

SIMPLE FRENCH FASHIONS MAKE HEROIC ROMANCE OF TRADE

Imported Models Quiet in Tone and Cut, but They Represent Patriotism of Makers and Daring of American Buyers

A COLORLESS and dowdy little woman was seen critically regarding a very simple black and white frock, one of the collection of imported models shown at a large Broadway shop. She read the label of the maker and turned away with an expression of utter disillusionment stamped upon her face.

"Huh!" said she. "Jenny! Nothing to it."

But there was nevertheless a great deal to it. The quiet simplicity which marks the collections of Paris gowns sent over here this year is the keynote of just one more chapter, perhaps the conclusion, of the first volume of one of the modestly heroic romances of trade.

On the one hand there is the patriotic French dressmaker who in the face of certain financial loss and a heartbreaking lack of inspiration continued season after season to make collections for the foreign buyers in order to retain the prestige of Paris in the department of dress and to give employment to women who could get no other work to do. On the other hand we have the American buyer who gallantly risked the perils of the sea to encourage his brother in the great cause of trade. During the most perilous seasons of submarine warfare the importers went their adventurous way, to and fro, to see and to purchase from the Paris collections for display in this country.

Backs of Gowns Featured.

Rumor, which has whispered each season only to be contradicted eventually, that the frocks on exhibition constituted the last of the collections of Paris gowns to be sent to this country until the war was over, is this spring so loudly insistent on the same prediction that we can but look with a lingering, sentimental interest at the present showing. We can but regard each skillful touch, each flash, however small, of the old time ingenuity and daring, with the admiration which they deserve.

For one thing there is unusual cleverness shown in the designing of the backs of many of the imported frocks, and a graceful and attractive back is one of the most desirable attributes in either a gown or a woman. The black taffeta evening frock by Agnes seen by the central figure of the sketch is of extraordinary chic, with its simple front showing a square décolletage and a skirt crisply draped in Watteau fashion, which makes it narrow at the ankles but wide at the hips.

Pink Roses on Black.

At the back the bodice is crossed from one side to the other, leaving a shallow V shaped neck. The loose folds of the skirt drape, edged by a narrow box plaiting of taffeta, are looped and caught to back of the skirt with pink roses.

The only other mitigation of the blackness of the frock is supplied by a turquoise velvet ribbon, which is slipped about the skirt drape from the right hip to the left side at the back and is joined under another pink rose. The short sleeves are edged by two rows of the plaiting.

Of a softer charm is the pink taffeta frock by Jenny, but with an even more original and alluring back. The bodice falls very straight at the back and curves well below the short waist line of the front. At the edge of the bodice back a short loose puff begins in the nature of bustle drapery, and from there the gathered back of the skirt descends until it is at least three inches longer than the front.

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A pink taffeta frock by Jenny, a Doucet frock of cerise chiffon and jet, one by Agnes of black taffeta, one by Premet of foulard and satin and one by Paquin of embroidery and lace.

V shaped décolletage. They are allowed to fall to the knees on either side and are then turned up to be caught in the puff of the back drapery. A finishing touch of fascination is found in the pink tulle hood, which falls from the back of the neck, is tucked under the crossed folds and droops to the edge of the dress in front.

Mme. Jenny also shows a frock in which the fabric falls straight in the back from shoulder to hem, while the front of the skirt is pulled softly back and fastened in a huge bow. A navy blue crepe frock by Doucet has a straight long hanging back, which is cut in one with the long kimono sleeves. The front of the bodice is cut in a long blouse, girdled and brightly decorated with Chinese embroidery.

A navy blue taffeta frock is girdled

in front, the sides of the very long tunic extending part way over the shoulders at the back, where they fall unconfined over a straight underbody. The front of the bodice and the bottom of the skirt are embroidered in jet and the back panels of the tunic are edged with fringe, while a ribbon binds the neck and is tied in a bow and long ends to fall at the back.

An extremely smart and interesting dress by Doillet is in black silk jersey and boasts of uncompromising severity, straight, rather snug and with only a row of buttons from the nape of the neck to below the waist line. The sleeves and front of the bodice are of the black jersey, while the front of the skirt is of gold tissue veiled with black lace embroidered in gold.

has been lavished, and of this sort is the cerise chiffon, jet embroidered, which is shown in our sketch. The high Medici collar with its narrow but deeply opened décolletage and the soft black sash tied in a rather large Japanese bow directly in the centre of the front are the special characteristics of the frock.

This fashion of cutting the frock high at the back and low in the front of the neck is all but universal in the demi-toilette both abroad and here. The French woman seldom wears anything more formal than a frock of this type, and the custom of making the demi-toilette do double duty is being followed in this country and undoubtedly will continue to be more and more followed.

The French makers have evidently planned their faith firmly to the attractive and practical foulard frock. Martial Armand has sent a very good looking long loosely girdled blouse of navy blue foulard figured boldly in white. This is buttoned straight down one side and the skirt, of which not more than four inches shows, the collar and the sleeve bands are of fine but not sheer white linen.

The frock of beige and white foulard combined with black satin by Premet has a band of white orandy edging the neck and tunic.

A less formal but entirely lovely foulard of the merest glance at which on a hot day is warranted to make any one feel cool is in white closely spotted with dark blue. It has wing sleeves, the backs of which are of foulard and the fronts of white

Foulards Figure Largely Among the Materials Used and Short Sleeves Are Ever Present in Frocks of All Types

foulard with a square white spot which is rather more elaborate in its makeup than the average frock of these days with its tucks and insets of georgette and its lace waistcoat.

There are a few very simple white and black foulards. One with hangings of black satin is mounted on an underdress of tucked white organdy, while another is combined with hem-stitched white cotton voile. In fact this fancy for combining foulard with some cotton fabric is a distinctive feature of the French mode and a very attractive one if not practical. One of the Callot models which have just arrived is in black foulard with a light blue spot. It has trimmings of blue cloth edged with white lawn and narrow lace.

