WHY should we not have a censor of fashion instead of a censor of plays? It would be quite as important a part to play for a man, though it might be difficult enough to find a man for the part. Instead of having to deal with royal situations, or the double entendre of fashion, I would have him curtiling the heroine's fancies, or objecting to her all-too-lingering skirts. He would waste no energy in forbidding the repetition of new words, but would employ it, generally in confronting airlines that cost a fortune without being beautiful. Being a man he would see no merit, nor sense, in "exaggerated" hats of fabulous price, and hishusbands in the world would call him their best friend. A benefactor, indeed, he would be instead of a penance paid at its assessment, petitioned against by playwrights. We do not dream of imitating the morals of a drama we go to see, but we religiously copy the garments the players wear. Our censor, at least, would see to it that they were worth copying. Certainly, it would be a fine enough idea, if only we could find the person to fill it; for he would have to be a brave man who could lucidly the wrath of outraged mistresses, to say nothing of daily petitions from legions of frustrated women.

And then there would be no more litter, no more unnecessary cribs of grotesque hats, or incongruous costumes; these would have passed the censor and be barred reproach. Besides, there would be no cause for complaint, for my censor should be a man of unapproachable taste, and have an admirable sense of the fitness of things. Also, as all fashion begins on the Paris stage, he would, of necessity, be a Frenchman, and most probably as acute. Not, of course, that all art—not even that of dress—is limited to France; only she clenchs upon most of the reputation for it. Amongst the greatest of her great designers, it is in Germany we remember, though she has conveniently forgotten it, that Elisa is an Englishman, Decoll is an American, and that Worth—the one-super-star—line incomparable Worth—was the son of a Nottingham farmer. So all is not French that adds to the glittering fame of Paris.

Cloche in mauve velvet, trimmed with many bunches of violets. Line of purple with ribbons. Made by Aubertine.

THE EVER POPULAR CLOCHE HAT.

To return to my idle imaginations, never likely to be realised, alas! for in Paris no one dreams of dictating to the stage, still less of protesting against fashion. I feel that in my Utopia no censor would have passed the skirts that have lately wriggled themselves into fame at the latest premieres. Their outlines remind one of the undulations of Madame Tallien a hundred years ago. Perhaps their reappearance just now is a sign that we intend to celebrate the centenary of that notorious lady, and may we look forward to further reminiscences in the way of slashed-up draperies displaying a generous length of silk stocking and a magnificent garter. "Why not, after all?" Pourquoi s'arreter en si beau chemin? Once again, I long for a censor to deliver us from the possibility of such terrors. I do not like the creases below the hips that are a feature of the new skirts. On the boards of the Odéon, where their daring came as a shock, they seemed less unpleasant than they do in Bond Street. I see that we shall adopt them enthusiastically. In evening frocks, in which one may play at being artistic, they have some rational divorce, but I see no excuse for their appearance on more coats and skirts. Nor do I believe for a moment that we think them beautiful; only we have talked of "lines," propped on "line" for years, and now that we have got more of it than we bargained for, we must at all costs pretend it is a glorious thing. But, even in all loyalty to cherished ideals, I cannot help wishing that all this "line" did not quarrel so desperately with petticoats in the very depths of winter.

Fans, however, promise to make up for a great deal. Never have they been so warm, so enticingly beautiful, and never, alas! have they been dearer. I will not even mention sable; for most of us it is an unrealisable ambition, shrouded behind fashionable shop-windows. If we go on at this rate, not all the wealth of the Vanderbilts will be sufficient to buy a single cloak. Silver fox has also gone up fifty per cent; why, I have not discovered, and, strangely enough, no one insists on a reason, but cheerfully pays the price. Just now there is a craze for ermine, which, for a marvell, is slightly cheaper than last year. It is mostly used without its petty little tails; but this is quite an exception, for on all other skins tails appear with such liberality that one cannot help doubting their sincerity. There are muff entirely made of them (this is dernier cri), coats with a fringe of them, hats that bristle with them; in fact, where there is a small piece of fur there are at least twenty made of them. The pillow muff is now so enormous that many women carry their little dogs inside it. I wonder whether they know how old is this fashion. In the seventeenth century people used gigantic muffls in which they hid a whole litter of puppies, and the larger the number of them, the greater was the chic.

Chinchilla is not quite as fashionable as it was, and beaver has come back after many years' absence; but the most charming fur for coats always was, and always will be, beaver. This year it is thinner and sottier than ever, almost like awer with patches of velvet, and when laced with braid and pannacott it is irresistible. These furs have all been made so soft and supple that they are twice as beautiful as and ten times more fragile than they were. It is all grit to the fancy extremely profitable mill. I wonder no impoverished peer nowadays has thought of dealing in furs instead of motors. There would be the chance of re-establishing his fallen fortunes.

Mr. Charles Dixon's excellent drawings of the Orient-Royal Mail steamer have been reproduced as postcards for the use of passengers by the line. In consequence of thenumerous applications which have been made for them the Orient-Royal Mail Line have decided to issue them to the general public at a small charge. The set of nine will be sent post free on receipt of a postal order for sixpence.

A regal costume in brown chinchilla velvet is worn over a petticoat of gold tissue, embroidered in chenille. Trousers in brown silk, and vest of Malines lace. Made by Roden. Photograph by Felix.

A DINNER DRESS.

A very graceful double skirt in grey-blue chifon has wide bower of robust daisies pretty edgings. High belt in Liberty satin, and expensive and sensitive silk of Almack lace. Made by Dempstone. Photograph by Felix.

A REGIMENTAL DRESS.