

Clinging Draperies of the Directorie Period, Originated in Paris, Make No Secret of the Female Figure



Coat of colored silk soutache in self, France

Buttons are a notable feature of the new trimmings

The very long stick sunshades - a feature of the Directorie style

One of the long, narrow, clinging skirts of supple fabric

The Black Hat affords an air of distinction when worn with light toilette

To disclose a low backed shoe and well drawn silk stocking

Fashion again claims fringe for the bow

Robe of supple satin of the Gilette type, narrow at the hips and very clinging at the feet; worn without petticoats

Richly embroidered coat which hangs from the shoulders with unpaired side seams

Clinging fabric and trimming which accentuates the long line effect

Incroyable coat with edges bound and worn with crumple vest

The 1820 price of wrapping the train about the feet

there are yet a few women who insist upon a more tailored style, and for these the Directorie and Incroyable have been devised. These are not exactly replicas of the masculine costumes of long ago, but they are near enough to be quite recognizable. A peculiar fact is that, during the period when the men were wearing cutaway coats called "Incroyable" the women wore skimpy, clinging gowns. Now women wear both styles, showing what a gain they have made toward attaining their rights and privileges!

The Incroyable coat is worn with a corselet skirt, which is as narrow as comfort allows, so even these tailored suits show the same tendencies as the more formal gowns. The skirts always have a fob pocket above the waist line, from which an old-fashioned seal must hang. The short skirt has gone entirely out of fashion, save for combination suits. These last are checked serge skirts, worn with broadcloth coats of a dark, solid coloring, and are really made on strictly tailored lines, though there is no waste of material in the skirt.

The Directorie is plainly seen to be an evolution of the Incroyable, a natural step from a coat cut squarely away at the bust to one shaped off in a diagonal line. These are always made with tiny short vests, usually of cretonne, though sometimes of embroidered satin. The Directorie coat is also used with the "two-piece" suits, when skirt and waist are one and worn over a guimpe. Costumes of this type are usually of silk, satin or pongee, while the coats are soutache and finished with the Napoleonic collar, as the standing variety has been dubbed. Covered buttons, too, are extensively employed on these suits, and they are used to trim both dress and coat.

Another coat, worn with a guimpe dress, is made in four panels each, elaborately braided and embroidered. This style must be three-quarter length, and the seams on both sides and in the back are not sewn together below the waist line. These suits are frequently made of that new fabric like-yet unlike-pongee, which is called "Mirage."

There are many coat suits of supple satin that first made their appearance this spring, and there are many coats made entirely of soutache braid woven in and out and lined with chiffon or like weight silk in the same shade as the braid. The satin suits are generally trimmed with rows of buttons and bands of Persian embroidery. With lingerie dresses no coat may be worn, save that of Irish lace or an all-enveloping one of pongee, which may or may not be waterproof.

Feathered and flowered hats are worn with tailored suits as well as lingerie gowns and sheath dresses; even that old standby, the ostrich plume, has been improved upon. The latest is to cut away one side of the feathers entirely and substitute a little frill of softest marabou. The effect is rather incongruous, but it has appealed to the fancy of the fickle ladies of fashion.

Tulle, too, is much in vogue, and the favorite color is a bright apple green, while flowers with small blossoms, such as lilacs, are arranged to completely hide the crown of many of the latest chapeaux. Veils do not seem quite appropriate with the gown of very classic cut, so milady has discarded them, and wears instead a large affair of chiffon, which is quite two yards wide and four yards long. This protects her coiffure before she arrives at her destination, and later it serves as a scarf to better show off the graceful lines of her gown and figure.

Of course, the old-fashioned sunshade would never do to carry with these artistic costumes, so a parasol with a very long stick has been provided, which must be held in the same care-free and natural way as the country-bred Bonaparte bore her crook. What could affectation have to do in combination with Peep bore her crook? What could affectation have to do in combination with Peep bore her crook? What could affectation have to do in combination with Peep bore her crook?

Of course, the shrouding skirts have had their effect on footwear and stockings. The only really fashionable shoe is finished with a very high heel, while large colonial buckle, preferably of gold, ornaments the instep. Stockings must certainly match the gown, and they must be of silk. Cotton stockings will not meet the requirements, be they ever so meretricious. The ultra-fashionable wear suede slippers in the same shade as gown and stockings, but this last is not considered an absolute necessity, for the hats, too, are so often black, though they may be trimmed with any color.

In fact, black is very popular, indeed, just now, and hardly any really good costume may be finished without just a touch of it somewhere about, while almost all black costumes are lightened by a little trimming of apple green.

In reviewing the fashions of the last few years, it is easily seen that they slowly merged from the strictly masculine type to the princess and then to the Empire. These, in time, combined and introduced the Directorie, and later the Incroyable. Following this line of retrogression, the next step will be the loose chignon gown of Charlemagne's time, girded at the waist, with a golden belt studded with heavy jewels.

Until long after 1800 no collars were worn, and the original classic gowns of the Revolution were low necked in the extreme. Now transparent guimpes cover the neck and arms. Will the next step be a complete return to ancient fashion?

Still in the line of retrogression, the chiffon and tulle scarf, now beginning its reign, belonged to the era of Marie Antoinette. Is the long ribbon the next step? Whence does fashion come? Why is it that the idiosyncrasies of an individual are seized upon and made a world-wide custom, while others remain unnoticed? Is there one fountainhead, one real Dame Fashion? There is an idea prevalent at the moment that the old Dame lives in Budapest, and there she sits in some medieval castle and sends startling ideas out in the world. But Budapest is not the fountainhead of fashion. Unquestionably it is Paris, but how and when the autocratic Dame holds court is impossible to say. Fashion is elusive. A good idea is found; surely it will be taken up and made popular! The women never see it, they refuse to countenance it, not one, but all in a body. Again some hideous style revived will instantly strike their fancy, and even the fairest lady looks like a caricature of her former self.

The new gowns are unquestionably beautiful and graceful, but practical they are not. They suit admirably all formal occasions, and, if the style is not abused, the innovation will enjoy a long day of popularity.