

*Mme Simcox*  
talks about  
**French Frocks & Fabrics**

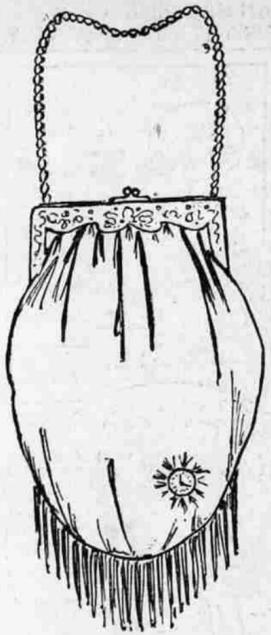
Mme Simcox is America's Greatest  
Designer and Creator of Fashion

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my medium. Its somber tone is liv-  
ened with a modified Gabrielle d'Es-  
trees collar, who, history tells us, was  
the "heart-queen" of Henry the Fourth.  
The color of this quaint feature of the  
jacket is a peasant's pink, striped with  
green. The material employed is a ben-  
galine of unresisting quality—unlike  
the lady from which the collar is  
named! The box pleated front slants  
toward the back in graceful, undulat-  
ing folds. Fringed ends, buttons and  
braid ornaments feature on the front  
of the jacket, and an oddly-shaped  
buckle of gray wood adds much to its  
elegance.

Two of the most delicately lovely  
models I have on view are a radiant  
blue and gold shot silk and a pale  
beige moire of the softest quality imag-  
inable. The first mentioned has a cel-  
tured draped high in the back over a  
bodice of transparent blue chiffon, be-  
neath which glimmers a faint sugges-  
tion of a gold corset cover. The neck  
opens boldly over a filling of malines  
and a strangely shaped loose collar—  
much like a rough rider's kerchief—  
shows on the back of the neck. A  
little apron adds to the coquetry of the  
costume.

The beige moire has loose tucked  
sleeves of the self-toned chiffon which  
hang limply below the elbow. The  
suave drapery of the skirt swirls be-  
low a short double tunic, and a peplum  
of chiffon, embroidered with Copen-  
hagen blue in a non-committal geomet-  
rical design, serves its decorative pur-  
pose. This appears in similar figur-  
ing on the waist, which is further em-  
bellished with a high girde finishing  
in two inclusive points curved upward  
to the breast. A narrow blue velvet  
ribbon outlines the opening of the  
neck, which is filled in with lierre lace.  
This same lace also shows illusively  
under the bloused bodice in the back.  
Charming, indeed, is a dashing little  
hat which I judged suitable to blend  
with this costume. It had a brim of  
the Copenhagen blue in hemp straw,  
narrow in the front, but spreading  
broadly toward the back. It was un-



need to feel that they are an offense  
against artistic ethics.

**New Features in Bags.**

Among the new bags I find many de-  
cided innovations. Their shapes are  
manifold, but most of them are long  
and narrow rather than short and  
broad, as formerly. They are, besides,  
all more or less ornate in style, even  
the tailored models in leather being  
gathered or pleated into mountings of  
gun-metal, steel or silver. Some of the  
newer designs, carried out in leather,  
open to show a half-moon mirror curi-  
ously inserted in the top, which, with  
the fittings that many of them now  
boast, does away with the necessity  
for a vanity bag. One of the most de-  
lightful appearing opera-bags I have  
seen is a melon-shaped affair of cloth  
of silver, heavily fringed on the edges.  
It is mounted in platinum, and a plat-  
inum watch is inset near the base. The  
lining is of Pompadour silk in plum  
colored tones, soft and delicate to the  
eye, while the interior when opened  
gives forth a delicious and refreshing  
odor of old lavender, a scent which, by  
the way, is again assuming a dominant  
role among the more pungent perfumes

and which brings back to us the days  
"when grandmamma was young!"

