



What Well Dressed Women Will Wear



BY *Anna Rittenhouse*

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THE MONEY AS SPENT BY UNCLE SAM'S BOYS IN PARIS

It is an earnest to the French people of great resources which are coming to the aid of France in her heroic struggle

Seldom does the perusal of the war news in the morning paper bring satisfaction to American readers, these days. The peace parleys of the Bolsheviks, the grave situation in Italy, added to the steadily chronicled submarine sinkings and the stories of delays and incompetencies at home, are enough to cause our breakfast war-rolls and our unsweetened coffee to sicken in our throats.

Yet among all the accumulated glooms, there are little nuggets of cheer, though some of them are so deeply imbedded in the clay of disaster that it is hard indeed to find them. One of these is the undoubted improvement of what might be called the general atmosphere of Paris. Every arrival from that city, every fashion letter, even the more serious chronicles speak of the intangible change which has made over the municipal conscience. Apparently, nothing is changed; yet in the restaurants and hotels the menus are more appetizing; the diners are gay; the theaters fuller and the pieces played there are more interesting and better mounted. At the opera, at the conference of fashionable lecturers, at the few concerts, at all the places where society gathers, the same story of better dressing, of increased interest in clothes and all that pertains to them, of the discreet reappearance of jewelry, is told by so many witnesses that we are forced by mere weight of numbers to believe them.

Paris itself wonders. But make inquiries as to the reason, and after more or less deliberation you will receive from all quarters the same answer. America is responsible. Not our home part of it; but the small representative body of the great potential possibilities of our country which has already impressed itself upon the consciousness of Paris so effectively as to give back to the people a faint reflection of their ante-bellum gaiety. Ever since the first Stetson hat was seen on the boulevards, the imagination of Paris has been stimulated by the picture of khaki-clad millions in similar head-gear, swarming to her rescue. She may have been disappointed by delays in realization, but her faith in us is unshakable. "We shall not be abandoned—we shall not have to endure to the point of utter exhaustion America is behind us. America with her millions of tall sons and her endless resources." The first contingents were welcomed for their own sakes, but also as an earnest of what was to come.

Welcome to the Soldiers

And Paris has given her newest allies a royal reception. Recently the cables bore the story of a superb gift to the allied officers of America, England, Italy and Belgium. Baron Henri de Rothschild has placed his palace—for it is nothing less—in the Faubourg Saint Honoré at their disposal as a club. Behind the high walls which shut it off from the curious, lie spacious grounds, utterly unsus-

GOWN WITH DRAPED SKIRT



It is of dark blue and gray embroidered in blue. The huge pockets at the side are also embroidered in the blue.

pected from the street, like these of so many of the older mansions of the French capital. The house itself is very large, wonderfully furnished and contains a great and famous library, a private theater and—best of all from the English and American point of view, a great swimming pool. All of these wonders are at the disposal of any officer of the allied nations who has been passed upon by the committee. General Pershing is one of the board of directors, and its president is the popular Admiral Fourrier.

Besides this splendid gift, many of the French clubs have opened their rooms to visiting American officers, after proper introductions. But there are many other Parisian institutions

where the khaki-clad Yankees are welcomed without any introductions at all. These include the salons of the great dressmakers. Returning Americans bring travelers' tales of unusual clients in the gray and mirrored reception rooms of the buildings which bear sartorially famous names over their doorways. The jewelers of the Rue de la Paix might confirm the tales were they so minded. It is whispered that many a Christmas box from "over there" contained feminine finery with famous names embroidered in the belts and stamped in gilt upon the boxes!

The American troops are paid on a scale that would turn a French war ministry white with horror. Besides, many of the brand new officers now wearing Uncle Sam's uniform are men with bank accounts which would be respected even in extravagant New York. Put any American with money in his pockets in Paris and his impulse is to spend it and keep on spending it. Wearing brown clothes and a flannel shirt isn't going to alter that instinct. It's too deep-seated.

The visiting American officer goes to the theater, of course, though unfortunately he is apt to be a little deaf in his French ear. But his eyes are keen enough; and by all accounts he gets his money's worth optically if not orally. Parisian plays are said to be better and to be more attractively costumed than they have been since 1914. There is no ban militaire on evening dresses, on the stage, at least, though the prohibition still extends to the audience. However, we are told that the Parisienne is feeling so much happier that she makes one thickness of tulle fulfill official requirements, and the demi-toilette grows more like formal evening dress every week.

Propriety would need be served with a film of tulle for sleeves and yoke in such a frock as the pink taffeta shown in the sketch. But if the Parisienne wore it she might well add a scarf, for these filmy trifles are said to be the rage; in brilliant hues, though light as the stuff that dreams are made of, they perhaps typify the inexplicable admiration that is so noticeable in Paris.

The demi-toilette, however, is nothing new to France. There has al-

ways been a certain popularity for this type of gown in Paris and worn with a hat, it is often seen at the theater or at restaurant or hotel dinners before the war.

