

FEMININE FADS AND FANCIES

By DOROTHY



A HERALD OF SPRING.

Written for The Observer.

LACE, as a means of trimming on many of the winter gowns of note, seems to have lost none of its prestige, in spite of the fact that it has been used for so long a time. The fad of laces dyed to match the material with which it is used, went out of vogue for a time, but seems to have returned to quite an extent at the present moment, adding just another note to the fact, that lace in almost any quality, style or color, is extremely fashionable. The first of the so-called spring styles set forth the statement, that we shall have here, too, that is in the spring, certainly a touch of lace, if no more. In the costume No. 1, here sketched—as

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we see one of the early styles giving an idea of the use of lace upon one costume at any rate. "This handsome princess coat of light face-cloth is an example of the styles that are to be fitted at the waist by means of pinched tucks, and plentifully trimmed with heavy cream lace. There is a modish little nest of emerald green cloth bound with silk braid, and the costume is topped by a hat of matching chip trimmed with violets." Judging from the close line of this suit—the exactness with which it fits into the figure—there is certainly no thought of an immediate return, at least, to all loose garments. The use of vests and all styles of chemisettes remains a much loved fashion, and no doubt will continue so throughout the spring. The figure here shown illustrates one of the vests and chemisettes, likely to be most popular. I am sure, too, we shall see these styles carried out in exquisite laces for use with all sorts of wash materials. I have recently noticed depicted some of the prettiest collar and cuff sets I think I have ever seen, some of these also including a front or chemisette. One of these especially referred to is of point de brogues, and another of the Duchesse pattern. It therefore stands to reason, when the shops are now showing such affairs as these, from inexpensive ones to those extremely costly, that we shall surely have one season of them, at any rate.

As the time draws nigh when furs will begin to look a wee bit heavy, more and more attention is being paid to the hoas and stoles made of lace and other filmy materials. These have been worn when suitable, all through the fall and thus far in the winter, and their daintiness has taken a firm hold upon the feminine minds. Here again we see the love for lace, using it in all possible ways. Now is just the time, too, when bargains are sure to be had in this line as well as many others. Merchants are making room for their spring displays, therefore, for many beautiful things almost at cost prices, simply because they have been on hand a month or two. "Lace and chiffon chemisettes are being picked up for the dress and stoles as necessary to a full dress afternoon toilet when furs are too heavy looking. These lace hoas can be made at home at a much

less expense than they can be bought ready made. Ribbon, lace and chiffon are the foundation of these charming neck protectors, and the pattern for the making almost a matter of fancy. In fact, anything this winter that is artistic in the way of dress, is the fashion, and some one has said that it is the first time in all history that feminine fashions are designed artistically.

Whether this last sentence be entirely true or not, it is surely a fact in many cases, as for instance the Dainty Robe for House Wear found in sketch No. 2. "Lingerie robes are true examples of the dressmaker's art, and the woman of fashion finds it hard trying to get along without two or three of the season's creations. They need not necessarily be expen-



SPRING LINGERIE BLOUSE.

sive, but they are always the quintessence of daintiness. The model sketched here is built of pale blue silk crepe, with a petticoat of gauze trimmed with lace. The negligee is bound with embroidered bands which form headings for plaited frills of silk. Shirring and smart ribbon bows finish the neck and the sleeves are edged with ruffles of lace and silk." For such a robe as this the sleeves seem unusually attractive, and so well suited to the garment. Speaking of sleeves, too, it looks as if those of elbow length were going to continue with us. I notice that in a number of the so-called spring designs, sleeves of this character are given, not only in house gowns, but in many of street costumes. Numbers of the blouses are so shown, as you will see in sketch No. 3, which explains a few of the new styles.

A SPRING LINGERIE BLOUSE described as "a charming addition to the wardrobe of the girl who glories in dainty waists. It is made of soft silk, for this is the fabric of the hour for such wash headgear. Anglice figuring in the decorative scheme. The yoke is of the embroidery and the flou border around it is ornamented with the same trimming. The sailor knot and girle are of black satin. The above pictured waist is not only pretty in silk as here described, but is equally or even more charming in some of the wash materials. With the ultra-fashionable folk, these elbow sleeves have been of an exceeding popularity the spring days, worn with the carrying of the large muffs so liked at this time. From these two things—the short sleeves and big muffs—have grown up a "foolish fad" indulged in by some few. "This new fancy is to take a pair of long gloves, (white as a rule) and cut off the hands, leaving the wrists and arms covered, but the hands bare. Then the fingers are covered with glittering and costly jewels—but the fashion is only effective in its own vulgar way."

From such notions as these one turns with pleasure to the attractive little figure represented in cut No. 4, which is

A PRETTY COAT OF ROUGH CLOTH.

"Here is a mid-season design for a small girl that can be gotten up inexpensively, yet with good results. The coat is a box model with collar and cuffs of red velvet bound with the rough grey wash material. The developed Being loose-fitting it is drawn in slightly at the waist with a belt of the cloth fastening under the broad box-plaited effect of the front. Patent leather shoes with white kid tops are worn with the outfit. "This new fancy is to take a pair of long gloves, (white as a rule) and cut off the hands, leaving the wrists and arms covered, but the hands bare. Then the fingers are covered with glittering and costly jewels—but the fashion is only effective in its own vulgar way."

