, finished with a rich correspondent tassel, acts as a substitute for a collar. The only elegant or appropriate trimmings for this species of habiliment, is the Indian floss, double Trafalgar, gathered borders of the same, or the large link trimming described in our last. Canonical scarfs and spencers, rich silk shawls, fancifully and variously disposed, some few of muslin lined with coloured sarsnet, and tied on the figure in style like the drapery of our Grecian statues, with a few Spanish spencers, are observable amidst the endless variety which is offered at the shrine of the fickle Goddess. With the above mentioned habits are worn, the small Gipsy hat of straw, or chip, with *demi caps* of the same,

or the small French hood of lace. Some tasteful females edge these attractive ornaments with a *petit wreath* of the white or yellow jessamine or any other delicate flower; they are usually tied across the crown with a ribband, or silk handkerchief, the colour of the coat or mantle. Straw and chip hats are also worn with the fancy turban, or *tiara* front, and short white veils; but for a neat or graceful figure, we consider no article of this nature so marked and becoming as the Gipsy.

The Minerva bonnet, the same as the pelisse, the small French poke, the small Scotch bonnet, with puckered *tiara* fronts—the two latter worn with short white veils, and silk cravats, with embroidered ends to correspond, adorn many of our females of acknowledged taste and celebrity. In full dress, the brilliant diversity which our fashionables display was scarcely ever equalled. We shall particularize a few of the most striking habits, and give our general remarks where it is impossible to be minute.

We observe that, amidst the many coloured robes which adorn our females in public, the chaste and elegant garb, formed of white satin, is selected by many of our fair countrywomen, and shines in pure and native lustre. These dresses are variously constructed, but are generally worn untrimmed, with long sleeves and high antique shirts of gold or silver tissue.— Sometimes these appear as a simple slip, and are worn with a lace veil, formed in a kind of short tunic. At others, a silver net drapery *à-la-Ariadne*, flows in the Grecian style round the figure, and is fastened on the left shoulder with a cameo brooch, or diamond buckle.— But the most unique and elegant habit we have witnessed this season, was a Rutland robe, formed entirely of Brussels lace, worn over a blossom satin under slip; the hair ornamented with a *tiara* of the apple blossom, exquisitely formed to nature, and fastened behind with a Persian pin of diamonds.— Round robes of white leno, made short; a broad white satin ribband placed at the bottom, with waist and sleeves to correspond, and a small Spanish hat of white satin, edged with silver Trafalgar, and ornamented with a frosted willow feather, appeared on two females of rank and beauty at the splendid musical party lately given by the amiable and interesting Mrs. K.— Roman tunicks clasped up the front, formed of coloured Italian gauze, with a white satin petticoat partially seen beneath, is an elegant and attractive garb. Borders of artificial flowers frequently ornament white drapery, and some few coloured borders in

needle-work, which produce an animated effect amidst the *coup-d'aile* of a drawing-room.

The high antique ruff is still but partially adopted. Indeed it can never be worn to advantage but with a fine throat, and commanding figure. The general style for gowns differs little from our last account: the waist is much increased in length with our most fashionable females, but the multitude seem not inclined to depart from that mediocrity to which in this particular, they have long adhered. Morning dresses are invariably formed a walking length, high in the neck, with long sleeves, and frequently with narrow treble flounce. To some are attached the French jacket, to others the tunic robe, and embroidered shirt. Caps of diverse construction are worn with this style of costume; and also in half dress. The court hood, or lappet cap, with the Grecian mob, are the most conspicuous for novelty and elegance. In the evening, or full dress, we see a few Indian turbans, also some Spanish hats and feathers; but the hair in the Grecian and antique style, with diadems and coronets, or bandeaus, together with *tiaras* of the frosted thistle, oak-leaf and fruit, roses in moss, and other fancy ornaments, is more generally adopted. With the cap *à la-MaryeQueen of Scots*, and also with the court lappet of fashionable attraction, the hair must be disposed in full dishevelled curls, bands and braids producing an unbecoming and graceless effect with these last-mentioned articles. The long sash of ribband, or sarsnet, with plain round dresses, tied immediately behind, or across the shoulder, *à la-militaire*, has been lately revived; and on very young women, the latter style gives a graceful turn to the figure.