In this, the French capital was a great contrast to the English one, in which only the fullest of evening dress, with a bare head, was considered the thing for such occasions. We have followed the French custom rather more than the English did in this. Many American women have had the feeling that a very décolleté gown is out of place in a public place, and even before the war it was customary to see them keep their evening cloaks pulled closely around their shoulders in such places. Of late years, bare shoulders have been more frequently seen, but this winter a searcher for pointers on evening dress would have had an unprofitable time of it in most places in New York. Never have evening frocks been less evident in public, and evening coats more so. This feeling has led to a revival of the so-called "restaurant" hat, a thing of lightness and grace, of which the large example in satin with a lace brim, shown today might serve as a type. Often such hats are a mere suggestion of tulle, held apparently by magic in the shape of a crown and a brim.

Paris again Gay

Some of the recent first nights in Paris have been signalized by the wearing of exceedingly good clothes. This was particularly true of the premiere of *Jeanne d'Arc*, a work new to Paris, though not to London. The salle was very brilliant and was packed to the doors. The orchestra seats are said to have sold for fabulous sums and the boxes for small fortunes. The proceeds were turned over to the French Red Cross. "Half toilettes," which were only to be distinguished from the ante-bellum evening gowns by the afore-mentioned use of a film of tulle, were worn by all the women, and many of them appeared in interesting and unusual head-dresses. Paris seems to feel the necessity of headgear with a semi-evening frock; hence the introduction of all sorts of amusing arrangements. Oriental turbans, jeweled effects, elaborate bands of jet with danglers over the ears, all of these and many more were seen, and they were creations of the best dressmakers of France.

In the street, the Parisienne still champions the frock and coat, or the "coat dress." All winter, satin has been a favorite material for outdoor things, interlined, of course, for warmth, and simply slathered with fur.

Satin will continue in favor and there is mention of a revival of the "wool back" variety, which had some success a good many years ago. For spring, the combination of materials, which seems to please our own designers and manufacturers equally well, will be featured.

CONSERVATION FROCK OF GABARDINE



It is of pale pink taffeta, with the bodice embroidered with white silk. Old rose velvet ribbon over the shoulder and around the waist. The skirt is caught up at one side and the other side is veiled in white tulle.

LACE BRIM THAT VEILS THE EYES



The Crown of this hat is wrapped like an Indian turban, and lace brim is of unusual width

The blue gabardine frock illustrated is a suggestive one. It fulfills every requirement of the commercial economy board on the wool question, as there is only a scant skirt of the scarce material. A jumper bodice of tan and blue striped silk, worn over an organdy vest and belted into place, is offered as a sort of substitute for the sleeveless vest of knitted wool which was so popular last year.

There really ought to be few women with "the face" to knit in colored wools for their own adornment, in these days of crying demands from the army and navy. But the slip-on garment without sleeves has taken such a hold upon our affections that it is difficult to think of abolishing it altogether. Nor need we do so. American designers, anxious to serve their soldiers and sailors in this vital matter, have had the cleverness to offer the same type of garment in materials of which there is, at present, no such pressing need.

Vests of flannel, of heavy shantung and other rough weaves of silk, even of satin, made almost exactly like the sweater vest of last summer, have been made up and are being offered to women whose patriotic intention might weaken if these novelties were any less attractive than they are. Jersey, both in wool and silk, is another favorite material for them.

Jersey Weaves Taken up

In fact, Jersey weaves have not in the least diminished in popularity. The first wool Jersey woven in this country was rather too reminiscent of Uncle Josh's red underwear to have a success with fastidious women. But the weave has been greatly improved.

As for the silk varieties, there is a heavy sort of vegetable fiber, which is immensely satisfactory. It is heavy and lustrous and not too stretchable. It hangs in the rich, long folds that cling to the figure and lends itself particularly well to strictly one-piece frocks of coats which hang from the shoulder in an Oriental effect, like the frock of dark blue and gray Jersey shown in the sketch. Such material is never lined, but it is worn over a lining of some sort made especially for it.

Paris is using this heavy kind for outdoor coats, some of them of the slip-on over the head, which have failed to achieve success with us, but which she still fancies. Our hotels, restaurants and houses are still, in spite of threatened coal famine, so well heated for the most part that we have retained our habit of slipping off our outdoor garment at the slightest provocation. The idea of wriggling out of a coat made all in one piece or pulling it over our heads like a sailor boy taking off his blouse, does not appeal to us; neither does the French woman's way of getting it on again, which is simply to make a circle of the garment on the floor and step into the middle of it, pulling it up around her. Here is another reason for the retention of the small hat. Such a feat would be impossible in a big one.

Most of the milliners say small hats

for spring, for the beginning of things, hairdressing is doomed to remain very much as at present. And no one has either time or inclination to indulge in the making of elaborate puffs and curls in these times of strenuous endeavor, war work and 24-hour waking days.

FROCK FOR YOUNG GIRL



It is of blue gabardine, and the jumper bodice which is worn over an organdy vest and belted into place, is of tan and blue striped silk.

NEW HAT FOR THE SPRING



It is of dark red silk with a large flower worked out in twisted in the