SOME SPRING SUITS.

The Tailor Frocks and the Tubgowns

IN ROUGH GOODS AND IN LINEN.

The High Girdle a Distinctive Note of Fashion.

Attractions of the Shirt-Waist Costumes—Pretty Accessories of Dress—Artificial Flowers in New Uses—Vogue of the Plaited Frocks—Evening Gowns of Black—Lingerie Petticoats More and More Elaborate—Phases of the Linen Frocks—The Capes and Collars.

Snow and sleet have made winter in the outdoor world, but in shops and still more emphatically in dressmaking ateliers, spring runs riot, with summer in its wake. Even if one does not want to buy until later, it is hard to resist the temptations that lie in wait on every shop counter; and when tailors are offering slightly reduced rates for February work, and dress-

makers are urging patrons to put their spring orders in before the mad rush begins, and seamstresses are piling up engagements fifty deep, only a very phlegmatic or a very level-headed woman can remain calm.

On the whole it isn't the part of wisdom to remain too calm. If a woman expects to remain in town until July or August, or if she will be in a quiet place where she will not need summer finery before that time, she may serenely watch the feminine flurry going on around her, and wait for everything save her spring tailor frock.

Later in the season the ravishing summer fabrics which are luring women into extravagances now will be on sale at prices much more reasonable. There may not then be quite such a variety of choice, but there will be enough things of beauty to satisfy

even a fastidious taste. Summer modes will have been exhibited then and the most successful of the experiments may be copied; and, after June, dressmakers have a slight breathing spell and may give a trifle more personal attention to even unimposing orders.

But if the summer wardrobe is to be needed early, now is the time to be wrestling with its problems, and a majority of the women seem to appreciate that fact.

We have already sung the song of the

early spring street suit, which is the first essential of the spring outfit, but the song has an infinite number of variations, and every day sees new models in shirt-waist or three-piece costumes. Almost all the tailors have taken up the shirt-waist costume as coming within their province, and it must be admitted that the more severe forms of the shirt-waist costumes come out from the hands of the tailor more successfully than from the hands of the average dressmaker. Stitching and pressing play an important part in the making of these frocks, and the tailor is on his native heath, when it comes to such work.

On the other hand, there is an argument against the tailor in the price he charges for his work. This is no greater than that charged by the fashionable dressmaker, but it is quite possible to have an attractive shirt-waist frock made by a very or-

dinary dressmaker, if one will only plan it carefully and supervise the making.

If a shirt-waist costume of lightweight wool or silk is to stand as the spring suit of the woman of moderate means, let her go to a good tailor or fashionable dressmaker and have that one frock well cut, well made, all that there is of the most chic; but if a good tailor coat and skirt suit is to be in the wardrobe, then the shirt-waist suit or suits may better be trusted to some one who will not charge extravagantly for the making.

A wise idea adopted by many women this spring is the ordering of three pieces in a tailor suit—not the coat, skirt and separate blouse, but a skirt of lightweight material suitable for either shirt-waist or coat and skirt costume, and both a shirt waist and a coat to match this skirt. The cost is not so great as it would be for two complete costumes, and yet one has both a carefully tailored shirt-waist frock and a good coat and skirt.

Vesting or loose woven hop sacking, fine mohair, canvas or etamine—a host of lightweight wools are susceptible of this treatment. The new checked and plaid etamines and voiles are particularly charming for shirt-waist gowns, and, while the voile does not tailor very well for loose-fitting coats, it adapts itself beautifully to the loose coatees, boleros, &c.

Mohairs are more attractive than ever

and appear in a multitude of forms. One of the new ideas is a mohair in plain color with a little black silk dot sprinkled over the surface, and in the middle of each raised dot, a mere fleck of bright color. In a dark blue ground with the black dots flecked with nasturtium yellow, the material is especially desirable.

The practical rough-wear gowns of homespun, frieze, coarse mesh canvas, &c., are in a large majority of the new models, fashioned with the blouse Eton and varied by individuality in the trimming and in the cut of the sleeve or collar. Two of the sketches show such frocks built upon the simplest of lines and dependent for finish upon the braiding and strapping of the coat and the strapping of the skirt.

