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## REVIEW OF FASHIONS.

There is nothing more significant in the dress question than the rapid development of American methods and manufactures, and the position they now take by the side of productions from the Old World. It is true, that nursing our manufactures to so great an extent as we do sometimes, results in higher prices for poorer articles than ought to be the case, but this will right itself in time, as the standard becomes higher and the resources larger. In the mean time, design is really in advance of textile manufacture; the great work-shops which turn out nine-tenths of the clothing worn by American ladies, no longer finding it necessary, or even good policy, to dance attendance on foreign models, but creating their own or taking them from New York fashion designers whose styles are acknowledged in advance of the French modes. It is not yet twenty-five years since ready-made clothing for ladies did not exist, except in small quantities made to order and brought from Paris at high cost. Trousseau occasionally ordered in this way generally subjected the purchasers to severe disappointment, for they were a "new departure" in those days, even in Paris, and the cut was bad, the shape was nowhere, and the trimming incongruous. A few vigorous newspaper articles, written about that time, attracted attention, and started a movement all "along the line," and in a few months every shop had become a ladies' "furnishing house."

It has long been conceded that underwear, at least of cotton manufacture, can be better purchased here than abroad, and few articles of this description are now sent for, or even bought by American women abroad, for they know they can obtain them to better advantage at home. But it has been supposed that they could do better so far as dresses and cloaks, jewelry and bric-a-brac, were concerned. But even this fancy is dying out, English women of taste have declared that special silks of American manufacture have no rivals in the foreign market, and it is known that some of the superior New York cloak houses anticipate the designs which are afterward brought over at great cost by French modistes.

The jewels and ornaments made here go to all the courts in Europe and on the Continent, and we are even beginning to use our own tickets and labels. There is no doubt that this might have been done from the beginning with advantage, wherever a good thing stood behind the name, but too many have been afraid to meet the prejudice which they conceived existed (largely in their own imaginations) against American dress or art productions, and therefore labelled them foreign, when they were really home

The outlines of this garment are especially graceful, and it can be stylishly made in rich as well as in inexpensive materials. The loose fronts are longer than the back, which is fitted by a seam down the middle, and the additional skirt piece is laid in plaits and increases the stylish effect of the design. The fronts are faced with contrasting material and trimmed with *motifs* of passementerie, while fringe arranged about the sleeves and across the back adds to the dressy effect of the whole. The model

made, and good enough to stand on their merits. Those who have been pioneers in the work of fostering American ideas and creating American standards, who have not only worked in the line of developing American taste at home, but have carried the banner abroad, and planted it on British and continental soil, know that it inspires respect, and assists to give a juster idea of the progress of this country, in all civilized arts and industries. The present season has shown an enormous falling off, not only in the number of tourists abroad, but in the number and value of articles imported. Prices

may be used to complete special costumes, though materials used for independent wraps made up handsomely in this way, and silk, braid, lace, fringe or any garniture suited to the texture may be used to trim as illustrated. For a medium size of this wrap, three yards and one-eighth of good twenty-four inches wide, will be required. Seven-eighths of a yard of velvet, and one yard and three-eighths of fringe will be sufficient to trim as illustrated. Patterns in two sizes, medium and large. Price, twenty-five cents each.

have greatly increased on the other side, and unless a lady knows just how to buy, or stays long enough to purchase goods in the piece, and have them made by the deft fingers of the cheaper class of work-women, it is not worth while to make purchases at all; in fact, she can do better in New York.

There are many reasons why it is very desirable that American women should emancipate themselves from the bondage of foreign fashions, except so far as they appeal to judgment and sense, as well as taste. We are a practical nation, we have no leisure class, the rich have their duties



TESOTA VISITE.

as well as the poor, and dress should be cultivated with reference to their needs, rather than the apish imitation of folly, or the childish desire for the last new thing.

is known, moreover, that trade desire to tickle the fancy is at the bottom of nine-tenths of the "novelties," and that the grotesque caprices regularly and industriously evolved for our benefit, would not be offered to experienced and cultivated taste in Paris. A French writer says: "Frenchwomen of rank largely design their own costumes, and even superintend their making. The long evenings in the *chateaux* are spent in making exquisite embroidery for the toilets which will figure in the *salon*, while the trousseaus are often entirely the work of the young lady herself, the mother, and the ordinary seamstress of the family." Ladies who depend upon French styles are all the time embarrassed by modes which have no correspondence with our domestic habits and customs. Take the extremely low neck, for example. Its continued existence is only owing to the tenacity with which one respected old lady, the English Queen, clings to tradition and custom. Health and decency alike demand its overthrow. Why should Nineteenth Century women go around displaying their range of thick or thin anatomy? They are too good, too sensible for this sort of business, and ought to set a better example, not only to the young girls here, but to the whole world. This question of low necks and short sleeves, or lace sleeves, or no sleeves, enters more largely into the economy of life and health than would be imagined. Women who go much into society cannot wear a thickness of wool, of the softest, next the skin, or covering even the body, because arms and necks must be free for display, and this not only occurs with the very limited number who can keep their dwellings at a summer temperature, and protect themselves from sudden changes but it disturbs the thousands of others, and prevents them from providing, as a matter of course, just what they ought for their own health and comfort. That there has been a great improvement in the matter and manner of women's dress during the past twenty years, admits of no question, but there is room for more, and it ought to come from the top; American women of society ought to set the example of that which is best from the highest and most intelligent point of view: but unfortunately the women of society are not always those that are most distinguished by either sense or intelligence.

"We're just driven to death," replied the undertaker when asked how his business prospered.

A man may successfully paint the town red, but when afterward he has a brush with a policeman he loses color.