

FROCKS FOR TO-MORROW.

By "THE LADY DRESSMAKER."

On all sides I hear that there is to be a great revival of those fashions of the "forties," in which flounces and pelerines and mantles all flourished together; and I have no doubt that those who go in for extremes will find plenty of them. It seems likely, however, that we shall all have a choice, and that plain skirts will flourish beside those covered with flounces. The tightness of the upper part of the skirts is something wonderful to see, but round the feet they run to four or even five yards round. And, after all, they are not ungraceful, and the flounces even may be arranged to make us look slight and tall, for they are not as those of old, gathered on the skirt, and so rendered bunched and ugly; they are in general cut so that they are of the same width, and so can be put on with no fullness at all. The number of trimmed and tucked skirts is very great, and the trimmings follow no special rule, but run vertically, horizontally, or across, just at their own sweet will, or rather that of the dressmaker who put them on. One of the new styles of trimming is seen in the *rouleaux*, which are either gathered, or plain, over cord. Folds of material and tucks are generally worn, and braiding of all kinds. Some of the tucks are quite astonishing; they are so very tiny, and so beautifully done, especially where the new blouses are concerned. The folds of material vary in width, from half-an-inch to three or four inches.

The French circular flounces, about which I have spoken, require very exact putting on the foundation, and should be pinned at every quarter, and even half-quarter, so that they may not be stretched out of shape, but lie flatly on the under portion. It is best to have a pattern to cut by, and the seven-gored under-skirt is thought to be the best to use for the foundation-skirt. These flounces are put on in all ways, even in a sharply-accentuated point at the front, the back being set in to the band of the gown, quite as full as the skirt itself. One of these pointed skirts is illustrated; only in this case it is not a flounce, but a kind of small over-skirt, while the flounce is below. This gown is of fine summer ladies'-cloth, the bodice is made with a basque, and an under-waistcoat of white satin, with cream-coloured lace over it, and the usual large bow of lace and *chiffon* finishes it at the neck. The edges of the skirt and *revers* are trimmed with very narrow velvet bands. The figure at the back wears one of those dresses which are so popular at present, trimmed down the fronts in a straight line, the trimming being continued round the edge of the skirt. The bodice is also one of the season's novelties. It is cut down low over a yoke of white or a contrasting colour. In the present instance, the dress was made of one of the new *crêpons*,

and the trimmings were of blue silk, to match that in shade. This style of trimming is very dressy, and is used nearly always for the princess gowns with much advantage, as it takes off from their plain effect, which is generally most trying, save to those who rejoice in very good figures.

With regard to colours in dress, I think I am not mistaken in saying, that one person in ten appears to me to wear a mauve or heliotrope gown. Next to it in favour comes green, which is generally trimmed with black, while much of the heliotrope is trimmed with white. I have also noticed an increase in the

popularity of blue; the new blue being almost of a corn-flower shade, which seems to go best with black as a trimming. For millinery, there is a lovely shade of *vieux rose*, and also some young greens, of the exact colour of the shoots on the trees. White hats will be much in favour, and I think, when the summer fashions are really here, we shall not find the hats so vivid in their colouring as they are just at present. The straw hats, especially, are a perfect feast of gay hues to the eye, after the dulness of the winter. Green straw hats with black trimming, and pale blue straws with mauve,



TWO NEW CAPES.