

CORRESPONDENCE PAGE OF FASHIONS & BEAUTY

Great Variety in the New Blouse

THE blouse is always with us. Like the perennial flower, it never falls from year to year in beauty and usefulness. Each season the new waists seem to touch the high water mark in variety and perfection of design. Nothing more, apparently, can be done to add to their beauty and novelty, and yet, when the Spring displays are spread before us, the new styles are more charming and effective than they have ever been before. Moreover, they are strikingly original.

The single color note that fashion decreed for the Winter blouse, and the costume as well, has vanished, with that season. The new fancy waists are so elaborately trimmed, so decorated in contrasting colors, embroidered, soutache braids and jeweled buttons, that the effect is almost oriental in many of the more fashionable designs. Even the plainest cotton and linen blouses strike the same note of contrast in the color scheme, with their colored art and hand embroideries.

The fancy blouse shown in figure A illustrates well a number of the new notes that are conspicuous in the best designs. This model can be made of any of the light silks or satins, with an underportion of embroidery or lace, and used as a separate blouse or as part of a charming afternoon toilet. A handsome model, which showed this new style to excellent advantage, was an exquisite combination of Mandarin embroidery and a delicate lace. The chemise was of tulle, and the bodice of a deep ivory colored satin. This satin used in one of the newest French importations on the market. It is lighter in weight than the older satins and perfectly suited to the present draped effects. Its spring shades are perfect copies of the fruit and flower colors, since art has not yet found anything to compare with nature's color tones. Apricot is one of the softest and most novel shades offered in this season's colorings and it will undoubtedly prove widely popular.

To add to the rich appearance of this satin and embroidery blouse, an old gold soutache braid outlined the vest and the deep points at each side with tiny loops of the braid. But the most successful feature of this charming waist was its sleeves, which preserved the close fitting effect in spite of their elaborate cut. They were made of a tight lining and faced with the trimming material, in this case the embroidery. They were then slashed and sheered in deep Van Dyke points, recalling the exquisite sleeves worn in the court costumes of the lords and ladies of a few centuries ago.

The surplus blouse has an attraction that speaks for itself, and commends itself rather widely as being becoming to both large and slender women. In figure B is shown a model which makes use of the accustomed surplus cut, combining with it all the latest ideas in blouse making. The model, for early Spring, or for later use, is made of delicate chiffon, organdie, or batiste. Any material that can be shipped attractively can be made after this pretty design.

In a shop I saw a ready-to-make-up shirtwaist which I would like to believe was made up in the style of this model. The material was a fine, cream colored batiste, with a border of colored embroidery, nothing so much like the rim of an old Dresden plate. This ran in a series of points of pale green, and on both sides trailed a line of embroidery of pink roses with tiny green leaves. In my waist I would like the material tucked to form the yoke and skirted into the full waist design. The embroidery would form the vest and trimming for the sleeves, and the bands would be of pale green to match the embroidery. This model from which the picture of this surplus blouse was made was of mesaline, with a vest of handsome embroidery, and bands and girdle of chiffon velvet.

In this study of the new Spring blouses I am descending from the elaborate to the plain, since the first demand the most time and the greatest consideration. Figure C is shown a happy combination of simplicity with fashionable effect. The grouping of small tucks succeeded by large ones away very largely with the necessity for other trimmings. This model has exceptionally good lines, and is principally intended for the new Spring fabrics, that have body. Perhaps this design immediately suggests the idea of a blouse made up as a part of a handsome wash gown, though in laffia or bouline it will make a charming detached waist to wear with the new Summer suits. To make this waist at home with little trouble, a ready-made yoke can be bought, though one can be cut easily and effectively from the new Summer blouses. The long sleeves must be made close-fitting to insure the good lines which they give when carefully cut and tucked.

In figure D we come to the foundation of all successful shirtwaist making. This model is one that none of us can be without this season, since it is simple, but perfect lines constitute the groundwork upon which any number of attractive results may be produced.

As here shown the waist is complete for a morning garment of madras or lawn, or it can be used as an underwaist of china silk, which the fashionable thin blouses make imperative. The plain front of the waist and the simple lines of the sleeves offer opportunity that any talented home designer is immediately struck with, for at least half a dozen apparently different styles models can be successfully made from the model. The fashionable use of cotton crepe will give its best effect in this plain design. The front of the waist can be widened for the heavy hand embroidery which any clever woman can work in odd hours. Embroidery on cotton crepe, if the goods are carefully stretched on a ring, is less difficult than the same work on thinner material.

