

Paris Materials and for Popular in Empire Gowns Both in simple and Elaborate Design



White Cloth Empire Gown



Dark Blue Voile Empire Gown



White Net and Lace Empire Gown

THE conspicuous or strongly marked fashions that from time to time make their appearance have almost invariably to go through a period of probation, as it were, before being universally accepted. Although, as a rule, they receive the approval of the wealthy class in their first showing, they almost always have to be modified to become universally popular.

There are several reasons for this seemingly odd state of affairs. To begin with the great majority of women cannot buy recklessly, and the number of gowns they purchase in the course of a year is of necessity limited. Consequently they want to be certain that the models they select are going to be in style for some months, and it is well known that often a fashion meets with approval when it is first introduced, and then suddenly "goes out," is tabooed. All eccentric designs are liable to this danger, and so the woman who can buy without counting the cost selects any and every gown she likes knowing that if she gets tired of it she can throw it aside for a new one, while she who can buy only a few gowns in the year does not risk the experiment.

Then, again, the most eccentric fashions require to be well made and are often far too intricate for the average dressmaker to undertake with any possibility of success. The dressmaker who goes abroad twice a year and has the advantage of seeing all the latest fashions is not so easily daunted by what looks to the dressmaker

who does not go away from her own city an impossible rendering of color and style. But women who love dress for dress' sake—and there are hundreds of them among dressmakers as well as customers—study all fashions, watch the trend of public opinion, and not such a long time, after all, passes before the most eccentric style, provided it is accepted at all, is generally accepted and made possible for the multitude. At the present moment the question of the empire gown is unimportant, and it is doubtful if there were ever a fashion that possessed so many pitfalls for the unwary as this one. In its perfect rendering is so attractive. The princess style has of late lost much of its terror for the amateur, and yet in many respects has similar difficulties to be overcome.

The tall, slender woman, blessed by nature with good lines, has not so much to dread in undertaking to have her gown copied from empire models as has the woman credited with a fine figure, and yet an unskillful rendering of the empire fashion will make the slender woman look like a most unattractive being, while the fine figure found in a well-cut and well-made empire gown is unimpaired and graceful. The line of the girde requires careful study. To build upon a Mother Hubbard wrapper effect and put a broad girde directly below the bust seems to be thought all sufficient, and yet a grosser caricature of a really artistic and charming fashion was never foisted upon a long-suffering public.

Seen in its perfection, it may be noted that while the folds of material hang apparently loose and straight, in reality they follow the lines of the figure, indicate the waist line without sharply defining it, and below the hips widen out in a most graceful and artistic manner. There is no decided flare. It has been said many times that the lining has an immense amount to

do with the smart effect of an empire gown. It is in truth a princess gown of perfect fit that should be made up as the lining, but as this presents many problems it is sometimes safe to have a waist and skirt, in reality two pieces but joined together, such as such that the band does not show. In order to obviate the too thick appearance of the waist, the train begins at the shoulders under a wide band of embroidery worked on the material itself. In front there is more the effect of the princess, for the line of the waist is indicated, and yet the folds fall straight from the bust from under the same band of embroidery as is shown at the back. Around the hem of the skirt is an embroidered band to match. Everything is severely simple, but immensely smart, and the same design is elaborated upon for an evening gown, with the embroidered band in open-work effect of silver, gold, jet or pearl embroidery.

The empire style, as may be seen, furnishes an exceptional opportunity for the display of fine passementeries and embroid-

eries, and any number of different effects can be obtained simply by using the different styles. It is thought more in keeping with the fashion to have the embroidery around the hem of the skirt and at the top of the waist than in designs, but, if so desired, the embroidery can be continued all over the gown, only having it heavier across the waist and around the hem. As can readily be understood, this is a fashion that furnishes unexampled opportunity for lavish expenditure, as when chamoisery is fashionable, and, in fact, demanded by any special style, it is considered best, when expense is no object, to have this work done by hand. That is the general rule for all gowns this year, but so exquisite is the work done by machine that it seems hardly worth while to pay the

difference. However, it is fashionable to be extravagant and not to be content with anything that is not of the finest and best, so that the most exquisite of embroideries are used apparently recklessly.

When the empire style first made its appearance it was relegated almost exclusively to tea gowns, and it must be admitted that it does seem rather more appropriate for that sort of gown than for any other, for it is decidedly on what used to be considered the negligee order, such as was best suited for home wear. But with the growth of popularity for the tea gown and its graduation from a bed room wrapper to an informal dinner gown the empire style at once seemed possible for many occasions which formerly would have been considered quite impossible. At the present

moment it is used, as has been said, for smart reception gowns, for dinner gowns, and, of course, always for tea gowns, but as the last it certainly is still the most conservative choice. The figured nets and laces are most charmingly appropriate for this model for the spring and summer, and in the introduction of some color in the lining trimmings are exceedingly effective across the bust that can be made of velvet or silk there is a chance to use some very becoming shade. Over a pale pink or pale blue the overdress entirely separates from the under, and a queer, shapeless garment it is in those circumstances when viewed alone; but it is rather odd to see how entirely different it looks with the different colored linings and the trimmings to correspond. Black lace or net or the black spangled net is a very safe choice, and can be worn over black, white or some color that is the most becoming or effective.

