

# Now for WAISTS— Smaller Than Ever

Corset Factories Are Now Working Full Time and the Demand Is for Constantly Decreasing Sizes.



The women of the court of Louis XVI. wore wasp waists and gowns bedecked in bowknots. Will the new fashion demand such affectation?

Irene Bordoni, famous fashion figure, who says: "We shall have walking barrels, not women, on the streets of New York and Paris if the corsetless form is continued."

BY WINIFRED VAN DUZER.

OUR flapper—bless her bobbed and rolled-down little heart—is through. Up stage and out of the bright light, to figure only as a past factor in the continued action of the perpetual feminine comedy. Or perhaps she will assume the important place of climax and turning point—who knows?

Anyway she is going; up stage and exit right. A lithe shape, down in the programme as athletic woman, moves out reluctantly at her side. She is the graceful creature of flat hips and boyish form; the incarnation of panther-like freedom of limb and muscle. But she, too, is on her way; up stage and exit left.

And in the center, all poised and ready to move forward in triumph, there waits—guess who? Why, the limp lily, the drooping dove, the femaleish feminine of great-grandmother's day, with hips like a geography lesson in globe measurement and waist like the twisted-in portion of a sack of peanuts!

For the waistline is coming back! It is easing in by degrees, craftily as it eased out of existence years ago. It is bringing along its companions and supporters, chiefest among these being Old Ironsides. And the last-named personage is supplied, say those who know, with an unusually strong set of whalebone and steel stays, and a long, long pair of draw strings.

It is from a wholly practical source that the players in the feminine comedy are taking their cue. So the announcement in a financial review by the manufacturer of corsets when these articles not only have come back but that they are appearing in constantly decreasing sizes, settles the matter so far as the American woman is concerned!

Waistlines that averaged 28 and ran as high as 30 and 32 without detracting from the grace of the women they belonged to are shrinking to 23 inches. And the very newest corsets are being put out in sizes of 21 and 23! Together with this announcement, one manufacturer declares that orders for all kinds of corsets are increasing!

There was a time, two or three generations back, when the test of figure of the lovely bride was the ability of the bridegroom to span her waistline inside the circle of his thumbs and middle fingers. Perhaps this is to be the standard of beauty in the 1923 form. If it is, how some of the women who have frolicked through golf and swimming and all the other devices that develop muscle are going to struggle!

Not only will Miss Modernism be obliged to drop most of her mid-riff sturdiness, but she will be forced to learn a new walk. Imagine, oh yearner after those "good old days," any human wo-



Seven ages of style (1870-1922). The masqueraders are (left to right): Mrs. F. R. Martin, society woman, 1876; Mrs. H. M. McDonald, woman of 1896; Mrs. W. A. Dearing, woman of 1890; Mrs. E. M. Lincoln, Miss 1921; Mrs. A. M. Bridge, woman of 1870; Mrs. R. M. Wood, woman of 1878; Mrs. W. H. Lindsay, woman of 1900.

man dodging the rush hour with grand-mamma's mincing steps!

It likewise presages a revolution of amusements. Instead of playing tennis Miss Eighteen-inch-waist probably will confine her physical exertions to languishing a fan. Emotional expression will be changed. Women will be obliged to take to fainting again to register pain or joy. The waltz will figure as somewhat rough and tumble. The smaller the waistline the more likely it is that the minuet will return.

Dr. Adolph Lorenz, the Viennese surgeon, stated, upon the occasion of his visit to this country recently, that the right sort of corset is an aid to female well-being. He made it very plain, however, that stays must be selected warily and worn with care.

"The young girl does not need them," he said. "For older women the corset designed on 'common sense' lines sometimes forms a support for the vital organs. The one that is a perfect fit, and worn loosely, prevents spinal trouble." But this—alas for the new waistline vogue!—means no encouragement for the squeezed-in method by which that curious concavity is obtained!

And to controvert his theory comes Dr. Mary Hilton, eminent specialist on women's ailments, modernist, and leader of feminine progress. She indorses the flapper, stands for all the athletic sports which develop women's bodies, and emphatically strikes out stays of any description, which she characterizes as a "relic of female bondage." Dr. Hilton

was one of the champions of unlaced dandling. She explained it this way:

"Every sensible doctor will tell girls to play, and particularly to dance, with their corsets off, if they wish health."

"The fad for checking corsets outside

ballrooms is the most commendable one the day and age produced.

"Girls cannot dance properly with the body bound. The benefit of the exercise lies in free play of muscles which produce abdominal development and to create conditions for better motherhood and so on."

"The notion that the feminine figure must be encased and distorted for beauty or for the sake of decency is a neurotic one. Fancy the Venus de Milo wearing a set of stays!"

