

Blouse Modelled After the Peasant's Smock Gains Importance as Weather Grows Warmer

Hangs Over Skirt to Protect Waistline—Made of Many Curious Fabrics.

By ANNE RITTENHOUSE.

THE American woman is securely anchored to a shirtwaist. She may adopt the French word "blouse" and pronounce it in her own way or with the accent on the French "u." It may hang over her skirt like a Chinaman's tunic or a peasant's smock, or it may be neatly tucked into her skirt in the way that America invented.

There are two classes of women who can be depended upon for loyalty to the genuine shirtwaist: one class is the young and waistless who can stand the fall of the blouse tucked over the hips and the abdomen; the other class is middle aged with a long cultivated waistline and a tightly strapped hip line.

The women in between prefer the careless overblouse. It saves them the trouble of seeing to it that body and soul are joined, as they say in New Orleans.

Now and then the American women drift away from the separate blouse. The shops insist that the sale of these garments has been as large throughout the reign of the one piece frock as it was before women took it into their heads to partially eliminate the coat suit, but the observer has a feeling that the one piece frock suppressed the shirtwaist.

Convenience of One Piece Frock. What is true of the loyalty of Americans to the separate blouse is also true of the tailored suit. Neither is ever entirely forsaken. Possibly our climate keeps us desirous of the comfort and convenience of the informal attire or rather the costume we think is convenient merely because we are familiar with it.

The truth is that the one piece frock is ahead of the suit as far as convenience is concerned. It is more easily made, it is cheaper to buy, more simple to adjust. It is the primitive garment of the world.

The shirtwaist, however, belongs to us, which may partly account for our constant usage of it. We consider it our contribution to costumery. So does the rest of the world.

The late Gen. Thomas H. Barry told an amusing story in connection with the American shirtwaist which shows how its fame has reached into the obscure regions of the earth. He was in military command of the Philippines when the Sultan of Sulu and his wife—sounds like comic opera personages—made their call of ceremony. They came with some display of splendor from their dominion, arrived in Manila and made their way to Gen. Barry's house. When Mrs. Barry received them the Sultana, pointing to her country suit, said with a smile that she wore the American national costume in honor of the occasion and had fastened it with the American jewels. The national garment was a cheap white shirtwaist tucked in her skirt; the American jewels were ten dollar gold pieces used to fasten the blouse.

What Manufacturers Have Done.

Those who make garments for the American trade and those who inspire designs behind the trade are eager to see the shirtwaist become a blouse. Some commercial reason there is in an insistence upon this garment for this summer. It is partly due to the evident fact that the American woman is tired of the masculine tailored suit as her spring costume. She may not wear it all the time, but she includes one such suit in her wardrobe.

It is interesting to watch the procession strengthen and lengthen, made up of smart women wearing what in England is called the country suit. These are made of a thick mottled jersey that closely resembles homespun tweed and there are North Carolina woollens woven on the Billmores estate, also English tweeds. Serge is lacking. Crepe de chine has only been accepted by the minority.

For the first time in several years it is considered good dressing to appear in the street and restaurant during the day in the simplest type of loose coat and skirt, the kind that the English woman has always worn in the country, usually with her hand in her pockets. Even that gesture is copied over here this season.

The French idea of ornamenting a tailored suit has been so commonly accepted by Americans during the last decade that the observer thought our women had forgotten the costume which they made famous and which once tallied out and fit with exceeding skill. But suddenly there grew up, over night, the fashion for the type of suit that men wear. All French suggestion has been eliminated. The English suit, as it is made and worn in the British Empire, is accepted.

It has simplicity, durability and a sufficient informality to keep it out of the battles of fashion. It is merely itself. It takes no part in the struggle for round neck or an oblong neck, a short sleeve or a long sleeve, a draped skirt or a flounced skirt. With a magnificent gesture it banishes these vexatious questions into thin air. It is what it always has been. It is, therefore, at its best.

Has Standardized Itself.

It is not quite right to say it has no determined contour this season. It has standardized itself for the season of 1921. The coat is longer length, is belted, has a round neck, a collar and revers, two broad pockets at the sides and long sleeves fastened with bone buttons at the back. The skirt is short, cut in two pieces with a straight seam down each side.

