

WOMAN'S VARIED INTERESTS



THE dressing of her little boy is a matter entirely within the province of the mother. She determines what he shall wear from the day of his birth until he reaches the age of ten, at least; and in the great majority of cases it is she who selects his apparel and she alone who is responsible for the result.

But does she regard this everyday incident to motherhood at all in the light of a responsibility to the child? Or is his clothing to her a mere necessity, to be given special thought only upon "dress" occasions, and then with the object of showing him off to advantage according to her ideas of good taste, or fashion, mainly for the gratification of her own personal vanity?

Mothers Appreciate Mental Influence of Clothes.

In these eugenic days few are the mothers, of any reading or education whatever, who do not appreciate, to some extent at least, the susceptibility of the child mind to early influences. Yet how many have thought of carrying this early influence into practice in connection with directing an education in dress along such lines of good taste and good form as will remain with their boys through life?

Correct and Smart Styles for Young Boys.

During his infantile days the question for that mother who will put aside such individual ideas as she may feel inclined to experiment with is a comparatively simple one, for, quite aside from any individuality of style or type her little boy may possess, the smart fashions of his dress are much more narrowly defined than are those which govern maturity.

She may, perhaps, have the idea that in running counter to them she expresses greater personality, but while in small details of color, trimming or material there is always a certain degree of latitude in their main forms they are very definitely established, not only by convention, but by the precedent of fashion.

Russian Blouses for the Child of Four.

For the little fellow, just over the line of babyhood, come the Russian blouse suits, of which two models are shown by the accompanying illustrations—the first a simple style of white linen, with turned-back cuffs and a collarless neck, finished with a white embroidered, scalloped edge; the second a slightly more elaborate effect of white linen, although the touch of extra finish is given merely by the square cut at the neck, the shorter and narrower cuff sleeves and the feather stitching of brown.

In the same category come the Dickens suits, of which a pretty Oliver Twist model, of rose-colored linen, with broad, white collar and large pearl buttons, is illustrated, and following these—that is, for the boy of same age and on for several years more—come the sailor suits, of which is here shown a model of white cotton, with small sailor collar of navy blue, cuffs striped with white braid, and black silk tie.

Of these models there is infinite variety in color and in detail of trimming, but while they do not make up all there is in the way of suits for the little fellow, when one comes to look for decided variation it is somewhat surprising how little one finds.

Do Not Depart Radically from Accepted Styles.

Even in attempting radical departure from the set fashions one is apt

HOW TO DRESS HER BOY IS MATTER OF CONCERN TO THE MOTHER

She It Is Who Determines What He Shall Wear from the Day of His Birth Until He Is Ten Years Old, at Least—She May Experiment with Individually Designed Clothes When Her Son Is Little, but for the Older Boy Precedent Defines What His Wardrobe Shall Contain.

to stray from the narrow path of good style. The Haunteroy and Buster Brown suits of past popularity, for example, cannot be included in the present day manual of smartness, and were one to combine the Russian blouse with little trousers of the Dickens suit type one would but mar the correctness of the forms. Indeed, so closely are certain rules of precedent adhered to that while the collar of the middie blouse is often colored the tie should be black, and—were one to insist on strictly correct form—the tie should be tied in sailor knot, instead of in bow style.

But to consider the subject more broadly than by the mere enumeration of examples, even in the dressing of children of tender years the importance of avoiding the vulgar and directing ideas of dress along lines of refinement and intrinsic good taste should be emphasized. There is no trite saying more true in this

connection than that "as the twig is bent, so is the tree inclined."

Dress from the Tenth to the Sixteenth Year.

From his tenth to his sixteenth year is, however, the period when the boy should have most careful direction in the elements of good dress, and be taught the importance of proper regard for the selection and care of his clothes.

It is then that, having had the unconscious teaching by example of his earlier years, his taste should be moulded; that he should be taught to distinguish between the exclusive and the vulgar in design and color, and—more than all—that he should be made to form habits of neatness and absolute cleanliness. In brief, it is the time when a boy should learn what to wear, when and how to wear it, and how to take care of it.

In such an idea there is nothing that need savor in the least of priggishness. Nor is it by any means

intended to encourage a taste for extravagance or ostentation. Indeed, quite the opposite, because a thorough knowledge of good style precludes the least suspicion of snobbery or overdisplay.

Good Style Is Not "Miss Nancyess."

The idea is not, of course, to foster in the natural, healthy boy a "Miss Nancyess" that will keep him from rolling around in the mud of a wet football field, or, to use a baseball expression, trying to steal bases standing up, but to impress upon him the desirability of not doing these things in his white flannel suits and, after his games, of getting under a shower bath, brushing his hair and attending to his finger nails before he again appears in "polite" society.

