

SHOP TALK—BY AMY ARMSTRONG

BUYING for Easter is now at its height. Whether it be a suit or a coat, a dress or a hat, a pair of shoes or a pair of gloves or only just a pair of pretty hose or a pocket handkerchie, every self-respecting woman must go on record with herself at least, as registering something new in her costume on this day which announces automatically, "Now is the open season for spring and summer clothes."

Although Easter comes quite late this year there has not been very much weather yet when sure-enough, light weight and light colored spring apparel was in keeping with the way a person felt. One or two warm days have called out the pretty things, but they have had to go back every time, retired for more practical garments. But when the twenty-third of April has come and gone, there is little likelihood that prolonged chilly "spells" will have the audacity to present themselves and by that time surely one can wear the new spring bonnet every day without thinking to oneself, "Guess I'd better not get out the bright straw hat today. It looks like snow and besides I really do not need it and I want it to stay fresh as long as possible."

So much for the weather. In good usage it is customarily taboo but for Easter it is such an all important matter that perhaps the few remarks are not altogether out of place. And now just a word about accessories. Judging by the peregrinations of the patrons of the various stores, the pilgrims are all traveling to one Mecca, or to similar Meccas. Everybody appears to be considering suits or dresses, perhaps coats, and many a woman does not seem to realize that she might better wear an old suit with neat gloves and shoes than a brand spanking new outfit with shoes run over at the heels and gloves through which the fingers are peeping out to have an envious look at the nearby splendor. This department is not even a distant cousin to a lecture platform, but news of the shops has just as much human nature mixed into it as the most psychological experiment and it is quite as much a determining factor there as to what people will wear and what they will do as it is anywhere else in the trend of human affairs.

Some folks, too, believe that Easter is a time to think of others and the shops are showing some wonderfully attractive gifts, different and particularly appropriate to this season of the year. For instance, one of them in the gift department has but now received a shipment of decorated flower pots. Flowers have been the Easter offering since the days of our remote ancestors, and here is a chance to add a touch which will make the gift of a plant complete. How many times have you shuddered at the incongruity of a pretty fern or geranium stuck into an old coffee can? To be sure most of us are more artistic than that, but the clay pot with a bit of crepe paper twisted about it, faded from drops of water which have fallen when sprinkling, is little better. These decorated pots have designs of flowers or conventional designs and are priced from 75 cents up.

Then there are the baskets full of good cheer, tiny bits of dainty baskets with fifty cheery verses inside, bound together with a ribbon, and lingerie sachets and quantities of such gifts. In the same department is another article which is perhaps not especially designed for gift purposes, but is unique. It is a decorated sprinkling can, of a most artistic shape with long neck and arched handle. A young girl in a broad garden hat, or even a miss of larger growth, going about among her flowers and plants giving them a drink

from one of these would be a picture for any artist. They come in several different colors, no two alike. They are priced at six dollars but have much more than six dollars worth of beauty in their slender shapes.

During the week the same shop which is showing these gifts just to show that it is practical as well as artistic held a sale which was an innovation in a way. It was tried as an experiment, but was so extremely successful that it will doubtless be conducted again another time. A suit sale was scheduled for a certain day and previous to the day set tickets were sent out to all the regular patrons of the store, admitting them to a private showing and sale. A portion of the store was curtained off and no one without a ticket could pass the door. In this way the regular customers had the advantage of the reduction and of special attention from the sales people in the department before the general public had a chance to choose the best. The room was crowded during the two days of the private showing, and the chosen ones seemed mighty glad to avail themselves of the privilege, whereas if they had not received the tickets they would perhaps not have cared to get into the jam on the final reduced price day. The suits were without doubt the best bargains offered in the department this year, and it will pay any one who receives a ticket another time, or even one who is not so fortun-

nate, to go and have a look anyway.

Speaking of wash silk skirts, they were mentioned last week, one department store is showing some in the delicate shades, white and flesh and a deeper pink, exquisitely lovely and most durable and useful as well. They are of soft silk and wash beautifully priced at \$9. Another new idea in skirts is the entire jersey silk petticoat, corded once or twice at the bottom to prevent its clinging too closely and so getting mixed up with one's pedal extremities and proving a stumbling block to the steps of progress. They come in the pretty colors and there are some other soft silks in the newest shades to match shoes and hose and the costumes of rose, blue and the rest.

It may look like forcing things a little to talk already of next fall, but one of the shops has just received a wonderful shipment of evening dresses and afternoon frocks which are made along the lines and after the models which are to be worn during the coming year. So if you are just about out of evening gown, or if you want to buy an afternoon or street dress for Easter and are afraid you will not wear it out before the truly summer garments are the order of the day, take a look at these and rest assured that if you purchase one you can wear it with a good grace in the field.

I just wish every one of you could see them. The evening dresses take your breath away. Did you ever look at a delicate, perfect flower and have something inside of you hurt from the

intensity of your emotion? Well, these dresses are the perfect flowers of man's creation. You look at them and wonder are they truly to be worn or are they just to make people happy as they gaze at them. Each one of these is an exact copy of models which reached this country from abroad March 20. Naturally the designers and manufacturers are now planning what they will create for the next season, as the spring and summer goods is by now in the market, and these forecast what is to come.

Let me tell you about a few of them. One is in green, of a soft shade combined with a gold and blue, these latter colorings in the odd sash and in the flowers which are woven into the material about the bottom of the skirt. It is fashioned with an old style basque and the skirt is lined throughout with a soft crinoline. With the silk in the bodice is used a German val lace and a real filet with a square mesh.

A rather odd frock is a combination of navy blue silk with royal purple in a model for a woman of mature years.

Another is of yellow Georgette, is called the ribbon loop dress and is a Peggy model. It is exceedingly simple except that it has at least one hundred of these ribbon loops set into tucks around the skirt and waist. One perfectly wonderful model is of orchid duchess satin combined with silver trimming and silver embroidered. There is a wide band of silver lace hung beneath the soft drape of the silk at the bottom and a silver ribbon



JOSEF HOFMANN, WORLD FAMOUS RUSSIAN PIANIST, WHO WILL APPEAR HERE WITH THE NEW YORK SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA