

VERILY and indeed are fashions a growth rather than creations. If one needed verification of that truth, it surely would be found in the evolution of the skirt as it has been manifested in the past few months. From the perfectly straight, narrow effect, it was first developed into slight fullness, then into a little drapery over the hips and today we have breadth as exaggerated as well as can be and looped up effects that are manifestations of the bustle idea. Skirts still continue to be narrow about the feet and the essential narrowness together with what may fairly be called the craze for dancing results in rather short skirts but, above the knees, there is very generous breadth and a bouffant effect that does infinite credit to the ingenuity of designers and dressmakers. We do not wear wires. Nothing that is really stiff enters into a fashionable costume. Draperies are so handled that the effect is found.

As an inevitable consequence of such a silhouette, coats for dressy costumes are very short. For the severely tailored, useful sort, the drapery is more moderate, rather suggested than aggressive and belted coats and coats of the more practical sort are allowed. Sleeve lengths vary generously that each designer and each wearer is free to determine upon the one that is best suited to herself and to the costume. To be sure, there is a certain inherent fitness in these things and the fancy beruffled coat calls for the shorter sleeves too loudly to be disregarded while the plain, useful costume seems to demand long sleeves by right of natural selection, but, even when these truths are taken into consideration, there is still a very generous latitude allowed.

All the big French houses have held their openings and, in these days of cabled reports, those interested are well aware of what each has to show. While it is true that each one of the big houses aims to set a style of its own, certain essential characteristics are to be found throughout and this silhouette that means narrowness about the ankles, generous breadth about the hips, drooping shoulders and big waists may safely be relied upon for a good many months to come.

Taffeta is such a pronounced favorite that it seems to put most other materials in the background and the new taffetas are really fascinating, showing not alone wonderful plain colors but chameleon effects that are a perfect delight, moiré treatments that are by no means extreme but just relieve the plainness of texture together with flowered and figured effects that combine to make a variety that is almost bewildering. The material is used not alone for entire costumes but in combination with other silk materials as well as serge, gabardine and crepe, until it would be almost safe to say that some bit of taffeta is found in almost every costume.

A DAINTY GOWN OF COTTON CREPE.



5205 Tunic Dress for Misses and Small Women, 16 and 18 years.

NEVER was any material lovelier for young girls and small women than the cotton crepe of the season with its pretty embroidered designs. This dress is white with little touches of color in the embroidery and the wide girdle that is finished with long sash ends at the back matches one of the brightest shades. The design is one of the very newest and, at the same time, one of the very simplest possible. All the fashionable blouses are loose; therefore, there is no question of fit to be considered and this one means only under-arm seams. The skirt consists of just front and back portions and the tunic is all in one piece. Any clever girl could run the dress up in a few hours and its smartness is beyond question while there are many materials that could be substituted for the crepe. Taffeta would make a beautiful dress of this kind and wool crepe in one of the pretty plain colors would be most attractive with the neck frill of soft lace or perhaps the frill on the tunic and the frill on the neck both of taffeta, for taffeta is as smart for trimmings as it is for entire costumes.

## CHECKS AND STRIPES ARE EXTREMELY FASHIONABLE THIS SPRING

BY MAY MANTON



8176—Gown, 34 to 40 bust.

May Manton Patterns for these Designs may be obtained by sending 10 cents for each pattern wanted to the Fashion Department of this paper.

8134—Coat, 34 to 44 bust.

8066—Skirt, 22 to 32 waist.

8205—Coat, 34 to 42 bust.

8194—Skirt, 22 to 30 waist.

8178 Fancy Blouse, 34 to 40 bust.

8006 Draped Two-Piece Skirt, 22 to 30 waist.

A GRACEFUL GOWN OF THE FASHIONABLE SILK.



NEVER have we had a season which offered such really fascinating variety of materials yet, in spite of that fact, stripes and checks make a dominant feature and the checks are especially noteworthy because of the very beautiful colors that are employed and the suggested rather than aggressive lines that appear. While undoubtedly we will wear a great deal of silk, silk and wool mixtures are in demand and éponge weaves are to be found in this mixture and also in all wool, all cotton and-all linen to be exceedingly handsome as well as exceedingly smart.

The coat suit that is illustrated shows éponge in a combination of tan and green that is extremely beautiful and eminently springlike in effect. The little coat is one of the very new ones that gives a bolero effect at the front but is finished with a real coat tail at the back. The skirt shows a tunic over the hips and back but leaves the long unbroken lines at the front that are exceedingly becoming. Women who seek an effect of height will be sure to welcome this feature as well as the stripes and, as

a matter of course, the same model can be used for almost any seasonable fabric. Among new ones for handsome suits is a moiré taffeta and that silk would be exceedingly beautiful made in this way with trimming of a fancy material giving a brilliant note of color. As illustrated, the costume is a practical, useful one. Made from the silk, it would immediately be converted into a dressy afternoon costume and it is just that adaptability of prevailing designs that makes one of the most interesting features.

