

THE STAR, ST. JOHN

For the Home Dressmaker

Our Paris Letter

PARIS, Feb. 23.
THE weather here has taken on a hint of spring and the feminine mind of the Parisienne is greatly agitated over the modes for the "semi-season"; for what is more difficult to decide than costumes for this time, when the weather is unsettled and the fashions are so yet but arranging themselves in the thoughts of the great couturiers?

The burning question at the present is the tulle, which held its place of vantage for so short a moment and has now given place to the skin-tight skirt for afternoon and the extremely simple little "trotteurs" for the morning.

"On dit," that it must be but a passing fad that afternoon dresses and "pantaloons" cannot remain popular for summer costumes and only the very slightest women can attempt to wear them with success anyway, but here it is in this snaky skirt, while in even the fine overalls the trimming and bias bands, instead of dipping in front, are sloped to the back.

Happily the extravagantly large hat has become "de mode," and the toque is retaining favor. White swans-down and marabout are the latest fancy, for they may be discarded earlier. Military fashions are returning—the shining hussar alpacas, the military collar, the heavy brass buttons, the stiff braided vest.

With the departure of the "cloche" hat the hair dressing has returned to its former state of comparative plainness. Even side partings are "comme il faut" and the irrelevant curls so much the rage are no longer seen. The peasants may keep their hair.

In fact, the great extravagance has brought about a return to great simplicity. Frenchwomen no longer disfigure their feet with the long-toed shoes of two months ago, but again adopt the natural size. Smartest boots have tops of antelope or suede and patent leather ramps, while stockings are worn to match the tops.

A gown recently seen, destined for an afternoon reception at the Elysée Palace, was of soft fawn-colored chiffon—light, the skirt long, plain and very tight; the corage, high-bellied, of course, was composed of silk flat lace insertion in the same shade over white and bands of fawn velvet embroidered with silver thread.

Each of liberty within the girdle d'Almeida, was attached upon the side according to the latest fashion, and fell in one and fringed with silver.

With this creation was worn a Mag-

yar toque of fawn velvet adorned with a full hussar alpacas in tones of brown, caught at the left side with a small rhinestone buckle.

The costume described above would be ideal when made up in voile, for the season is now too late for velvet. The silver embroidery could then be well omitted and darned net could take the place of the flat lace. It is now too late to indulge in such toques as velvet or marabout, but some charming hats may be made of net, and stevedresses are increasing in popularity every day.

The Hungarian alpacas are not these feathery affairs popular for so long; they are much stiffer and heavier, and are far more than the fancy plumes recently worn.

American women never did take up the fashion of wearing shoes three sizes too large, but the colored tops for patent leather boots are extensively worn, and they are really most attractive when the cloth matches the suit. However, the women of France never at any season wear the half shoes that we adopt so early in the spring, and it is for this reason that the cloth tops will never become universal in this country, for we, with our pumps, wear any shade stockings that suits our fancy.

New Girdles

MOST of the new high belts are finished in one long and with a tassel. This idea is carried out even in morning dresses, voile or pique, and is becoming to the average figure, particularly as the new semi-princess dress is so much the rage. The belt at present is not fastened directly around the waist line, but slightly above it to give the skirt a very long line in front and on the sides.

Some dresses of light materials are finished in front directly below the girdle in a large bow of the material. This is not unattractive for very slim figures, for it adds several inches to the bust measure. There will be, owing to the present increasing popularity of the girdle waist, a decided leaning toward the very low line of the corage, for it is becoming to every woman, and the girdle will add whatever is necessary for the sake of modesty. Decolletage, however, can be overcome, and those who wish to keep the pretty girdle in vogue must do all they can to see that it is not abused, for a peculiar thing about fashions is that the moment any one line is overdone a reaction is sure to come.



Colors on Lingerie Dresses

THE new white dresses shown in the shops have some touch of color in embroidery or lace, but the silver embroidery coats trimmed with lace are pure white. These are very useful to wear in the late afternoon, and, while they could not be accused of being worn, they do add a certain air of freshness to the toilet.