**Ribbons.**

With the increased popularity of  
sashes, used sometimes on an ultra-  
quiet gown to give it the one brilliant  
note of fantastic color, the vivid tones  
of ribbons have struck a still more  
vigorous chord than those used on the  
robes of 1872, from which many of  
them are copied. Not a few of the rib-  
bon sashes are shot with gilt or silver,  
and on a white gown blossom in con-  
ventional designs—stiff rows of pansies  
and roses in shades not conceivable to  
the natural process of floral evolution,  
but only to the genius of a master-  
ward such as Luther Burbank. When  
our eyes tire of bizarre effects, how-  
ever, we find a haunting charm and  
loveliness about some of the softer  
blurred designs, such as a faint rose in  
irregular motifs against a background  
of ash-gray. So much, however, of a  
color combination's effectiveness de-  
pends upon the personality of the wear-  
er, for there are moonlight as well as  
sunlight types of women—even though,  
until their sensibilities are trained,  
they may fail to recognize this fact,  
well known as it is to artists!

**Phases of the Coaching Parasol.**

Coaching, as we all know, is one of  
the chief delights of early spring, and  
the coaching parasol, or sun-umbrella,  
as it is sometimes designated, is in a  
class quite by itself. It is built on lines  
much sturdier than the ordinary affair  
and has a far heavier frame to resist  
the high winds which strike us with  
so much greater force when we are  
perched on the top of a coach. This  
coaching parasol generally boasts a  
stout handle of wood, carved in most  
cases, with a sporting head of some  
characteristic description, such as a  
horse or Dalmatian coach dog; while  
the silk employed should be of the  
heaviest quality obtainable to be of  
any lasting value. One that struck me  
as being the acme of suitability was  
made with a handle of warmly-toned  
Bermuda cedar, a wood which has a  
delicious fragrance as well as beauti-  
ful natural markings. The handle was  
carved in the semblance of a devil-fish,  
and the silk used ran the gamut of the  
yellows, from a burnt amber to a vivid  
gold as sunny in effect as a summer  
day.

Still another sun-umbrella was a  
study in reds as glowing as the pic-  
ture, "The Study in Red," that the  
artist William Chase designed. Who will  
ever forget that famous picture of his  
in which the various shades of the same  
tone-color seem to melt into each other,  
blended and yet distinct! The head of  
the handle of this particular umbrella  
was that of a gay tropical parrot,  
while the handle itself was of the man-  
zanita wood, which meets its fine-  
growth in California. Two tones of  
crimson fought for supremacy in the  
fabric, and the whole effect was as  
gorgeous as that of a Royal Poinsettia  
in fullest bloom.

*Clara E. Simcox*



So many are the varia-  
tions which appear  
from day to day in  
the world of fash-  
ion that, for the  
greater number of  
women, it is almost  
impossible to keep  
pace with the sub-  
tle differences that  
can be individual-  
ly adopted with  
good results. It is  
the novelties and  
trifles that can be  
applied to the as-  
sured fashions in a way that offers  
added variety and interest. And has  
there ever been a time when we have  
had such a mixup of periods and na-  
tional modes as at the present mo-  
ment? We have Watteau hats, Pompa-  
dour cretons, Egyptian scarabs, Ro-  
man striped silks, Japanese bows, not  
to mention a revival of the futurist lin-  
ings and Post Impressionist effects.  
What the exact significance of all this  
conglomeration will be—beyond a gen-  
eral bizarre license for eccentric nov-  
elty—would be hard to define. Still, it  
all adds to the interest of our clothes  
and encourages a taste for originality.

At the same time the so called "ar-  
tistic" woman (always a dangerous  
personality as far as dressing is con-  
cerned) should beware of wall-paper  
or pre-historic designs in silks and  
cretons as substitutes for the rare color-  
ings and effects in which the favored  
rich can indulge without giving of-  
fense.

