

These Frocks Give Chic as Their Password to the Summer Wardrobe



In the midst of one season we contemplate changes for another. Only last week we heard with a breath of relief the grave pronouncement that mid-summer styles were settled. This week there are hints of autumn modes — just a word, but enough to disturb one's peace of mind and make one wonder if the new things bought now will be of service a few months hence.

One can feel perfectly safe in buying a silk frock, for if the voluminous styles of the present carry over it will be necessary to use silk materials to develop them. Another reason—taffetas, twilled and ribbed silks, Dresden effects, etc., are being produced in such great quantities that the manufacturers are sure of their popularity or there would be a change to other fabrics.

It is a long way from silks to gingham, but mention must be made of the latter because some of the dai-

rest frocks of mid-summer are carried out in gingham. A plain blue frock which gives many hostages to fashion and yet no whit concedes its practicality, is trimmed with checked liner. The check is very bold indeed and strikes a sharp note of contrast with the gingham, which is of that fine, satiny quality known as Scotch. There is a straight gathered skirt finished with a deep band of the checked trimming, and the lower front of the waist extends below the skirt to rest on the skirt. A vest of organdy, trimmed with black buttons, is surmounted by a high collar that closes at the front, while two pointed flaps finish the upper edge. One can imagine the controvertible qualities of this arrangement, for if the collar is unbuttoned the vest will then have two tiny revers and a lay-down collar. Bands of checked lining are stitched about the outer neckline, which is cut in round effect and on the edge of the elbow sleeves.

Checks have enlarged considerably during the past few weeks, but they have been compelled to do so to keep space with stripes, which have widened. For those who want them there are amazing checks, block effects two inches, even three inches square.

For morning wear there are detectable frocks in linen, cotton voile, marquisette, figured lawn, challis and dimity. Percale, as humble as it may sound, is also found made up in frocks that are as smart as they are inexpensive. The home dress-maker has much to be thankful for the straight gathered skirt, for there is nothing easier of accomplishment. The fullness at the top is disposed of in plaits, sometimes, instead of gathers, while the widest latitude is allowed in finishing the skirt. Sectional ruffles are not hard to manage unless one wishes to ring in some of the variations produced by shirring, cable cording, corded tucks, etc. But the woman who is careful usually sees her way clear to manage such details before attempting to carry them out.

Among the ultra-fashionable trimmings velvets play an important part being used on everything from slippers to parasols. And since furs have been worn so much this summer velvet does not seem out of place. Some of the loveliest of the picture hats made of taffeta and trimmed with flowered ribbons have the brims faced with velvet. As far as the idea per se is concerned velvet hats are distinctly not new, but the latest models exploit many charming novelties. As for velvet trimmed summer frocks they are legion. Narrow velvet bands are used on anything from tulle to silk, and there is nothing daintier than the petal flounces bound with narrow ribbon velvet; also some exceedingly pretty things are achieved in white chiffon cloth made up with extreme simplicity and trimmed only in these black velvet bands. Even where no great amount of the velvet appears

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little touches are often introduced at throat and wrists or on vests of frocks in the form of bows or lacings. The extremely short skirt is very trying to many figures, and few of the frocks made for the American wearers as short as the average French frock of the same type. One sees here, also, rather more than among French models the underskirt effect with the much wider and more flaring overskirt, and some of the very prettiest summer frocks are of this order. The underskirt may show all around or only on the sides, but its suggestion of narrowness about the ankles is sometimes vastly more becoming than the unmitigated flare of the ultra-wide skirt.

Plain taffeta petticoats are made gay, by ruffles of flowered taffeta. Plaid taffeta petticoats have pinked ruchings of the plaid silk for trimmings. Petticoats of plain taffeta in light color are trimmed with wide inset bands of cream net on which narrow Valenciennes lace frills are applied in scalloped lines.

The soft, lightweight satins and crepes are used as petticoat materials, too, as are the chiffons and laces, but none of these is capable of flaring in ultra-modish fashion with assistance.

Lucky assistance is at hand in the shape of narrow white crinoline bands to be run through hems or folds, fine supple reeds to be shirred into the skirt fullness, even amusing hoop skirts, which, while not so ample as those of civil war days, are quite substantial.

The irregular bottom line does give first aid in some cases of wide skirt injury, and great ingenuity is shown in the handling of this line—scallops, points, wall of Troy battlements all have their innings, and the very full ruffle at the skirt bottom gives, of course, an effect of irregular edge.

Some very new imported muslin frocks, for which one must once more call the word quaint into service, are made of dotted-swiss in the smallest and most thickly crowded of dot designs—a sort of swiss quite out of use during recent years, though to our mothers and grandmothers it will look very familiar.

The question of the collar is more vital than the average woman realizes, and the unbecoming collar is a thing to be avoided, no matter how new or modish it may be. Many of the new collars thicken the neck line or conceal the shoulder line in a fashion extremely trying to the woman of short neck or high shoulders or too full figure.

Stripes are having what the French would call a success "fort." With the late season there seems to have come a taste for the broader stripes, wider spacing, but the narrower stripes are modish too. Exquisite colorings are obtained in some of the changeable taffetas. A broad stripe of changeable orchid and light blue, for example, may alternate with a stripe the same width in orchid and pink or a broad stripe of biscuit and old blue changeable may alternate with a stripe of plain biscuit.

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