

THERE seems a very decided fancy for princess dresses, many of which have already put in an early appearance, both in velvet and fur at the various skating rinks, and, indeed, anywhere where the extremists in fashion congregate. Together with the princess is seen its half-sister, the long and graceful redingote, both of them admirably adapted to suit tall and slight people, and both quite certain to be much seen this year. The very advanced amongst the ladies' tailors say that the coats with waistbands will absolutely vanish—at least, from the fashionable world—but in spite of this prognostication, I have seen some very pretty bodices and coats of this kind, though the Russian pouching effect has disappeared and the basques look longer. There are very large *revers* to all these coats or blouses, which are generally made of some bright velvet; old rose, green, and almond and white, being all of them favourite colours; and they may be edged round with a tiny rucking of black *chiffon*, one of those puffy edgings that were seen so much last season, and which promise to be equally fashionable this year also. The bodice has also very frequently three fancy buttons, and fastens on one side, as I see it often, with a metallic belt, and I think silver ones will be quite as much worn as ever. For now that many people have purchased these very artistic silver belts, they will not be willing to give them up so soon. Besides, the ordinary girl has not a very large dress allowance, and must manage to dress herself well and smartly within it. The sleeves are, of course, either shaped in a square or are pointed at the wrist, and are generally finished with a frilling of lace inside.

There is an immense feeling for the use of white cordings and white silk braids, especially on black materials, serge being specially honoured. In this connection, strappings are much used, and edged with the white cording they are certainly very smart. These serge gowns are generally made with a large-sized round collar, which is rather open at the neck, and this space is filled in with a chemisette of white *chiffon* or of white satin, with white lace over it, and surmounted by a high neck-frill of lace and satin, the satin being put on in a double frill with the lace over it.

Amongst the prophecies for the future, which I have heard during the month, is the coming of flounces. These are declared to be "an undoubted fact," a slight exaggeration when they have not yet arrived! But still I am bound to say, that a great many of the thin materials for evening dress, are already ornamented with small frills, or several deep flounces. I am afraid all the small-sized folk will complain a great deal of this new fashion, for flounces are very detrimental to little people. They decrease their apparent height, and add much to dumpiness of figure. With the present style of dress, the tall women and girls seem always to score, but the smaller ones have a chance too; for the plain, tailor-made gowns suit nearly every one. The modern flounces are not put on all round the skirt, in a straight line, but show a tendency to be shaped into a point in front, from the waist-line at the back. I am not sure that this line is becoming to the figure, nor indeed any line of the sort, which seems to fall forwards, towards the front. In our illustration of a new skirt, we show the more graceful line which drops at the back as well, and it will be seen at once that this conduces to slighthness of appearance, and a graceful line.

There has been much talk about the new skirt, and all kinds of things were told of it, *i.e.*, that we were to be "tied back" once more, that we should have the old umbrella back again, that very original umbrella skirt, with next to no fulness at the top, and extending to, at least, six yards of material at the edge.

None of these things have really occurred. We have the new skirt, and it is certainly cut very tight at the top; fitting also closely round the hips, but it flutes gracefully enough at the feet, and will be found very pretty, I think, when worn.

Tailor-made gowns are always in, and the change in them is very small. We have the

rather long, tight-fitting coat, generally double-breasted in front, but as the season advances, this will not be required for warmth. The fashionable colours appear to be grey, fawn, drab, and a light shade of lavender-blue; white, purple, and dark blues are also much liked; and I see that green still finds many adherents, and is undoubtedly both seasonable



IN THE FIRST DAYS OF SPRING.