Skirt straps are more than ever important in this spring's tailor frocks and are used with infinite cleverness to promote the artful cling and flare demanded in the skirt of the moment. Seams, sorts, joinings, are hidden by the strapping without the suggested clumsiness of a many-pieced skirt.

The strap defining a yoke and front breadth cut in one is much seen, with vertical straps defining the seams or plaits of the skirt sides and backs. Both of the tailor models to which we have called attention in the illustrations have this idea developed in the skirts, and both are collarless.

A third street gown, less severe, has blouse fronts that may be closed or thrown back, and has also a deep cape collar. Both revers and collar are faced with white cloth and ornamented with tiny dull gold buttons, the corners of the cape being turned back and buttoned, as are the corners of the cuffs, to show the white lining.

Still further from rigid tailor simplicity, though still far from elaborate, is the frock of soft wool canvas in the shade which Parisians call blotting paper pink. Its full skirt has a hip yoke of tucks running to a point in front, and the draped shawl collar is edged by a number of fine tucks. The full loose bolero falls over a high girdle of black Liberty satin and a lace blouse, and is held together in front by a soft cravat of black satin, run through large crochetted rings of black silk.

These big crocheted rings appear frequently upon the wool frocks, and, in cotton or linen, are used on the tailor-cut gowns to confine soft scarfs of silk or mull.

The high girdle, too, is a distinctive note in the new modes and augurs some slight changes in the fashionable silhouette. Its use will, not in any way affect the straight front of the popular corsets, but since it pushes the blouse fulness upward, and to some extent defines the lower curve of the bust, the deep girdle will doubtless, if it continues its triumphant career, lengthen the corset above the waist, and raise the bust slightly.

These girdles need careful fitting and featherboning and, though folded or fulled, must lie smoothly and mould themselves to the curves of the figure. With them has come the long-curved buckle reaching the whole depth of the girdle in front or back and curved slightly to the figure. Wonderfully beautiful *art nouveau* designs are shown in these buckles, and brilliants, corals, pearls and all the semi-precious stones are pressed into service in their making.

The buckle is not, however, an essential

accompaniment of the high girdle. Stiff rosettes of silk with large brilliant buttons in their centres often finish the girdle where it fastens. Small, square bows of velvet or silk, without ends, held by tiny buckles from which dangle pendants matching the buckles, fill the same rôle as the rosettes.

On evening frocks a shower cluster or spray of artificial flowers may be used; and often, the last fold of the soft silk or satin forming the girdle is left loose until the frock is on, and then drawn around snugly and fastened under sash ends at the back, so that the fastening of the girdle is nowhere in evidence.

High jeweled belts give much the same effect as the girdles and are a part of the tendency toward jeweled dress accessories, buttons, buckles, pendent ornaments, clasps, etc. Exquisite enamels are much favored also for the *art nouveau* ornaments; and, by the way, the fuchsia is the flower of the day.

Its drooping lines harmonize perfectly with the 1830 droop of the fashionable figure, and designers have been quick to grasp the fact that this long-discredited flower expresses exactly the spirit of the season's modes. So fuchsias are blossoming everywhere and in all materials—in jewelry, on hats, fashioned of chiffon, silk or velvet and appliqued on gowns, tucked in drooping clusters among the fluffy mousseline or lace of fichus or flounces.

And while artificial flowers are under discussion one should make a note of the flower chain, which is a new fad. Festoons, fringes, garlands of tiny flowers have decorated evening gowns, but the flower chain is a reproduction of the long chains in jewels or beads, to which women have clung so devotedly, and is worn in the same manner, but it is made of tiny bouton roses, violets or other small round blossoms, threaded closely upon gold or silver thread.

Parisian women in choosing their Riviera outfits have shown a surprising liking

for dull black—not black relieved by paillettes, jet, etc., but the uncompromising, lustreless black of chiffon. This, though effective when its billowing gloom sets off some blonde beauty, is desperately unbecoming to the woman whose complexion leaves much to be desired. She must rely upon paillettes to lighten the black gown, or must have becoming color or creamy lace about the throat and shoulders of the black frock which is so practical an item in a wardrobe.