Economically minded people who begin to count the cost after they have ordered five or six gowns at the expense of no less than \$200 apiece are contending that the colored linings are very economical and make it possible to have quite a variety in one's wardrobe. This is accomplished by having the overdress entirely separate from the under, and a queer, shapeless garment it is in those circumstances when viewed alone; but it is rather odd to see how entirely different it looks with the different colored linings and the trimmings to correspond. Black lace or net or the black spangled net is a very safe choice, and can be worn over black, white or some color that is the most becoming or effective.

Chiffon in accordian plaits is certainly not a new fashion, and yet it would be difficult to find any material that is much more satisfactory for these same empire gowns than chiffon pleating. The material is so soft that a lot of it can be used without adding to the size, and it hangs so well and drapes so well that it is not surprising it has had a much longer life than almost any other material known. This year the shades of colors are extremely popular, and most charming color schemes can be worked out in them, while the colored embroideries or passementeries, especially those of very open work pattern, show to great advantage on them. It is not considered as necessary or smart to embroider chiffon as to leave it plain. Nets and laces can be embroidered, and a soft silk ancrep de chine, but these are not made in plaatings that are so fashionable for the chiffon.

The unlined princess gown of lingerie and lace, that is now to be found everywhere ready made and in every grade of material and workmanship, is in danger of losing its popularity in favor of the empire style made in the same way—that is, without lining. But the time has not yet come for the latter fashion to take precedence of the former, generally speaking, and fortunately for the world at large, as the princess style is far better suited for most occasions, while the empire requires the most careful treatment not to look almost like a caricature.

Very well informed on the best authority (7) that next year's winter gowns will show the empire style to perfection, and of course, that means that the shades of color that seemed to be omnipresent, but which will require considerable modification of that sort to do away with the effect of its being not a wrap alone but a fitted garment, an effect difficult to secure in design heavy a material as cloth and a design wherein the lines are so loose. By careful however, new crests and new figures will probably have been attained, and the fashions that now seem impossible will in a few months' time seem to be the most common mode of dress and not in the least eccentric.

The influence which dress exerts upon the mind is a well known fact, and all beliefs or theories are never shown more clearly than when some such marked fashion makes its appearance and is at first bordered with modulations of the empire period or ornamented with light designs and simple styles of applied trimming. One shade trimmed with empire medallions was bordered without gathers and fringes in empire style. These are very fashionable, more and more of them being seen every day.

Louis XV lamp had a shade of white silk. Or it might be of Nile green, fashioned with bowknots, embroidered or done in ribbon work. A shade that bordered more at the bottom than most of the modern ones was of silk, covered with mouseline and with a wide insertion and a bottom flounce of lace.

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Attractive Hampers For Baby's Clothes

FOR the spring and early summer baby much that is beautiful is offered in the way of hampers. Hampers for babies are always attractive, for they are invariably decorated with the daintiness that appertains to infants. But this season they seem prettier than ever, for added to the ribbon bows and beading and the fluffy ruffles which usually decorate them are hand-made embroidery decorations that are surpassingly fine and delicate. The hamper made of wicker or palm leaf is lined with pale blue, pale pink or white silk which has been made into six pads for the four sides, the top and the bottom, and one for the tray. These pads are delicately scented with sachet powder. In selecting powder for this purpose care should be taken to get the freshest and purest. Certain scents, too, are preferable to others. A fresh fragrance is preferable to a heavy, sweet odor.

The very sheer linen batiste or nainsook of the very sheest quality is used for the covers of these pads if they are to be embroidered. An embroidery design is used around the ruffle which trims the inside of the hamper lid and around the ruffle of the tray. The baby's name is embroidered in the middle of the lid cover or on one side. When sheer handkerchief linen is used with satin ribbon bows at the corners and in the middle of the lid cover the hemstitching will be found a sufficient decoration. The embroidery of the monogram of the name may, of course, be as elaborate as one wishes, and is certainly very charming. A little border of tiny pink rosebuds around the lid cover with the monogram worked in the tiny buds in the center and another little border of buds around the bottom of the tray is most attractive. A little, green

vine is pretty used in the same way. Tiny daisies in pink, pale blue or white are charming.