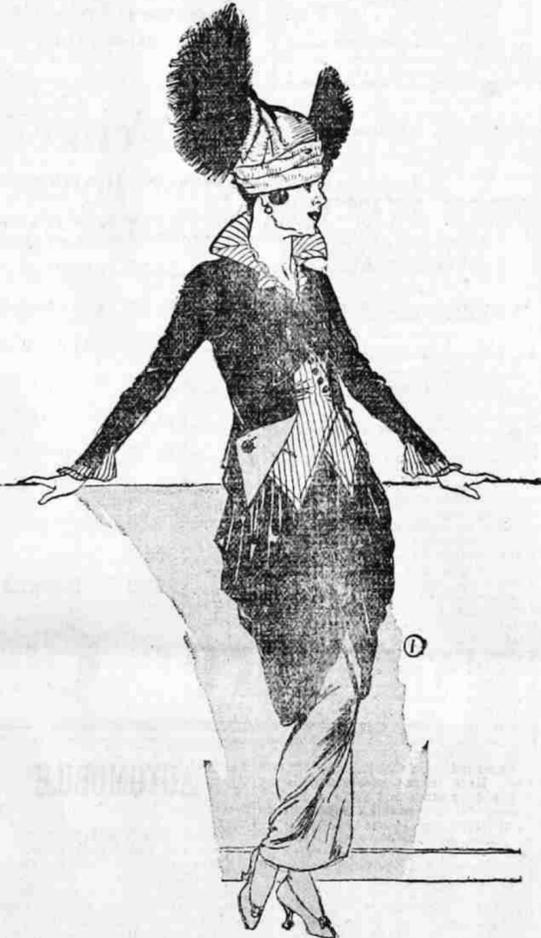
One of the commonest mistakes in  
dressing is to copy in cheap materials  
some eccentric mode that can only  
justify its existence when everything  
connected with it is beyond criticism.

**Fashionable Spring Fabrics.**

The alert brains of the manufactur-  
ing world have devised all manner of  
delectable fabrics for Spring wear.  
The most fashionable materials for the  
moment for afternoon gowns and tail-  
ored suits and trimmings are silk duve-  
ty, chiffon taffeta in Persian effects,  
Roman stripe moires, crepe poplins,  
Irish poplins in clan tartans, ripple  
crepes in silk and wool, gabardine and  
golfine.

With the tunic styles foremost the  
fashionable fabric must necessarily be  
that which drapes gracefully, clings  
closely to the figure, if necessary, and  
at the same time be fairly durable, for  
with the *thes dansante* that are all the  
vogue the afternoon gown must not be  
too fragile. As silk crepe fulfills so  
perfectly these requirements it will  
undoubtedly enjoy tremendous popu-  
larity. Several new weaves have ap-  
peared which are of interest. Pebble  
crepe, which I have used for several  
of my new models, is delightfully sup-  
ple and pliable, with an added lustre  
which makes it quite irresistible. It  
can be easily manipulated and falls  
naturally into graceful folds.

Chiffon taffeta makes up into ex-  
tremely smart looking gowns and taf-  
feta, either plain, check or striped, is  
very fashionable at the time of writing  
and undoubtedly will continue to be.  
The most supple, softest weave, of  
course, is the taffeta of the moment.  
Some of the French couturieres say



gown body, while the loose long sleeves  
have turned back cuffs of a most pi-  
quant shape.

Dark blue, called by the pretty name of  
*bleu de nuit*, is a favorite among the  
colors of Spring costumes. One attrac-  
tive model in this deep color is devel-  
oped in chiffon and taffeta, combined  
with a rare cream lace arranged in al-  
ternate irregular circles around the  
figure. A note of oddity is added by a  
unique gilt necklace, which encircles



that they find even that somewhat stiff  
for the prevailing modes, but person-  
ally I have found that it can be easily  
draped to form the ruches, frills and  
panniers that are features of the Spring  
styles.

A unique position is held by golfine.  
It is an excellent understudy for cor-  
duroy, and like corduroy will outwear  
the majority of materials, for in the  
best qualities the fabric is pure and  
not chemically treated to give it a  
finish. Perhaps it owes a great deal of  
its success to the particularly good  
colors in which it has been developed.  
An exquisite shade of chamois, the  
new Argentine yellow and flamingo,  
are all deftly brought out in this ma-  
terial. For sport coats and golf capes  
golfine supercedes all others. Stripe  
materials are very popular again, but  
they are outtrivaled by the plaids and  
checks, which are extremely smart this  
spring. The favored color combina-  
tions are shown—blue and green, blue  
and white, brown and blue, and it goes  
without saying that black and white  
is in evidence.

My French correspondent writes me  
that, although black hats were con-  
spicuous at the Auteuil races, the  
gowns were in the brightest colors and  
the most vivid plaids were used as  
trimmings on the tailored suits.