Every woman likes to have an entire gown in her wardrobe and the light weight silks of the season seem especially well suited to such use. The one shown here is made from taffeta with trimming of charmeuse satin and the contrast of fabrics gives a smart touch while the lines are among the newest and best to be found. Loose sleeves either in Japanese or raglan style make the almost universal ones and the way in which the two materials are combined in this gown make an exceptionally good effect. If for any reason a more practical gown is wanted, the same model could be used for one of the pretty wool crépes with

trimming of charmeuse satin, for crepe-finished fabrics are among the most fashionable of the spring and they contrast most effectively with the dull finish of the charmeuse satin. The wisest dressmakers and the best designers fully realize that color always should be chosen with reference to the individual's needs rather than to any prevailing fashion but, nevertheless, there is a tendency to the use of yellow, green and blue this season that is not to be overlooked. A combination of yellowish tan crepe with brown trimmings would make an exceedingly beautiful gown.

In the spring, every one motors and, consequently, there is always a need for a loose coat to be slipped on over the gown. The one that is shown on the central figure is new and smart. In the short length, it gives really the effect of a sport coat and is practical for walking as well as for use in the car but the same model can be cut longer to become essentially adapted to rough weather or to traveling. In the picture, white polo cloth is shown but the season is unusually generous in the matter of cloakings as it is in that of other materials.

SUITS and gowns both are made of the silk and, not infrequently colors are combined in a really wonderful way. At a recent showing of new models was noted an afternoon gown of the new moiré taffeta in changeable effect combining blue and gold. The wide deep girdle was all of gold colored satin held by a large slide of mother of pearl and the blended colors were a real delight. An exceedingly smart gown that exemplifies the use of strong contrasts consists of a plain skirt of black satin with a knee length tunic and blouse of changeable taffeta showing salmon with a tender gray. The lower edge of the tunic is finished with a gathered ruffle of black matching the skirt. The blouse opens in a deep V to the belt and is finished with a turned over collar and revers of embroidered chiffon in a gray that exactly matches the threads found in the silk while the chemisette is of shirred white net. We are entering upon a season of wonderful colors and of infinite possibilities. Contrast and harmony when rightly handled are a pleasure to see and it is the part of the designer to study such with care. Many of the figured silks show almost daring effects. The artist in color uses them with rare effect. Let us hope they will not be attempted by those of lesser gifts. Plain colors and quiet tones always make a safe choice. The daring contrasts offered are fascinating but, unless rightly handled, bring dire results.

For the more elaborate costumes, those designed for dinners, dances and occasions of the kind, there is a great tendency toward skirts that are trimmed at the lower edge and sometimes the skirt with slight fullness that is held in by trimming. Putings, ruchings and frills make the preferred finishes and such finishes seem the natural outgrowth of the fashion for taffeta while they are more often seen in that material than in any other. Unquestionably they are pretty. No matter how well fitting the shoes, how perfectly matching the hosiery, the foot that is thrust out from a plain, narrow skirt is by no means pretty. The soft ruches seem to fall caressingly about the ankles and to relieve greatly the severe line. For the gown to be worn within doors, the finish has everything to commend it. As a matter of course, the plain skirt is the preferred one for the street costume of even the elaborate sort.

Blouses for wear with coat suits have taken on certain interesting new features. Organdie is being much exploited for the white blouses to be worn with simple suits and hand embroidery is the preferred finish.

THE new taffetas are so delightfully soft that they drape beautifully. This gown is made of that favorite material in two-toned of chameleon effect with trimming of plain color. It is very charming and very graceful yet quite simple and it takes lines that are becoming to large as well as to slender figures. There is a plain lining to the blouse over which the lace chemisette is arranged. The skirt is made in only two pieces with the edges lapped and these lapped edges allow the most effective use of trimming material. Made of the taffeta, it is exceedingly beautiful. It could be reproduced in crepe de chine to be more clinging in effect and it could be utilized for charmeuse satin to be exceedingly handsome. Among important fabrics must be mentioned the new wool crépes that are such favorites and the lovely cotton fabrics that, in recent days, take rank with silk itself.

For the medium size the blouse will require 2 1/4 yds. of material, 27 1/2 yds., 36, 1 1/4 yds., 44 inches wide, with 1 3/4 yds., 21 for the trimming, 1 3/8 yds. of lace 4 inches wide; the skirt 4 1/2 yds., 27, 3 yds., 36 or 44 inches wide.