Trinkets afford a brilliant display in private parties, and at the Opera. Next to the diamond, which can never be out of fashion, the amethyst, ruby, and emerald, rank highest. Pearl, with center ornaments of these jewels, must also defy the power of fashion and the effects of time, for neatness, grace, and purity, can never be out of date, where the taste is correct, and the judgment sound. The Persian and comet pin, the cameo, onyx, and mosaic brooch, the gold linked necklace, pearl ditto, in form of flowers and shells, take precedence of other minor ornaments. Gloves of French kid, a pale primrose, silver grey, and flesh colour, now take their place, with the York tan, and Limerick.—We have before remarked, that in full dress nothing is admitted but white kid. Shoes are most fashionable,

formed of double silk, to correspond with the pelisse, or otherwise, of pale blue, brown, or green kid. In the evening, white satin, kid, or figured silk, with gold or silver rosetts, cannot be changed to advantage. The prevailing colours for the season are, shades of pale green, pale blue, lilac, buff, and jonquille.

### THE DUKE OF KENT'S MANSION AT KNIGHTSBRIDGE.

THIS *chef-d'œuvre* of architecture and furniture, which is now to be disposed of by private contract, is really the most superb residence we ever witnessed. It is the daily resort of the fashionable world, and amateurs of what is called the *classic*, in household embellishment. This superb mansion, together with its plantations, hot and succession houses, &c. have cost his Royal Highness no less a sum than eighty thousand pounds, independent of fourteen thousand pounds expended in the furniture and other decorations. The richness of the whole *tout ensemble*, and the accommodations which are multiplied *ad infinitum* for domestic comfort as well as ornament, are without a parallel in this country. The state apartments consist of several suites, they are as follow:—Entering the hall, from the court-yard, the windows appear with additional splendour, from their being composed of stained glass. To the left of the grand geometrical staircase is a noble vestibule, which leads into the dining parlour; this apartment is of the grandest proportions, being about forty feet by twenty-five, the walls are elegantly finished *in fresco*. The curtains are of superfine orange colour cloth, of an Etruscan hue, pannelled out with very bold and broad margins of velvet; the draperies after the Etruscan style, are suspended over antique cornices. The whole of the windows are occasionally covered with painted transparencies on silk, producing the most beautiful effect imaginable. On this floor is the private library; the walls of which are covered entirely with azure blue silk, and decorated with fanciful draperies. The book cases are without doors; in their stead, from each shelf is suspended a novel and very tasteful *vallen* of blue silk, decorated with *bullions*, in festoons and drops. The chairs in this room are of white and gold. The vestibule is *en suite* with the dining parlour. Ascending the grand staircase, you enter, on the first flight, another vestibule, which leads to the principal drawing-rooms.

The walls of these magnificent apartments are painted wholly in *bas relief*, and finished with gold mouldings in compartments. In this room are mirrors of vast magnitude and uncommon beauty; they occupy the spaces between the piers and over the chimney-pieces. Under each of the two principal piers is placed a table of the most exquisitely designed and executed *scagliola* marble, perhaps ever witnessed; it represents Etruscan vases and antiquities. These tablets are supported by superbly carved and gilt *chimeras*. The chairs are of white and gold, covered with blue damask silk. The curtains are composed of white lutestrings, with continued draperies of azure blue satin; they are very tastefully arranged, and occupy the whole length of the rooms; the principal apartment is forty feet long. The carpets are of the best velvet manufacture, in shades of crimson. Contiguous to the latter is a superb *boudoir*, or Turkish room, fitted up in strict costume. On the second story is the Duke's sitting-room, which is chiefly remarkable for its commanding site, and the general simplicity of its outline. This room is fitted up with book cases, in white and gold; and Grecian couches. Adjoining to this is his Royal Highness's bed-chamber, in which is placed an elegant French bed, tastefully formed with draperies of yellow cotton, and embroidered white muslin. On this floor is an unique bath, made after the French style,

the bath being concealed in a couch, and covered with cushions and draperies. This bath is supplied with hot or cold water, which is always kept in a state of temperament for instant use. The residue of this suite is occupied by dressing rooms and vestibules. Passing up the third flight of stairs, you enter a lady's sitting room, the walls of which are wholly hung with blue calico, formed into quills, and surmounted by festoons, decorated with bullion fringe. The curtains of this room are of blue calico and white muslin; the furniture is simply elegant, and consists of Grecian couches, sofa, tables, and magnificent pier and chimney glasses. Parallel to this apartment is another, fitted up to correspond, but having the addition of a French bed.

On the ground floor, beneath the dining parlour, is an oval conservatory, now filled with rare exotics. A door of communication leads to the Duke's private study; the latter is not finished. The innumerable offices, attached and detached, renders this enviable residence truly valuable; affording every accommodation for a very numerous household. No expence has been spared in supplying the house with every other requisite of domestic utility. In short, we may venture to add, there is not a mansion in the vicinity of the metropolis of equal attraction, combining all the luxury of Rome, with the simplicity and elegance of ancient Greece.