Black crêpe de chine, especially in the gleaming satin finish, has found much favor for the inevitable black frock, and French dressmakers are turning out many chic little costumes in this material, accordion plaited in skirt and bodice. Two such frocks are among the illustrations, and both have the virtues of inexpensiveness and style, although the cost may be run up to a goodly sum if the lace details are chosen in rare old lace.

The one model with the surplice collar of heavy cream lace and the mitton sleeves of lace under the flowing plaited sleeves is a distinct success. If a hint of color is desired, the lace collar may be lined with

Liberty satin and the girdle may repeat the color of this lining.

Although the plaited frocks are not new, they persistently retain their vogue and will certainly be worn throughout the summer. This should be a cheering prophecy to the woman whose income is small, for sun plaiting or accordion plaiting gives more *cachet* at less expense and trouble than any other device for the combining of simplicity and charm in costuming.

For the woman who wants a black dinner frock because of its durability, yet who cannot wear black near her face, there is an excellent suggestion in another of the sketches. The original model was of palest green silk voile, with a deep berthe-like collar of cream net inset with heavy lace motifs in deeper cream, but the design could be successfully developed in black silk net.

The skirt has a yoke made of the flat-shaped folds that suggest deep tucks. Below that the skirt is fulled and is finished around the bottom with five of the deep folds or "nun's plaits."

The full round blouse has flowing transparent sleeves of the black net, and the deep collar would be formed of a chiffon velvet in luscious peach pink with inset cream lace of heavy mesh outlining the edge irregularly. The frock should be made over black liberty satin and the broad girdle and little square bows joining the two sides of the collar in front should be of the soft black satin.

Too much stress cannot be laid upon the necessary softness of the season's dress linings. She who rustles is lost, sartorially speaking. The new soft taffetas and Louisines meet the demand and in some instances colored pongees or India silks are used for lining.

Right here the pongee petticoat should have its need of praise. Now that the quality of pongees has been improved and the range of colors extended, exceedingly pretty petticoats are made of the material, with all the flounces and furbelows attendant upon the up-to-date petticoat.

The silk has no rustle, can be made, by the use of many flounces, to flare satisfactorily at the bottom, and will outwear ten taffeta petticoats.

It is late in the season to mention another type of petticoat, but cold-blooded sisters may make a note of it against another cold season. This is a snugly fitted under petticoat of ventilated chamois skin, covered with silk, and is one of the provisions against cold which the automobile fad has called forth.

Lingerie petticoats grow more and more elaborate and beautiful and have almost routed silk petticoats for all save very rough wear. One of the latest fancies is for the lingerie petticoat whose flounces have scalloped edges embroidered in buttonhole stitch.

Possibly little sprigs are embroidered above the scallops, but there is no other trimming. These skirts may be laundered easily and well and have a severe air suitable even under the tailor-made street frock, while with the linen and cotton shirt waist suits they are eminently the right thing.

And, apropos of the linen frock which is to be so important a feature of the season's fashions, the large cut pictures a group of these tub gowns. The severe shirt waist gown in linen we will leave for another time, but many of the new linen frocks show a degree of elaboration that lifts them out of the simple wash gown class.

The five sketched here belong to the great middle class of linen frockdom. They are slightly trimmed, yet not too elaborate to stand careful laundering or to be serviceable for ordinary wear.

Materials for such frocks are fairly bewildering in their variety and beauty. The plain, smooth linen in exquisite shades of blue, green, rose and biscuit and in white is a great favorite, but side by side with it are the knicker, or knotted rough linens; the heavy loose woven linen canvas and hop sacking, linen striped, figured, checked dotted, two-toned, diagonal twill in white and color, solid color linen checked with a raised cord in self color; all white linen with white stripes, dots and other designs—the list is practically endless. With the linens come the mercerized cottons—but they are another story.

One of the linen frocks in the illustration shows a popular shirt waist suit model, with the broad box plait on the front, both of blouse and skirt, tapering toward the waist line. On either side of the box plaits are stitched side plaits, and the only relief to the severity of the frock is in the heavy embroidery which ornaments the box plaits.

This embroidery may be in contrasting color, but linen embroidered in self color is considered more chic, and white embroidery on white is the prime favorite. A morning glory design is one of the designs most liked and most effective, and the morning glory appears also with great frequency on the blouses or whole costumes of fine handkerchief linen.