How popular the very short sleeve used by French designers for frocks of all types will become in this country is an interesting question. It is an engaging fashion in the abstract, but there are unpleasant possibilities in its application to individuals.

Perhaps French women can be counted upon to show pretty shows. At any rate there are short sleeved French gowns for all occasions, from the high necked rose colored satin evening gown by Doillet, which really has no sleeves at all, to the navy blue serge frock with a high necked white shantung waistcoat by Worth, which has sleeves that reach only half way between the shoulder and the elbow.

There are a number of gowns with kimono blouses in which the arm apparently emerges from a slit in the side, and curiously enough these short sleeves are usually unadorned. This constitutes a source of peril, for the hard straight line of the edge makes a still more uncompromising revelation of an ugly arm.

Two attractive sleeves have been designed by Lanvin. One short sleeve on a satin frock has three ribbons edged with crystal beads falling from the back of the arm loosely to be confined at the wrist in a bracelet of the same ribbon. The other sleeve, which is part of a long white lace tunic, is completely open on top from shoulder to hand, where it bags deeply, to be attached to the arm at wrist and forearm by bands of silver and crystal beads.

It is safe to predict that with even a moderate popularity for the very short sleeve bracelets of some kind will become an important accessory. They may be jeweled or they may be only ribbon bands, but they will surely be there.

There are innumerable flowing sleeves which reach either just below the elbow or become gracefully wide, long and voluminous in the Japanese manner. Sleeves of a less flowing variety are frequently slashed to show the bare arm or are split at the side to form wings.

The long close sleeve still holds its own and in the more loosely fitting long sleeves ingenious cuff arrangements are lavished.

SMALL HATS BROADEN FIELD FOR SUMMER PARASOLS

PARASOLS were once regarded as an agreeable and coquettish frivolity, an item of the feminine wardrobe like the fan, which pretended with charming hypocrisy to be one of the necessities of life, but whose principal usefulness was as an advance guard flung out in light skirmishing order in the campaign of the flirtations.

In these days of small hats, however, it is acknowledged that the parasol is as much of a necessity to a woman in summer as a muff is in winter. The muff is a thing of beauty, but at the same time it keeps her hands from getting cold and her knuckles from becoming red, while a parasol, without parting from any of its old time allure, keeps the sun from her eyes. A woman must be very young and self-confident who does not realize that the too familiar gaze of the midsummer sun will redder her eyelids and plant a dozen wrinkles where one is more than enough.

In these practical times a combination parasol and umbrella is sure to be hailed with joy. One model of this kind can be had in green, blue or purple silk, with a narrow, finely striped border. The border is sometimes inside the edge and sometimes forms the edge. This parasol has the further advantage of a blunt point and a folding handle for convenience in carrying, and the handles are colored to match the silk, with ivory trimmings and a large ring through the end.

There is another interesting invention to record in the development of the common sense parasol. This is a knitting bag, moderately large, which has inside a long narrow pocket, into which is thrust a parasol with a folding handle. Parasol and bag are, of course, made of the same silk, either striped or plain, and usually of rather sober color, and it is hard to see how conservation of space or effort could go much further.

Purple parasols, to be carried with purple hats, are an exceedingly smart accessory to the tailored costume, they are either in plain taffeta or in moire silk, or in taffeta with a moire border.

Sports satin is one of the novelties of the season in its use for parasols, and has advantages for this purpose, the most important being its thickness, which makes it a thoroughly effective sunshade.

Plain colored sports satin parasols are lined with a contrasting plain color

or with one of the pretty printed foulards, and the sports satins, which are printed in large and striking spots, stripes and blocks, are cunningly cut and contrived to form a symmetrical design in the wedge shaped sections of the parasol.

Sets which include a parasol are ingeniously designed and often very attractive. There is a hat and parasol set of a thin printed silk with figures in dull red on a green ground, bordered with plain brown. The hat is faced with brown, and both hat and parasol are bordered with narrow brown silk fringe.

A French set of hat, parasol and scarf is of lace edged with grove feathers, and another charming set consists of a sash and parasol, both made of silk on which a large flower design in a dark disk is printed at intervals. Both parasol and sash are bordered with quillings of pleat edged ribbon.

There are large flat parasols of many

A set which includes hat, parasol and knitting bag is in cream shantung printed in a delicate flower design, the hat banded with straw and the bag and parasol without decoration.

There are semi-transparent parasols of green georgette, two thicknesses of the fabric being used and a beaded design being worked in the lower part of each section.

There are large flat parasols of many

top is still in evidence. A delectable French parasol in white organdy has a detached top of pink organdy which frills just enough to look like a flower petal.

Another charming French parasol is in navy blue taffeta lined with shirred white organdy, and a plain dull green silk parasol has an organdy border which is joined to the silk by a wreath of tiny raspberries done in beads in the natural colors.

Velvet parasols and a parasol in brown net banded with many rows of yellow-brown squirrel are among the attractive eccentricities, and the blunt pointed parasol made of a mandarin coat is always a desirable possession.

Parasol handles are usually of the simplest variety in wood, with a leather or cord strap or with a large ring by which they may be carried, but there is a fancy for carved ivory tops, either in the shape of a perforated oval ball in white or color or in a veritable group carving of monkeys or elephants.

A satin parasol lined with foulard and one of sports satin.

narrow sections in printed georgette, edged and decorated with ruchings of the narrowest ribbon. The georgette used for such parasols is printed in small, closely covering Oriental designs.

There are numbers of parasols in flowered silk and a few in frilled and puffed chiffon and lace, while the silk parasol which has a flat black lace

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