There seems to be a tendency toward the wearing of higher collars just now than for a season or two. For a time it looked as if no collars were going to be worn at all—but the outlook now is just for the opposite. This is all well enough while it is still cold, but I suspect when warm weather comes again, low collars will be very much in evidence. Now they are so high that in order to relieve the plainness which seems to occur from so long a line in the back, little bows are added just there to the collar. Of course this decoration applies to a suit collar—mean an entire gown all of one material, for it is in this case, where the collars are highest. It is to be noticed; however, that the stocks of linen, etc., upon the market, are a fraction higher than at this time last year. These are surely pretty, too, as are the belts which are shown in some instances at least, to match the collars. The embroidered white wash belts so much worn during the last of the past summer again make their appearance, with a new touch, perhaps, somewhere about them. Pearl buckles are more in evidence, though these were also quite a little worn, too, the past season. An example of high collar is surely to be found—accompanying the blouse in sketch No. 5, which is a

SMART WAIST OF TAFFETA. "This design will recommend itself

for both its simplicity and chic. It is built of old blue taffeta and has a vest and deep fitted cuffs of all-over lace. A director's stock of lace and silk finish the neck." The all-over lace waists, are going to be much worn, I notice, both over white and color. I suppose there can be no doubt but that we may count upon these as almost a "leader" in the spring. They will be worn with dark skirts, or when made over white, with the white cloth skirts; again we shall find them worn with the color of skirt matching the shade which is used underneath the waist—but this fact was noted last week, but not, I believe in reference to the all-over embroidery waists.

I suppose almost every woman wants, whether she has it or not, some style of evening dress as a part of her wardrobe. Of course in many small places, a really full evening gown is rarely if ever needed, but the society woman must have them. To many these are thought to be absolutely useful and necessary, and no doubt they have their place. Pictures are taken do not get out of date like those of ordinary everyday style. Perhaps this is because there is so little of the real costume, that hardly anything remains to get out of date. Be that as it may, in the sixth and last sketch of this page, we have quite an attractive evening gown. It is simply "a one-piece frock made princess in effect by graduated laces attached about the waist line. The skirt is finished with a deep flounce of lace above which are ruffles of plaited silk put on with velvet ribbon. This plaited silk drapes



DAINTY FOR HOUSE WEAR.

the bodice and consorts with bands of embroidery to finish the square décolletage. Dainty puff sleeves are made by long elbow gloves. This costume is made of soft white silk. Speaking of white, too, the prospects are for a "white" season again. Last year, if you remember, while white was worth a great deal, much was said to the effect that it was not so popular as in past seasons, and yet Vogue refers to its use as follows, which testifies to the fact that it has been in for some while: "It always is mere guessing to foretell fashions in advance of their authoritative disclosure, but if the popular trend of the winter towards white in informal as well as ceremonial dress is of value, then it is running no risk to prophesy this season." We can but hope this is true, for, after all, there is nothing so sweet, fresh and simple as the all white costume, both for old and young. To the matron it gives the needed touch of freshness, while to the young girl, it adds a sure charm to the already sparkling eyes and pink cheeks. A "white" season it seems to me, therefore, is one to be welcomed by all of us.

OF INTEREST TO WOMEN.

New York Sun. "Are you taking soda baths" is the question which is asking one another most just now. The soda bath is declared to be a specific for rheumatism, neuralgia, sciatica, and other ailments, and the bather beautiful. Women have tried in turn the perfume bath, the mud bath and the medicinal bath, but no other bath has been met with the same favor as the soda bath. It is said to come from Europe, and the method of procedure is as follows: "One pound of washing soda is added to five gallons of water and the patient lies in this for fifteen minutes. Then follows the cold spray and the bather emerges refreshed and free from ailment. The pains disappear like magic and her skin glowing like the sky at sunrise."

Chattanooga News. Gertrude Atherton, whose pen has been inactive for some months on account of a serious illness has now left Munich after a sojourn of six months and has gone to seek a quiet place in California where she can take up her literary work with renewed enthusiasm. The "Traveling Child," recently issued by the Harpers, is her best published work. "Writing books is very exciting," she said recently. "You must make up your mind to renounce everything for the time being; I live like a hermit in some little out-of-the-way spot when I am writing a book. I rise every morning at six, work until noon, eat a rather

hearty midday meal, and read for a couple of hours, and then begin to work for an hour or two. Some days I write all day,—write until I am all written out. It takes me usually about three to four months to write a book; after that comes the rewriting, the proof-reading, and all the unpleasurable details which never know exactly what sequence of incident or characters is going to follow until I am in the thickest of composition. Of course I decide on a motive, and have two or three of the principal characters, pretty clearly in mind, but the rest of the story works its own way out. When I am tired of writing, I take some exercise, walk, or ride, or go to the country. This country, however, she will write a new series of tales about characters drawn from "The Fables of the Nile."