A decided departure in morning shirtwaists is the plain white wash waist embroidered with colored lines. Or it may be made from white lawn a circular design of shamrocks ran from shoulder to shoulder midway down the front. The embroidery was done in green, rose and blue, and green silk tie of the same shade. The same idea of a differently colored hand embroidery on a white surface was repeated in a number of colors.

Another street or morning novelty in the new wash waists was of white linen, with a band of violet linen an inch and a half wide down the front and at both sides, touching the shoulder seams. The ends were of colored linen, and on the left sleeve was an embroidered monogram the color of the linen trimming.

Figure D would be a helpful model in making up a simple dress blouse of a kind that I saw a few days ago. The waist was thin white net or chiffon over a flowered silk underwaist. The flowers showed through the sheer waist with charming effect, although the waist in itself was quite simple. The only trimming was a band of the underneath silk applied on the outer waist in a V shaped point to give a yoke effect. In working out your Summer blouses please to remember the great vogue of colored embroideries. The heavy appliques and ornamental art embroideries of the Winter have been continued in a

different form in the new and beautiful wash embroideries in which are found not only the conventional blues, reds and greens of other seasons, but a marvelous variety and combination of shades suitable to any of the most delicately colored fabrics.

The directorate vest for women is an

previously made for women. They are without sleeves and plain over the shoulders, like a man's waistcoat. They are cut in a deep point in front and folded at the sides in flat plaits, which cross over to the left of the waist, where they are caught with a buckle and fall in two loose sash-like ends.



FIG. B—SUITABLE FOR BOTH SLENDER AND FAT WOMEN.

other way of adding a new character to the regulation blouse of all-over embroidery or lace. These vests are made of silk or a light-weight woolen material, and in no way resemble any other vests.

These vests can be worn with last year's blouses of lace or embroidery, provided the sleeves of the latter have been cut into the new styles.

MARY DEAN.

In the Dangerous Forties

THE woman at 40 must face the fact that her first youth has passed. Youth is the calendar. Nature, unaided, has done all she can for her child; the future now rests with the woman. Will she grow 50, 60, 70 years old, or the same number of years young? So here I set up a sign post and label it "The Dangerous Forties." But the woman who makes no effort to preserve her natural beauty and power after she has reached 40 will surely slide down the hill of ugliness, while she who uses her years of experience and intelligence to help her maintain her youth will become a radiant example to her sisters.

Of course, the wise woman will begin to think of the ways to save her youth long before she sees the danger signal, but so long as the 40s can be counted a few years ahead, nature will make a pretty fair struggle to save herself when given half a chance. There will still be streaks of gold or chestnut in the hair, or a faint flush on the cheek, unless ill health or gross carelessness has entirely destroyed the physical treasures of youth. It is only when it comes that nature calls on us to help ourselves.

I know of nothing that gives a girl of young woman such a distinct feeling of pleasure as to see a woman who has made an art of growing old, who has used her years not to preserve, but to increase her beauty and charm. On the other hand, the woman who has let go herself and thereby lost all of her youthful charms in a few years, will fill her sisters with a positive shiver, as they involuntarily ask themselves, "Must I be like that in just a few more years?"

Don't wait till you are 40 to take yourself in hand. Wake up to the necessity of doing so now, no matter what your years under 40, and then, when you reach 40, the battle to keep your youth will not be half so hard as you anticipated.

When, at last, you have reached 40 you should realize clearly that you have got to be good to yourself, better than you have ever been before, if you are to win continued youth. You have got to have more rest, more fresh air, more natural pleasure. Perhaps you have given up 15 years, a little more or less to motherhood, to helping your husband in his career. Now you need to help your children and your husband by saving your youth for them, as well as for yourself.