One costume that created quite a  
sensation was worn by Mlle. Yvonne  
Breillot, the young comedienne. The  
suit was of gabardine in bright Russian  
green; the skirt was made with box  
pleats and was quite short; her under-  
skirt, which came a few inches below  
her dress, was of green and blue tar-  
tan plaid silk; the little collarless bo-  
lero, with the same plaid on the revers,  
opened over a white cloth waistcoat  
which fastened in a trig manner down  
the front with a row of oxidized silver  
buttons, the genuine Scotch buttons  
bearing a thistle. Her hat was a  
Scottish *bert*, with an ochre colored up-  
standing quill. Over this costume was  
thrown a long green Neapolitan cape  
lined with white satin. The cape was  
cut with the fashionable point at the  
back and fell in ample folds, which en-  
abled the wearer to throw the end  
over her shoulder in true cavalier fash-  
ion. The cape, like most of these new

Neapolitan wraps, had a large hood  
lined with silk. This kind of cape re-  
calls the golf cape of ten years ago; it  
is extremely full and is cut circular.  
Some of the models come down as far  
as the hem of the dress.

Many white waistcoats and black and  
white vests are worn with the French  
frocks. An instance of this is shown  
in the model illustrated (Fig. 1.) The  
costume, showing a smart combination  
of two materials, is in black moire  
taffeta and a deep Thesplan blue satin-  
cloth. The little coat which is much  
seen in Paris is semi-fitting and fastens  
in a novel manner with straps over the  
vest, which is of thick white silk, striped  
with black, with a row of blue and  
black enamel buttons. The fish-wife  
drapery forming the upper part of the  
skirt is of the moire taffeta. The cloth  
of which the underskirt is made and  
which is employed for the facings of  
the coat is in that exquisite rich shade  
of blue that has recently cropped up  
with such avidity. This blue has a  
purplish tinge in it in some of its tones,  
while in others it is uncompromisingly  
blue in varying depths. It looks its  
best in the finest face cloths and poplin  
cloths. And it has this advantage, for  
those wise women who do not try to  
save on material that it cannot be suc-  
cessfully reproduced in cheap fabrics.  
Thesplan blue is only for those who  
buy good material. With such a cos-  
tume as the one under discussion, a  
little white crushed straw toque, with  
two full black pompons standing sheer  
out at the sides as in the sketch, is  
extremely smart.

**French Frocks I Have Imported.**

I have now on exhibition some new  
frocks from the French capital which  
show the general trend of style abroad  
as completely as it can be shown when  
all the notable Paris couturieres seem  
to be bent on more individual develop-  
ments than were characteristic in for-  
mer years. There is, however, a decid-  
ed leaning toward a balloon effect be-  
low the hips, again arrested at the  
knees, as exemplified in Fig. 2, where  
two rather wide bouffant ruffles again  
contract the fullness of the gathered  
skirt. A rather butterfly effect is to be  
observed on the front draping of the

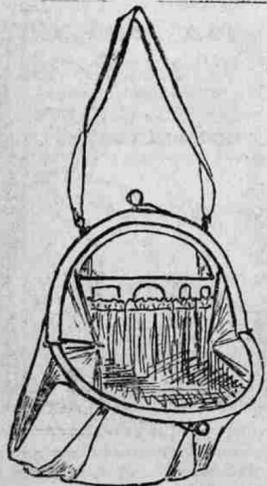
the throat in a single strand and falls  
with pendant tassels over the bust. A  
tightly grouped bunch of dull red moss  
rosebuds is tucked in at the belt.

Another dark blue street costume of  
light weight serge has charmeuse ruf-  
fles about eight inches in depth run-  
ning in diagonal lines from the waist-  
line. It is brightened by a red-gold  
chiffon bodice, hand embroidered with  
green and orange tuss silk. A bunch  
of vari-colored cherries decorates the  
girde.

The gown on Fig. 3 is a creation of  
my own, and I have used a dusky, gray  
tussor, almost the color of smoke, for

declined with a silk in soft Persian de-  
sign and the same silk composed the  
rounded crown. Stiff little bunches of  
flowers in the identical hues of the  
East were set primly around the brim  
and poised on the back was a flat bow  
of neutral-tinted brown velvet.

Hat trimmings, for the most part,  
seem to be put on at a more oblique  
angle than ever, and whether adjust-  
ed at the front or rear give the silhouette  
a decidedly flamboyant appearance  
when outlined against the background  
of some smartly subdued drawing-room  
wall; but, as long as they follow the  
correct line of proportion, we do not



A vast amount of intelligent study and artistic sense is required in the selection of suitable and appropriate clothes. Clara E. Simcox