Embroidery is not to be used, dotted Swiss or point d'esprit is used to uphold the inside of the hamper. Bands of insertion in lace or embroidery beading and ribbon are used for trimming. When hand embroidery is used the tray is usually covered smoothly, so that the embroidery will show to advantage. But when em-broidery is used for the bottom of the tray is covered plain, but the sides are full, the material being shirred around the top and bottom. Several rows of beading around the top of the tray are run with narrow ribbon and a frill is used to finish the tray, the frill or ruffle not being large enough to interfere with closing the hamper. The tray is usually fitted with pockets, which may contain small things for the baby's toilet, pins, powder, sponges, soap, and other necessities. The lower part of the hamper is often lined with a soft material, such as plush or velvet, and is used for the baby's smaller belongings, little ribbons, sets of buttons, bibs, fannel bands, booties, etc.

Precocious Children Should Be Pitied

BY MARGARET E. SANSTOR.
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FOND parents, as everybody knows, are much in the habit of imagining that their children are clever and brighter than ever children were since the world began. Other people may find the children tiresome and disagreeable, but in the eyes of doting parents they are without a peer, and their sayings and doings are related with infinite relish whenever anybody is found who has leisure and patience to listen.

Precocious children fortunately for themselves and for the race, are the exception rather than the rule. A normal child, healthy and sturdy, is seldom precocious. Of course, there are on record notable instances of children who manifested remarkable traits and extraordinary intelligence at a very early age, and some of them did not belie their infant promise.

Lord Macaulay is a case in point. When he was somewhere near the milestones of his fourth birthday, he read incessantly, and lay on the hearth rug, at full length, with face buried in a book, he heard little that was going on around him. On one occasion, having the misfortune to be badly burned, this unchild-like child remarked, to a sympathizing friend, that the agony was extreme. Yet Macaulay grew up to be not merely an eminent historian and man of letters, but man of universal knowledge, of profound public spirit, and of notable loyalty to kith and kin. Though a prig in

childhood, he was not a pedant in maturity. Of Robert Murray McChesney, a famous Scotch clergyman, it is gravely set down by a biographer, that he had mastered the Greek alphabet at the age of three. I myself have a friend, a woman of brilliant powers and varied scholarship, who was taught to read Hebrew by a very learned father before she was able to learn English, so that as a little thing of six she read the Hebrew Scriptures, while she did not yet know the English alphabet. Her early precocity did her no harm.

Generally speaking, considering the importance of a sound mind in a sound body, it is not worth while to push children forward intellectually at the possible expense of their health. The brain of a child is unfairly treated may develop so rapidly that its power of assimilation will be early exhausted and the wonderfully brilliant child becomes an ordinary man, dull and commonplace. The boy and girl who make a clean sweep of all the prizes in sight during school years are often never heard of again. Some of our most conspicuous statesmen, authors and commanders, on sea and land, made no show whatever during the days of their training, and were graduated in the lowest ranks of their class.

A besetting sin of American parents is an almost insane ambition in behalf of children and a desire to push the children as fast as they can out of childhood's quiet round into the turmoil of the arena. Little people are hurried from the cradle to the kindergarten, from the kindergarten to the primary, and so on through the several grades, and frequently to the disadvantage of the children. I heard the other day of a young doctor who matriculated at the medical school when he was just sixteen, an age at which no youth is fit to undertake the serious study of medicine, and, indeed, at which few boys are sufficiently matured to enter college.

A precocious child is very likely to hear so much about his talents and his attainments that he will look down condescendingly on the neighbor who is not nearly so far advanced and still has a pronounced liking for marbles, kites, balls and robust games. A boy ought to know how to play. Play is far more worth while for him than work in the first ten years of life. The precocious child is seldom or never a good catcher or pitcher or quarter back or half back; he is on the contrary, likely to survey with disdain the boyish pride taken in his triumphs, and to consider the time spent in the open air rather a waste than the opposite. His energies are bent on acquiring more and still more information in preparation for the struggle of life. Often one sees the strange anomaly when such a youth has grown up, of a man whose intellect is developed and the child's life and future were saved through the process of suffering and a forgetting all he had ever acquired. It was a loss-up between life and death, not only, but death and idleness, and when the child came out of his stupor sane, and recognized his father, the luck doctor bled him, and the latter, "Lucky your way, Jim," and it was.

power to hold on and do well in the roughest realities of everyday existence.

Another point to be noted is that every one fights shy of the infant prodigy. Parents try to hold him out and compel him to show his pieces, to the boredom and disgust of friends and acquaintances. Fond mothers little dream of the dismay and the secret amusement they awake in the minds of their social circle. "Here comes Mrs. W. She is sure to lead the subject around to Albert's performances unless that hopeful child and his wonderful speeches can be sidetracked." I have known a silent combination of forces ready to check the mother without her suspecting it, when, as usual, she began to launch forth on her pet topic, never heard of more. The vast majority of our social circle, "Here comes Mrs. W. She is sure to lead the subject around to Albert's performances unless that hopeful child and his wonderful speeches can be sidetracked." 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