New Orleans Times-Democrat.

An old lady who calmly produced a pair of spectacles and a damning case the other day in a specialist's office, and asked while awaiting her turn, provoked much covert amusement. This is only another proof of the conventional stupidity of silly and unalterable laws for conduct in the most trivial affairs of life. The woman in question was really an economist of a valuable order, and illustrates well the change the feminine portion of it. Who does not realize the enormous amount of time wasted in the little walks of life, in the streets cars, between the acts at the theatre? Most of these are filled with cheap candy or light reading, though one feels distinctly unsoiled on such occasions. How much better if we could fill them to our betterment either in a practical or intellectual sense. Of course sewing is usually out of the question, though I have known the bag of knitting to gladden a three hours' wait in the country station, but a book can always be carried, and it is wonderful how much reading the busiest woman can do by watching her opportunities. It is the "little drops of water" that make the mighty ocean, and no time should ever be too brief for employment. Of course for people who are mentally active, periods of vacancy are beneficial and even necessary, but for the woman whose life is filled with household work and care, the spare moments of thought and reading will prove refreshing as well as broadening."

Columbus Dispatch.

A unique document and one of the most interesting finds to women—the oldest love letter in the world—was recently discovered in Chalcidica. It was written on clay in the year 230 B. C. Although the Egyptians were noted for their love songs this is the first love letter of the Egyptians that has ever been found.

The lady to whom the letter was addressed lived at Sippara, the Biblical



PRETTY COAT OF ROUGH CLOTH.

Victor Hugo's Love Story.

I have been reading this week of one great poet who was unable to carry out the great deal of his life. The man was Victor Hugo, and his ideal was marriage with a royal princess—Princess Helena of Mecklenburg-Schwerin—who, in the year of Queen Victoria's coronation, was married to the Duke of Orleans.

The story is poetically pathetic. Hugo first met the Princess at a fête given by Louis Philippe in honor of her coming marriage. As soon as she heard who he was she went to him with hand outstretched and said: "I have been waiting for this moment, M. Hugo. You and M. Victor Cousin the great philosopher and Platonist who introduced Germany to France's notice) are the two Frenchmen I have longed to see. I know your verses by heart, and the first thing I did when I arrived in Paris was to visit your

Notre Dame."

Such a confession from so gracious a young princess was perhaps more than enough to turn a poet's head. I have often heard the late Paul Meurice tell the story, and when he told it Paul Meurice, Hugo's great friend and faithful biographer, always added: "They met in 1827, the princess and poet, and in 1838 Hugo produced 'Ruy Blas.'"

Big Eagle Comes to Town on Car. In a struggle with an eagle which flew from an empty box car in the yards of the Southern Railroad Jesse Wolfe's clothing was torn in several places. After he had unaimed the bird with a pistol shot he dispatched it with a blow in the head with a wagon spoke. Wolfe will have the bird, which measures a foot 8 inches from tip to tip of wings, stuffed. The bird is thought to have secreted itself in the box car while it was in eastern Kentucky and was unable to gain its freedom until the car was opened upon its arrival in this city.



SMART WAIST OF TAFFETA.

Sepharvanta, where it was found, while the writer resided at Babylon. Although it is more than 2,000 years old and written under such difficulties the tone of the letter is not very different from what might be written by a twentieth century lover to the lady of his adoration. It reads: "To the lady Kasubya (little ewe) says Ginnil Marduk (the favorite of Merodach) this: May the sun god of Marduk afford an eternal life. I write that I may know how your health is. Oh, send me a message about it. I live in Babylon and have not seen you, and for this reason I am very anxious. Send me a message that you will come to me, so that I may be happy. Come in Marchesvan. May you live long for my sake. It is likely that he desired her to go to Babylon at that time that she might have with him the gayeties and festivities held in that month."

Ball of the Dressmakers.

London World. A somewhat curious ball marks the outset of the Paris season. This is known as the "Ball de la Couturiere." Tickets are taken by all the women who go to the Rue de la Paix for their dresses, via with each other in exhibiting all the novelties in the shape of ballroom dresses. The dresses are worn by "mannequins"—girls with shapely figures and handsome faces, who do the come to look on.

THE LADY'S "YES."

"Yes" I answered you last night; "No," this morning, sir, I say. Consider now the vein soft and supple and the bather beautiful. Will not look the same by day."

What the vixen played their best. Lamps above, and lamps below, Love me sounded like a jest. Fit for yes or fit for no. Call me false or call me true. Now, whatever light may shine, No man on your face shall see. Any sinner for change on mine.

Yet the sin is on us both; Time to dance is not to woo; Woeful light makes dark the truth, Scorn of the world on you.

Learn to win a lady's faith, Nobly as the thing is high, Bravely as for life and death, With a loyal gravity.

Lead her from the festive board, Point her to the stately stairs, Guard her by your trusted words, Fure from courtship's flatteries.

By your truth she shall be true, Ever true as wives of yore; And her eyes, once said to you, Shall be true forevermore.

—Elizabeth Barrett Browning.



BURNING EVENING GOWN.