There is more novelty in color than in cut. Black and blue are forsaken. Stripes, checks and patterned surfaces are ignored. The surface of the fabric is rough, but supple; the material appears to be porous. The colors are often soft and rich. There is a new color called beige, which sometimes has a suggestion of mauve or pink in it; there is raspberry, French blue, deep pink, bright yellow, thick white cream.

If any one tried to follow the color, cut and ornamentation of the new blouses suggested for this summer one would feel like the chameleon who fell into the hairdresser's hands. The colorful whirl of the blouses shows that the manufacturers are trying to please the public or persuade the public. Whichever way it is, there is a belief that the separate blouse has come into its own. It will not be the shirtwaist of other days; for it will not have undisputed supremacy; the blouse



Upper Left—Blouse of gray lace lined with gray crepe which has long, tight sleeves and a large bow at one side. It is cut in a straight line at the hem and comes nearly to the hips. It is usually worn with a knife-pleated gray skirt.

Second From Upper Left—Ornamental blouse of crepe de chine embroidered in bright flowers. At each side there are many loops of the fabric. These hang over the skirt.

Upper Right—A thin blouse of yellow organdy with black satin girdle, run with bands of yellow fillet lace. The sleeves are long.

Second From Upper Right—A taffeta blouse that fastens snugly above the hips. It has organdy collar and cuffs; a black tie goes under button holes from neck to hem.

Center—A morning blouse of red and white dotted Georgette with a white crepe fichu that has long ends in front.

Lower Left—Tunic blouse of Chinese brocade with square sleeves of blue Georgette. It acts as a waistcoat to a blue coat that does not meet in front.

Lower Right—Over-blouse of red taffeta stitched with blue at the edges and fastened with blue buttons. The high collar can be turned back to show an organdy gimpie.

of the summer will be varied and not uniform.

When it is worn with a suit it often resembles a waistcoat. For the obvious reason that many of the new suits have coats that do not fasten. They open in a straight line down the front, and unless one wears a blouse or a waistcoat there is exhibited to the view that ugly line across the front of the figure where the shirtwaist goes into the skirt. When these two garments are in different colors the unness is emphasized. The very slim can obviate this condition by wearing a belt, but the majority of women prefer to omit it. It thickens the waist line.

Because coats often open in front there has come about an immense sale of neckwear. It consists of ornamental vests in a variety of fabrics, from organdy to silk covered with chain stitching, including many pieces made of deep cream-batiste covered with an eyelid embroidery.

It is unusual for a woman to wear a whole shirtwaist under a coat when she persists in regarding the coat as a part of the skirt and not something to be taken off. To prevent the jacket from irritating the skin or absorbing the body moisture careful women wear plain blouses of white nainsook cut high at the back, long in the sleeves, finished with a plot edge. These come between the skin and the coat. Many women attach their skirts by snaps to the bottom of these little camisoles instead of putting them on a belt at the waist. The trick slenderizes the figure.

While it is true that the sale of neckwear for jackets increases as the season deepens, there is no lack of appreciation of the separate blouse. There are certain types to be worn with suits by those who insist upon taking off their coats, making them as outer wraps to be removed indoors, and these go over the skirt and not under it. There are other types, and they are more frequent, which are frankly intended to be used to build up a complete costume by alliance with a separate skirt.

In such blouses there is a return to the color fashions of twenty years ago. They are not boned and they are without lining, which is a species of informality that the woman of twenty years ago knew nothing about, but they are unlicensed in the choice of color and fabric.

These new ones go over the skirt and go over the corset cover and have about as much stiffness as an army shirt. They are not boned and they are without lining, which is a species of informality that the woman of twenty years ago knew nothing about, but they are unlicensed in the choice of color and fabric.

It takes an effort on the part of an individual to get rid of red this season. The dressmaker has gone wild about it. They are also adored and abetted by the milliners. The people who manufacture blouses are the ones who could really use this color to the best advantage.

There is a smart, overblouse of Oriental red slightly gathered into the waist line at the sides in order that it will not present the tight flattened line across the diaphragm that only the slim can tolerate. It is stitched with blue at its edges and fastened with blue buttons. There is a small gimpie which shows when the high wide collar is unfastened and thrown back.