And another physician, Dr. Kristine Mann, offered an opinion which would indicate her theory to be about the same in that she advanced it a few years ago before the athletic waistline became universal and when she found it necessary to criticize the uncorseted figure. She said:

"The American girl is a rotten physical specimen. Of the girls working in department stores, 25 per cent have digestive troubles and 85 per cent have something the matter with their backs. And a group of well-to-do American daughters will show just as many physical defects as the poor working girls!"

Dr. Mann, a member of the health committee of the Women's Municipal league, at the time she made this statement, was medical director of the Department Store Education association, in which Mrs. Edward Hewitt and Miss Anne Morgan were interested, and so was able to make physical examinations of hundreds of girls from all classes. She said further:

"Compared with the women developed by the Greek civilization, even with

"Our flapper is through. The limp lily, the drooping dove of great-grandmother's day is about to return."



modern Scandinavian and German women, American girls are in bad shape. There are not more than eight to fifteen girls in every hundred that have flat, straight, normal backs. Out of the remaining 85 some backs hollow in too abruptly at the waist; others show lateral curves of which the visible effect is rounded shoulders or one shoulder higher than the other.

However, the two fashion figures and professional beauties, Irene Bordoni and Mme. Maurice de Rothschild, raise their plea for the corset.

Miss Bordoni is trying to rescue women from what she calls the "jelly-fish

condition," due, she says, to absence of stays. She declares that without them we soon will have "walking barrels, not women, in New York and Paris."

Madama seems to believe divorce and absence of corsets go together.

"If you want your husband to stay at home, wear corsets," is her advice. "Husbands, tired after their day's work, are not satisfied to come home and look at corpulent wives. So they go elsewhere to find more pleasing feminine companionship." This little French lady is leading a movement in Paris which aims to provide corsets free to workmen's helpmeets

## TIMID GIRL STANDS LITTLE CHANCE TO WIN SOCIALLY

Spirit of Go-Ahead Necessary if Woman Is to Make Large Circle of Enduring Friends.

SEVERAL are the reasons for social unpopularity, writes Edith Johnson in the Kansas City Star. A timid girl stands small chance in an era of aggressive womanhood when girls and women take the initiative in courting, when they get up the dances, promote all kinds of outings and take the men about in their motor cars. A girl of today faces two alternatives unless she is extraordinarily attractive or will have a dowry from her father's estate. She must accept the spirit and custom of the times, making her own way socially as a man formerly made his, or she will sit at home and twirl her thumbs. Then sometimes the brightest girl in the crowd will not find favor with her associates, for ordinary minds have a way of resenting superiority—they find it disconcerting, op-

pressive and boring from their point of view.

Not infrequently it happens that this same girl who was a bit too clever for her young circle has a very good time in later life. The qualities that alienated the associates of her girlhood win for her a flattering popularity after she is 30 years of age. Her younger friends could not appreciate the wit, the intelligence, the kindness of heart, the generosity which greatly endear her to associates in middle life.

Chief Cause of Failure Cited.

The chief cause for social failure, I am convinced, is lack of social enterprise. No woman need live without a pleasant social circle, if she has the energy and initiative to form one, together with some leisure and a little money to spend. She need not wait in these days of the "go-

getter" for others to create a social atmosphere for her—she can do that for herself.

When the women in a certain group organize a club and leave out one of their number, the latter will do one of two things, provided, of course, that she cares. She will brood over the slight and take out her displeasure in talking about it or she will brace up and, looking about her, organize a club of her own. This has happened again and again in all strata of society. After a few years, the second club may dominate and absorb the first one, to the amazement of its founders.

Go-Ahead Spirit Is Required.

So many are the cultural and civic opportunities open to women nowadays that no woman should be hampered by a sense of social helplessness. If a woman is not invited into those circles where she longs to see and be seen, she would better attend some of the affairs for which she requires no invitation, but where she can scrape acquaintance with congenial women whom, if she is clever, she may win for her social friends. Many a better-babies movement, swat-

the-fly campaign or Americanization programme has been turned to the most satisfying social uses, and why should not that be so?

Getting into society is like any other worldly undertaking—it requires the spirit of go-ahead. No woman, unless she be a celebrity, dares to sit down and fold her hands while society of its own accord makes a place for her.

If you will watch any successful society woman, you will discover that she is a clever saleswoman, and that those who seek and follow her are "sold," as we say, on the value of having her friendship, on the delightful character of her entertainments and on the desirability of having her as a guest in their homes.

Cobbler Finds \$100 in a Shoe.

WARSAW, Ind.—Thomas Ross, Winona Lake, placed \$100 in bills and several checks inside one of his shoes for safekeeping. Then he went to Florida and forgot all about the bills and checks.

While repairing a pair of shoes for Ross, a Warsaw cobbler discovered the greenbacks and checks and turned them over to the owner.