Another frock in which embroidery forms the trimming is of white, with bands, shoulder straps, &c., of black and white

embroidery, through which runs a touch of bright red linen ornaments, and pendants modelled upon the silk pendant ornaments of the winter season are used upon this frock and repeat the black, white and red scheme. These ornaments in a multitude of designs and in white combined with almost any of the colors found among linens and cottons, are among the novelties and add an effective note to the tub frocks.

Linen laces, too, are popular trimming and there is a larger and handsomer assortment of wash laces than ever before. One of the sketches shows an effective use of white linen lace on a gown of almond green linen. Broad bands of the heavy lace trim the skirt and edge the sides of the surplice frock; and upon this lace band are stitched narrow straps of the green linen, between which the lace shows in inch-wide lines.

A biscuit linen is also trimmed in heavy filet which runs vertically along broad box plaits in the front of skirt and blouse, and forms narrower lines between small box plaits around the rest of the skirt and the blouse. Then there is the blue porcelain linen frock, whose one ornament is the linen cape with long stole ends.

These linen cape stoles, like the lace stoles, may be found ready made in the shops, and, inset with lace and beautified with embroidery, furnish a trimming striking enough to redeem any plain linen frock from commonplaceness. Such a trimming is not inexpensive, but it is practical, launders perfectly, and may be used on more than one frock. A note of warning should, however, be sounded in regard to the capes, collars and stoles with which the shops are overflowing.

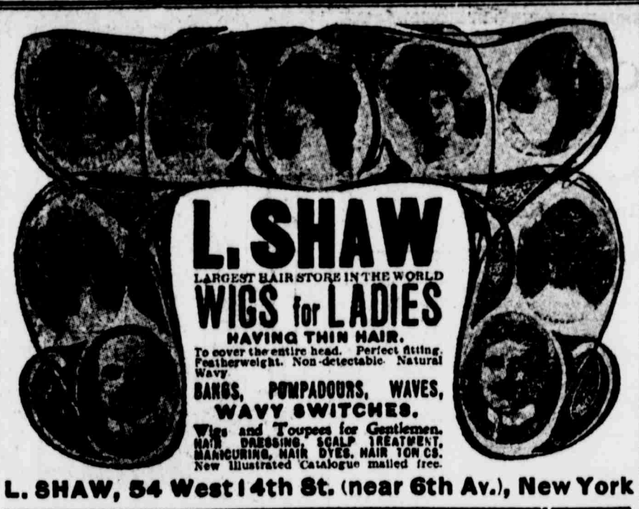
Their shapes are easily copied, and they are so striking a novelty that every woman will be likely to adopt some of them when planning her summer wardrobe. This foreordained popularity will make the ideas common, and only in their fine and expensive forms will these dress accessories retain their vogue among the fastidious.

The woman who can afford only a cheap, ready-made cape of lace, or of batiste or linen, lace trimmed, would better not buy any. The cheap ones will be an eyesore before the season is far advanced.

Though diaphanous materials are used for at least seven out of ten evening frocks, the Liberty satins are still popular for evening wear and are much more serviceable than the filmy creations of mousseline and chiffon. Mousseline laid over Liberty satin and the two accordion plaited together, is an idea gaining in popularity, and even the chiffon velour, which is velvet almost as fine and soft as the heavyweight chiffon, is included among the materials suitable for the plaited gown.

Two evening gowns worn by an actress famous for her toilettes are included among the sketches, and both are in Liberty satin. In one the pink satin skirt is trimmed with bands of heavy lace, over which runs one of the new vine appliques—a ribbon appliqué, consisting of vined ribbon stems and ribbon blossoms, which can be twisted into any curves and shape desired, because it is attached to no foundation. The lace blouse has a trimming of the same appliqué and the sleeve is notable even among the legion of picturesque sleeves.

The other evening gowns hint broadly at things to come, when we shall have gone over boldly to the Louis modes that are insidiously gaining a hold upon fashion's votaries. The corn color and pink color scheme itself is a Louis note and the sharp pointed bodice, the fichu, the full skirt, the festooned flounce and the rose garlands all shout "Louis." We shall see more of these ideas, but at present only the daring souls are venturesome enough to adopt them.



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