Children's Coats and Frocks From Paris

THE French modistes are particularly clever in designing suits for little girls that will carry out the ideas shown in the reigning fashion, and they still maintain that simplicity of line necessary and appropriate for little tots. In the illustration shown today the single-breasted cut-away jacket, the pleated skirt, the panel fronts, the long shoulder line and the button trimmings are all shown, but adapted to the size and age of the little wearer.

A smart little suit of white or ecru serge is fastened down the front with

three brass buttons, and is cut with a round hem at the bottom of the coat. The skirt is side pleated and the jacket is trimmed with a narrow soutache braid. The white hat is simply adorned with a bow of ribbon to match the suit.

A more dressy little frock is that of light blue linen, with a neckline of batiste or allover embroidery. It is, in spite of its appearance, very easy to make, and the result is charming. The linen hat is finished with a draped crown to match the little dress.

A suit of plaid and navy blue chequer is cut in quite the latest style, whether

for mother or big sister. It is made with a very long-waisted effect, and the loose coat is trimmed with small brass buttons. The plaid is of shaded blues, and the cuffs and collar of the jacket are finished in bright green velvet. The basin hat intended to wear with the suit is trimmed with velvet to match the collar.

A pink linen with the mikado sleeves and pearl buttons from shoulder to hem is worn with collar and undersleeves of baby Irish lace. The front of the skirt is finished in a box pleat with the belt at each side, so that the front line is unbroken. This dress is a fascinating design for quite a little girl, and the white canvas hat, with a knot of soft pink ribbon, gives a complete look to the costume.

All of the models given are very simple, and the two little dresses are just enough modification of a Russian blouse to make a distinction between frocks for little boys and girls. Instead of using allover embroidery and lace for the girdles, they may be batiste or tucked handkerchief linen, and if pearl buttons are not used, wooden buttons covered with scraps of the dress material may take their place.

The little white suit would be most attractive if made up in some darker fabric, and it would then be far more serviceable, while stitched bands of tulle might be substituted for soutache braiding.

The little plaid dress would be a most attractive style for a checked gingham jumper, to be worn with a reefer of blue serge, with collar and cuffs of the same.

Hats for children of this size are most easily made. The little old-fashioned hat with linen to match the suit. For that matter, the hat may be all white, with only a change in trimming, a bow or a wreath each costume of the wardrobe.



Blouses with Sabot Trimming



THE newest blouses are made of every conceivable shade and material—chiffon, silk, satin, flax net—and all of them have introduced somewhere in the decorations the emphatic fall of lace or material named in Paris the sabot.

A blouse of violet chiffon is finished in front in three deep tucks, which at both sides of the breast is bound to satin and the sabot of lace is introduced. The same idea is carried out in the undersleeves, while the yoke of the blouse is made of the lace used to make the sabot.

A blouse of blue chiffon taffeta is trimmed with flat net, covered with a design in bands of silk, while the linen undersleeve is fastened from neck to waist with a sabot. It gives the same effect as the ruffled white blouse of just a year ago, except that the middle pleat in this new creation is but one-half inch wide. In speaking of last year, both the jumper and ruffled blouse are combined in these latest waists, which is shown by the last illustration. This is made of white taffeta, heavily embroidered in white silk flowers, while a band of net, covered with orchids, holds the shoulder strap together at the front. This shows the sabot in the ruffle of the undersleeve, while the tiny buttons used down the front are covered with taffeta and finished around the edge with a trim of lace.

SIMPLIFIED MODELS

All of the elaborate blouses of the illustration are beyond the power of the home dressmaker. But a little ingenuity can accomplish wonders, and a reproduction of model garments does not necessitate an exact copy in materials. The design of any of these blouses may be carried out in cotton, particularly the waist would be charming made of dotted Swiss, the wide bands of the shoulders done in white embroidered linen. The ruffling down the front is for sale in any shop at little cost.

