

# AS SEEN THROUGH WOMAN'S EYES

## "Crimes of the Corset."

In the four hundred years that have elapsed since Catherine de Medicis introduced corsets into France, criticism of the article and of the women wearing it has not been lacking. Indeed, it was not long after the death of Catherine when a celebrated French savant gave a lecture in his dissecting room at the Hotel Dieu to demonstrate the "crimes" of which the corset was guilty. These lectures raised much discussion at the time, and they, perhaps, and not coquetry and the feminine love of change, were responsible for the loose, floating lines of the Watteau pleat, or, a century afterward, for the costumes of the Directoire.

Now another celebrated French doctor has returned to the charge, and, not content with lecturing and demonstrating the evils of corsets,

has gone so far as to form a bill which it is his intention to present to the Chamber, and which, in the case of its becoming law, would most effectually put a stop to what this doctor terms "the crimes of womanhood."

Dr. Marechal is a physician whose reputation would not lead one to accuse him of mere sensationalism, yet the charges that he brings against corsets in his recent lecture are perhaps more stringent than those ever uttered before by any member of the anti-corset brigade. Dr. Marechal makes the astonishing assertion, and pretends to back it up by statistics, that out of a hundred young women who wear corsets only thirty retain perfect health.

The law that Dr. Marechal is endeavouring to have passed is divided into three articles. Article 1 forbids any women under thirty to wear a

corset of any description. Any woman convicted of doing so shall be punished by three months of imprisonment, if the delinquent should be a minor, her parents or guardians as well shall be condemned to pay a fine of from 100 to 1000 francs.

Article 2 permits any woman over thirty to wear any corsets she wishes.

Article 3 provides for the most rigorous formalities surrounding the manufacturing and sale of corsets. Every one licensed to sell corsets shall be obliged to take the name, address and age of every buyer, and shall be subject to fine and confiscation of business in case of an illegal sale.

Although Dr. Marechal asks that legislation shall only take cognizance of the evils of corsets at present, he is by no means to stop there in his desire for dress reform. He has a good deal to say on the subject of

high heels and pointed toes, of tight gloves and long skirts. In short, he claims that women's dress has caused a frightful physical deterioration in the human species. While the cranium of the Merovingian woman had a capacity of 1383 cubic centimetres, that of the modern French woman has a capacity of only 1337 cubic centimetres, and this loss, the doctor declares, is due to the habit of wearing heavy head-dresses.

As to whether or no a modern French head weighing only 1337 cubic centimetres is worth more than a Merovingian cranium weighing somewhat more is a subject on which the learned doctor does not care to enter. He is convinced that corsets, hats, veils and various other items of the feminine wardrobe are bad, and has come to the conclusion that if women will not be persuaded to discard them they should be forced to do so.



Smart Cloaks.