There is another brilliant blouse from France made of Chinese brocade worn with a blue suit. It is built to give the effect of a short tunic blouse and resembles a waistcoat when it is worn under a jacket. The sleeves of it are blue georgette. The idea of using wide square sleeves of a transparent colored material in a tunic blouse of varied coloring is good. Paris is making it up from the Orient and is bringing it to the States.

The touch of red is shown in another French blouse of red and white dotted organdy which carries the newly revived fichu we have lifted from the days of Martha Washington. This piece of neckwear is not especially easy to adjust and it is not always becoming, but it is fashionable, and one must reckon with it to the best of her ability.

When it comes to transparent blouses organdy comes into its own. It is offered in bright colors, especially in yellow, and it is often girdled with black satin to give it a touch of solidity. Chinese brocade is sometimes substituted.

A new Spanish restaurant has opened in the theatrical district called the Ambassador, at 220 West Forty-ninth street.

Theatrical History Made Since "Belle of New York" Was Here

When in 1897 "The Belle of New York" was presented at the Casino New York was without some thirty or forty of the theatres everybody knows about to-day. Hanson cabs provided transit about the streets for those inclined to money spending, while bicycles were regularly checked at the Casino during the run of the musical play. The late Oscar Hammerstein, whose tangled estate is still in the courts, was astounding the town by his exploit of building the Olympia, the present New York Theatre Building, with its two playhouses, one at each end, its dancing and music galleries and its commodious roof.

There were then in existence a sort of alcoholic species of "beau," young men whose inherited money removed them from the temptation of work and who spent their time principally at night in the various gay restaurants and bars. Some of them were notable barroom fighters, whose escapades were the talk of the town. These young men formed a powerful clique of first nighters. When they took a fancy to a musical comedy their devotion to the chorus of that production became spectacular.

During the engagement of "The Belle of New York" at the Casino they showered flowers and diamonds in almost equal proportions upon the young women of the ensemble. Occasionally their ranks were decimated by marriage to some of the chorus. Their standing backstage was far superior to that of any mere passing university "man." More frequently than not they backed musical productions and in many cases travelled with them as sort of extra managers.

Native drama was then practically in its infancy, the managers producing mostly English pieces, with a few American musical comedies and farces and some dramas by Americans who were well established. The newcomer among

writers for the theatre had practically an impossible road to travel. The Messrs. Shubert had not then reached New York to establish their policy which opened wide the doors of the theatres to all comers. Entry into a theatre for a producer was a carefully guarded monopoly then which was often paid for by a large share of the production. It is these managers who are soon to bring back to New York "The Belle of New York" for a revival engagement.

With a brand new ocean lifted daily to the tops of the Palisades, real sea water sun bathing is to be open for the season at Palisades Amusement Park. This season finds the pool enlarged, with a new wave machine which will roll breakers up on a brand new stretch of sandy beach.

The movie contest for the purpose of picking new stars for the screen continues at Starlight Amusement Park and in addition there are various rides and exhibits, a free vaudeville show and dancing competitions.

Many Attractions At Suburban Parks. The Derby, at George C. Tilyou's Steeplechase Park, Coney Island, is proving an attraction for those who enjoy a thrilling ride. To-day for the first time this season the park flower garden will be open to visitors.

Mrs. Nan Sterling, who appeared at the Winter Garden in "The Passing Show of 1921" with her daring aerial act, has been signed up by the management of Luna Park to perform in their circus, together with Arthur Pryor's band. It is a coincidence that Mrs. Sterling has come to Luna, inasmuch as its founder, Frederick Thompson, was her godfather.

Hotels and Restaurants. The Langdon, 2 East 56th St. A few desirable suites will be available for full occupancy. Furnished or Unfurnished. To sublet for the Summer. 2 Rooms and Bath. 3 Rooms and Bath. Restaurant a la Carte. Plaza 7100.

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Hotel San Rafael, 5-67 W. 45th St., nr. 5th Av. Large Room & Bath, \$4 per Day and Up. Also Suites 2 Rooms, Bath.

Hotel Montague, 100 West 47th St. 100 rooms, \$1.50 day and up. With bath, \$2.00 day and up. Single rooms \$1.00 day and up. SPECIAL PERMANENT RATES. Phone Bryant 7733-4-5. H. W. Krause, Mgr.

Hotel Orleans, 100 WEST ST., 1-2-3 ROOMS. Delightfully located. Very inviting rates.

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