The other two may be made in dimity or lawn—in fact, flowered dimity would be a charming binding for the blue waist—and Valenciennes lace is not an expensive article.

The violet waist is really designed for China silk, and pompadour ribbon might be used as a trimming, making the un-

Violet Chiffon and Valenciennes Lace

Few women realize what really beautiful effects may be obtained by using Valenciennes machine embroidery. The only important point is to see that the material for the foundation is fine and of good quality.

Of course no one can expect to use any of this year's models unless one is willing to do most of the sewing by hand, for this is the one little detail that makes a blouse.

The Silk with Yoke of Lace

delicious of lawn. Flat net, too, might be used for the foundation of any of the waists.

Odd Combination in Spring Suits

WHILE that beautiful and always becoming color, has gone out of fashion, for in the new clothes—white even pinks, have a forced look to which the real flowers never attain.

It is a most remarkable reversion to hats of some time ago. Such modest blossoms as forget-me-nots, violets and violets will find no place in the fashions of the year, but calla lilies, Easter lilies and hydrangeas will be in great demand.

This same mammoth taste also seems to have influenced the designs of foulards and chiffons, for the season's designs are out of proportion—gigantic in fact. The little old-fashioned prints have given place to huge bunches of orchids and sunflowers. It takes many tucks and pleats to reform the size of the designs to many.

A costume for spring garden parties is composed of a small tulle trimmed all round with huge flowers and a flat net dress with a huge design of becoming Easter lilies, embroidered in heavy white floss. It looks at a distance like a costume for a giantess, but when worn the effect is original, and good.

Huge Designs in Vogue for Spring

FLOWERS for the spring hats are of the most enormous size—huge roses and unnatural morning-glories—while even panics have a forced look to which the real flowers never attain.

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Evening Gowns

SO MANY of the new evening dresses show the influence of the position jacket that it has become a very important thing to have lace drapery around the back and hips. The jacket runs over the shoulders and down both sides of the figure almost close to the armholes. It necessitates all of the evening dresses being made with a square neck.

The dresses under the jackets are made princess, but many of them hang quite loose in front, and are only held close to the figure by a gold braided belt fastened each side of the jacket and tied in a knot in front, allowing the ends to hang to the knees. To give the necessary severe line and breadth to the shoulders, folds of velvet are used, which curve from the waist line in back to the waist line in front.

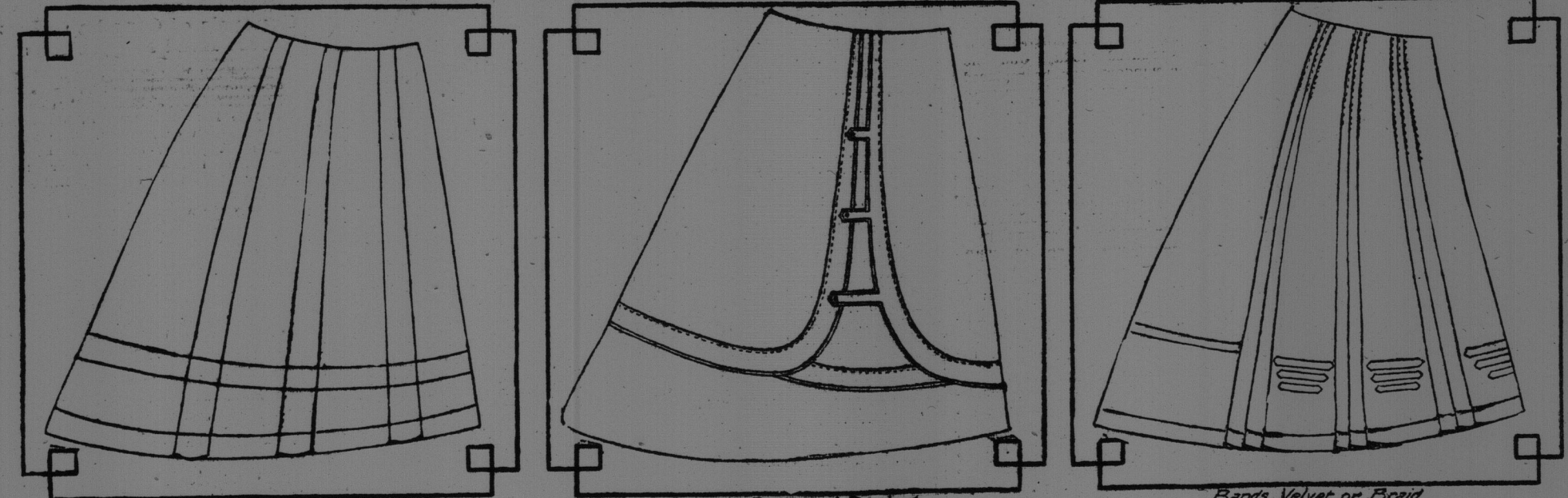
These bretelles are sometimes as wide as eight inches, so that they give breadth to the shoulders and that small appearance to the waist that the clumsy folds of the lace coat almost obliterate.