More than this, he should be taught that there is much benefit to be derived from a regular morning tub, and that to be scrupulously neat and well groomed is a duty he owes

to himself, his family and his friends.

Boy's dress after the tenth year may be described as man's dress, with certain modifications and exceptions as to form, cut, finish and materials. Sack suits of single and double breasted design, Norfolk suits, etc., in their main characteristics follow the styles intended for more mature years, but there should be none of the exaggeration and extreme in cut or finish for the boy under seventeen, and while the fabrics, which include all the standard cloths, such as blue serges, gray and mixed worsteds, chevots, tweeds, homespuns, etc., unfinished worsteds in stripes and plaids and white and fancy flannels, are practically the same as for men, they should be somewhat less pronounced in shade and pattern.

Less Attention to Style for Boy of Fourteen.

It may be that less care need be

given to the styles for younger boys than to those for boys of fourteen or more, but "style" is "style," whatever the age, and just as soon as they begin to follow the general fashions for men in clothes and haberdashery, the more correct those fashions are, the smarter they will look.

For school and all-round, everyday wear, single and double breasted sack and Norfolk suits are the recognized styles, and of these the illustrations on this page furnish examples of good cut and finish—the single-breasted of dark gray worsted, with three buttons and simple inset breast and side pockets; the double of light gray worsted, with two buttons and large button-finished patch pockets, and the Norfolk of heavy white linen, with yoke, box side and back pleats, large patch side pockets and white pearl buttons on coat and belt. With all are worn full bagging knickerbockers, which are not only more correct, but better style than

tight knee trousers, and in general fashion of soft collared shirts, simple four-in-hand ties, etc., there is an observance of prevailing mode.

Outing Attire of Tweeds.

In the way of more distinct outing dress, as for the man, the sack and Norfolk suits may be of the rougher English and Scotch tweeds and homespuns, the knickerbockers may be made with box-cloth extensions, and mixed worsted stockings or even puttees may be worn with laced tan boots. Or again, more especially for the seaside and less rough country places, suits of white or striped flannel, serge or Palm Beach cloth are a good selection.

When the boy reaches the age of long trousers these should be cut and made exactly as are those for men, and may match the suit, or be of white or striped flannel, duck, etc., and worn with dark blue coats, silk or lisle stockings and low tan or white shoes.

The Eton Costume Is Modified in America.

From seven or eight up to fourteen or fifteen—depending somewhat on the size of the boy—Eton suits, consisting of black unfinished worsted coats and waistcoats, striped worsted or cassimere long trousers, with broad white linen collars and black silk four-in-hand ties, are one of the most fashionable styles for dress or semi-formal wear. These, with the boy's dinner coat suit, make up about all that is necessary, with the exception of riding clothes, top coats, etc., up to the seventeenth year. In this country high hats are not worn with Eton suits, as in England, and the waist seam model overcoats are quite unsuitable for younger boys.

Under the age of fourteen or fifteen years distinct evening clothes are neither necessary nor correct, and this in spite of the fact that at many of the shops may be seen dinner coats, with short trousers, for boys of ten and less. For those of

fourteen or thereabouts dinner coats are permissible, and should be made on much the same lines as those for men, except that there should be nothing in the way of braided or jewelled loops in place of buttons, and that the general haberdashery should be quite simple.

Fall Evening Dress After Eighteen.

After seventeen or eighteen the young man may wear a full evening dress suit, although until the age of twenty-one the more extreme styles of evening dress, such as figured waistcoats, jewelled buttons, jewelled watch chains, etc., are not to be advised. One can hardly help feeling the jarring note of overdressed youth, and where there is inappropriateness in dress there is sure to be bad form.

Nor does the average boy under eighteen require what may be called formal afternoon clothes. From the age of sixteen on he may have a dark morning coat, or cutaway, but even this is a matter of question, because it should correctly have a high hat as an accompaniment and this few boys under eighteen can stand.

Accessory Styles for Older Boys.

As soon as the boy gets beyond the point where his dress is outside his mother's province of selection and instruction, his father should step in to exercise a little care—provided, of course, that he has himself any appreciation and knowledge of good style.

Few there are who will not admit that good dress is of great importance in the making of a man, or deny its influence upon the success of his business as well as of his social career. Yet how often do we see the "Oh, he's only a boy, anything will do for him" kind of attitude, with the resulting slipshod appearance that comes from regarding dress not as a thing requiring any thought of selection but as a matter of pure necessity.

In the matter of general accessories, just as soon as the boy begins to wear styles worn by men he should have them as correct. By this it is not meant that his shirts, collars, neckties, belts, stockings, gloves, etc., need necessarily be of the latest materials, or of the most smartly exclusive and expensive kind, but that they should be right in point of style, and of intrinsically pretty pattern and coloring.



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