

# The World of Fashion.

By MARGUERITE.

**T**HE tendency of the new fashions is toward the Directoire influence, and it seems possible at this moment that it will end in a complete resurrection of that period in winter fashions. Before they have really been out of fashion, the shortened waistline is back again, for the fashions of to-day seem to incline to what is becoming graceful and best adapted to woman's form. Nothing is exaggerated and changed merely to alter the line of clothes, and for this reason we are again back to the shortened waistline, although many of the designers, Poirer, Cherult, and Paquin, have never discarded it entirely.

This, too, is the fourth season for the plain-fitting sleeve and smooth shoulder line. The plain shoulder line is more noticeable than ever before, and with the shorter coats and narrower skirts make the distinctly new points in the winter fashions.



PICTURE GOWN FOR EVENING WEAR.

In spite of the many exasperations which the Directoire lines may lead to, for every distinct fashion brings with it a trail of exaggerations from some of the less important designers who hope by this method to reach the pinnacle of fame, the Directoire fashions possess many charms, and now that we are accustomed to narrow short skirts, bare lower arms and open, low necks, it is only a step further to the open tunic slit at the side, to disclose the soft draperies of the underskirt. The polonaise and overskirt is just as strongly in favour as it was when first adopted, but it gives more the suggestion of drapery than heretofore, by which I mean it has lost its regular outline. It begins with a short end at the side front or toward the back and drapes the figure, gradually lengthening as it envelops the form. Again, the reconstructed tunic starts at the side front in a short apron and extends around the side of the back panel, leaving the opposite side absolutely undraped.

It is not only in the matter of overskirts and tunics that femininity in Paris is draped and swathed, but likewise in soft scarfs of silk, satin, and chiffon, some of the younger, more slender and graceful ones skilfully drapes themselves not only around the shoulders, but the scarfs are arranged to encircle the lower portion of the body. And surely there is no other nation whose women can excel in grace the Parisian woman in the wearing of all types of clothes and feminine accessories. They are perfectly at ease in floating scarfs, enormous hats and hanging veils, and adapt themselves like the native Japanese to the short steps required in the wearing of skirts no wider than a yard and a-half at the lower edge. There is no doubt but that the present fashions are designed to reveal the silhouette of the figure, and yet not in the ungraceful manner of the tight sheath skirts of a couple of seasons ago.

Skirts are narrow to the point of actual discomfort and embarrassment in walking, but they are hung from the waist in soft, vague fullness and a suggestion of width is often given by loose bands, stitched on one edge, overskirt draperies or a loose hanging panel sash.

The long shoulder line is given by the arrangement of the trimming material or the cut of the dress, but nearly every gown is seamless at the natural shoulder line. It is impossible to see the end of this vogue, for the kimono outline is used not only in blouses, but suits as well, and it has been the inspiration of the loveliest wraps for afternoon and evening wear.

It is certainly a most fortunate fashion for the home dressmaker, as it facilitates the making of waists, for everyone knows the extreme difficulty of properly fitting shoulders or setting a sleeve in at the right line to best bring out the contour of the shoulder.

It means the elimination of the problem of wrinkles from the neck to the underarm across the shoulder and in back as well. This simple and practical design is suited to the slim woman as well as to the stout form, as it only means a rearrangement of the pattern. While a slim figure can wear the plain patterns perfectly well, a woman with more form would require a plait or slight fullness at the end of the shoulder.

## FASHIONLAND.

LONDON, February 3.

Sales, thankful to relate, are at an end in nearly all the largest shops in London, and dowdiness has given place to fresh and delightful displays of spring goods.

There is no season like spring in the shops, as in the weather, and in individuals, and perhaps only in a place with a winter like London's does one note the pleasant upheaval that the "morning of the year" creates. Dark gowns, heavy looking and heavy-coloured millinery, stout boots and gaiters, furs, and cold weather comforts in general, must have their moral effect of depression, one would think, since, with even the sight of spring dainties, the feminine spirit rises to a brave atmosphere of buoyancy though the eyes that appreciate may not be accompanied by the purse that will buy!

Think, for instance, dear feminine reader, of a great window made to look a very fairyland of beauty—to our eyes!—in order to display lingerie of all descriptions, and I defy you not to feel that you own the lot.

It is a French shop—would that I had not to confess that!—and the floor is a billowy mass of amethyst silk on which, with their bows of palest pink and blue and mauve, and garnished with great bunches of Parma violets, lie vanities galore, trimmed with lace fine as cobwebs, and wonderful hand embroideries. It is surely the Spirit of Spring, and though one nightdress may represent the price of a serviceable gown to many of us, we cannot but appreciate the beauty of the unattainable as we would a painting or anything perfect in its kingdom.

Fashion now has a decided trend, after some months of indecision, and, as a good many of the changes predicted are only old favourites revived and can be easily copied at home, it is well to pay attention to them.

## BLOUSE FRILLS

are again shown on the spring models and very pretty and dainty these look in soft silk, muslin, or cambrie. Nearly all, it is to be noted, are gathered, and many are edged with very narrow real lace edge.



TWO AUTUMN COSTUMES FOR SCHOOLGIRLS.

The costume on the right is of mulberry tweed with light braid embroidery; that on the left is designed in plum-coloured faced cloth adorned with soutache.



## The Corsets the New Styles Need.

The Gowns for winter are so ideally graceful that the figure must be exquisitely proportioned in order to set them off. This throws the entire burden upon the Corset. A study of the subject reveals the fact that

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