Melon Bonnets

ANY caps for spring are made of three pieces, cut like the sides of a circular triangle and sewn together with a fancy stitch or a strip of lace insertion. Sometimes the sections over the face and at the back of the neck are made of dotted Swiss, while the middle section is of baby Irish lace. In other caps all three sections are of fine nainsook, but the middle section is heavily embroidered. This new style is very becoming to the baby's head, and brings the joining of the sections just behind the ear, so that whatever lace is used as trimming will converge toward this point.

A very attractive cap may be made of allover embroidery, using Valenciennes insertion between the sections, and for very plain bonnets pink linen may be used, with a little hand embroidery around the face. This cap is known as a melon bonnet, and bids fair to become the reigning favorite in juvenile fashion.

ALTERING GORES IN SKIRTS



Line on Straight of Material

NOW that circular skirts have returned with such force to popular favor, those women who have suits and dresses made with the ordinary gored skirts seem crushed with their misfortune. "What shall we do?" they cry. "This suit is too good to throw away, yet how can I disguise these awful goreds?"

Three models to hide the old-fashioned seams are shown today; each of them requires the additional purchase of the minimum of material. All of these allow for a circular skirt.

Band at Bottom of Skirt

In the first model the seams are ripped, the breadth nearest the front is turned, two pleats are made of new material and set in, and all are stitched to the hip line. If a circular ruffle finishes the skirt, graduated bands of braid may be used to hide the joining, but the straight lines look better without any break between them, so the second method may be used to better advantage. In this false box pleats of new material, made with the straight of the goods, are laid over the seams and false tucks are made on the hem of the ruffle and around the bot-

Band at Bottom of Skirt

tom. This method enables the skirt also to be lengthened both at the bottom and at the top of the ruffle.

A panel effect is added by false tucks beginning close together at the waist line and extending to a curve around the line of the ruffle. The little straps may be added across the front if desired, also the braid around the skirt.

In all of the models shown new material is required. If it is impossible to match the old skirt, then some other material may be used, providing it is of the same shade. For instance, in the

Bands Velvet or Bias

first model broadcloth may be used to alter the velvet skirt, or even pleats of taffeta.

In the second, if it is impossible to secure material to exactly match that of the skirt, some other variety may be used in its place.

The third model should be altered with material to match, otherwise the false tucks would look out of place.

Of course, in the question of an evening dress line or chiffon may always take the place of the dress material. As for the lines of the skirt, the first

and second models are most appropriate for small women, while the third model would have the effect of shortening the figure and is therefore only desirable for a tall woman or a woman of average height. The bands added at the foot of the skirt may be used to lengthen the back, for in some cases last year's dresses were not as long as the skirts of the latest style.

Three other models will be shown next week suggesting ways of altering gored skirts without requiring material to match.