How many women take a walk every day of their lives? Undoubtedly they intend to do so, but I venture to say that you walk about once a week instead of daily. How many women, after rising in the morning, throw open all the windows of the bedroom and spend a few minutes in simple lung gymnastics? Are you afraid of catching cold if you do this? Nonsense, it is impossible to take cold when one is breathing deeply. Draw the air slowly through the nostrils, until the lungs are entirely filled, then exhale quite forcibly, until you feel an active movement of the whole diaphragm. This simple exercise will fill the lungs with the fresh air, the best of all beauty foods, and empty them of possible impurities. In this way any woman can start her day with more energy, more bold upon health and beauty, the latter depending

upon the first more than most of us are wont to believe. In beginning the work of taking care of her youthful charms, or what remains of them through personal neglect or untoward circumstance, the woman of 40 can learn from her mirror what should be her first task. Are the eyes tired looking? Have the lines of age gathered about them or the mouth? Is the skin dry and beginning to have a curious texture, as though a little fine net-work of wrinkles were beginning to form underneath? Whatever is shown by the mirror to be the most important thing to do for good looks' sake, set your hand to the task at once. Then, when you have made progress in this work, look



FIG. A—ILLUSTRATING SEVERAL NEW BLOUSE IDEAS.

FIG. C—A HAPPY COMBINATION OF SIMPLICITY WITH FASHIONABLE EFFECT.

Making Friends in a New Town

A LETTER has just reached me, one so interesting and suggestive of so many ways of doing an important thing wrongly, that I feel inclined to give it a public answer. The proper solution of its question may be of service on some unexpected occasion.

The kernel of the argument. New friends are a good deal harder than old ones to impress. Unless one has well studied the A B C of politeness at the last residence, it is not likely that the new one will hang long with the golden fruit of social approval. So anticipate the move with a careful examination of

of which is essential, concern the letter itself. It is delivered to the person requiring it, unopened, and all that is demanded of the recipient is to enclose her visiting card, with new address, in the same envelope. The letter is also sent by hand, instead of by the usual method.

Any personal appeal in this first assault upon the social fort, unless ardently suggested by the friend giving the letter, is also, for the most part, a visiting card, with address, is quite enough to come from the stranger until she has been visited.

Letters falling, there are a number of ways which may be legitimately employed to secure a circle of new friends. The church is an unfailing and the safest way to meet them, for whether you are for or not, and everybody is here welcome.

Say you are a broad-winning girl, going to Detroit, Philadelphia or Paris to make your living and assume that you have taken pains to choose a home of which you will not be ashamed. A good deal depends upon one's dwelling place, by the way, for who wants to cultivate a person, however interesting in herself, amid slattery or undesirable surroundings? Your quarters found not them in order. This done, select the church with which you are most in sympathy, and go suitably dressed every Sunday to service. Any girl, woman or man who is a faithful church-goer cannot fail to have friends, for the object of the church is to gather all to its bosom.

A stranger who appears at three succeeding services has established herself as worthy of every notice. If she shows signs of voice, a vestryman comes to her after service to ask her to sing in the choir. She is invited to join the young ladies' guild, to come to prayer meeting, to teach in Sunday school, join sewing bees, visit the poor, all of which means a daily spreading of the circle of acquaintances, teas, dinners, receptions, what not.

"For a girl padding her own canoe," said a bachelor whom the other party, "there is nothing like the church for society, comfort, and safety against the wrong people. The wolf, however much he is cracked up as going in sheep's clothing, has no great preference for the fold. Give me the Rock of Ages and all its dear people for my friends."

With her, I firmly believe that old-fashioned standards are safe guides for conduct, friendship and peace. In these anxious times, through the church and letters of introduction, I have given the best method of obtaining a new and desirable social circle. But if one is endowed with sufficient character to withstand the possibility of wrong influence, any happening which effects acquaintance may be pursued with dignity.

In Paris the first thing a woman art student does is to join the American girls' club, which formerly stood in the Rue de la Paix. If already a clubwoman, she sends her card to the secretary of any woman's club, and is sure of a gracious reception; while the daughter of a Mason, by stating her father's name, order and lodge, to other Masons, will find immediate hospitality at the ends of the earth. The doctor, the dentist, the landlady may all be taken into one's confidence. "Here I am, a stranger in a strange land, without family, friends." That is enough, or if the speaker has the correct appearance—that occult something which proclaims breeding—doors fly open.

As to the letter which has inspired this article, it seems to me that, while modesty is a virtue, it is a plain unvarnished married woman," the writer has placed her case in a most advantageous light. A well-ordered home is a new and desirable social circle. But if one is endowed with sufficient character to withstand the possibility of wrong influence, any happening which effects acquaintance may be pursued with dignity.

The solution of this last difficulty is obvious. She who is outside the ring of family and friends must hourly burnish her armor. She must dress with taste—how much clothes have to do with the whole subject after all—and show herself in every way worthy to be known and invited into homes.

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