

# WHAT WELL DRESSED WOMEN WILL WEAR

## Shorter Skirts Bring Higher Boots

By Anne Rittenhouse  
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EVEN at the height of the craze for the imitation of Russian ballet-costumes, there never were such high boots and short skirts as now. Victorianism allowed the skirts to miss the ground by many inches, in order to show the flesh-colored stockings and flat black slippers of a woman with a well-turned ankle and an arched instep.

We will have those two requisites necessary for a short skirt. The American woman has the best looking feet in the world, possibly barring the Spanish woman, among those nations who wear boots. She is conscious of the fact, and the manufacturers cater to it and the rest of the world imitates her. But, even Victorianism at its best, or worst, never allowed women to wear skirts so short as the ones that have come upon us at the coming of spring.

Twelve inches from the ground is the measurement of a few of the newest. A hem that ripples six and eight inches above the floor is already commonplace in the large centers of fashionable life. The strange part of it is that the critics are silent. Are they stumped, or did the bitter and unsuccessful fight against the hobble skirt and the split skirt leave them too discouraged for further attack? We do not know, but we do not listen to sermons attacking it, as we did when the "peek-a-boo" waists became barred from some churches.

The cartoonists are strangely silent about this amazing fashion. And it is really amazing. We who saw it coming on were prepared for a storm of criticism; yet here the fashion is popularly launched, and the only comment is left to the reporters, not the reformers. Between these two classes in women's apparel there is a vast gulf of difference fixed.

**What Happens When Slippers Come.**  
So far the effect of a skirt cut 10 inches from the floor is mitigated by the high boots worn; but what of the effect when the warm weather makes women discard the boots and go in for pumps? Are we to have the sight of the thick and thin, the curved and the straight, the bowed and the fleshless striding along with no covering but stockings between the heel and the hem? This is not a pleasant thought!

The carrying of a skirt out may add to the beauty of a feminine procession. It appears on the surface as though we were to be asked to approve or combat one of the most remarkable fashions that has been put over by the dressmakers in decades.

The women have taken to it like fish to water. They leap at the idea of walking about in an untrammelled fashion. They have been hobbled so long that they swing like a pendulum to the other extreme. Skirts that are 5 yards wide and 10 inches short delight them. A walk down New York's Fifth avenue at noon makes one rub the eyes and ask if the Russian ballet girls have forsaken the stage and gone on promenade.

Two conditions are responsible for these costumes: The zeal of the bootmaker and the vogue for the wide skirts. Every one found that the latter hid, if long, six yards swirling around the instep or ankles took every particle of grace away from a woman's figure, so the hem was drawn higher and higher in order to combine beauty and fashion, and at this juncture the American bootmaker saw his chance and produced the high-laced shoe and its more dressy companion, the buttoned cloth boot.

**But for Grandmother—Taboo!**  
A charming fashion, indeed, for the young woman with a good looking foot and ankle, but for the grandmother, no matter how strongly she retains a semblance of youth, this fashion should be taboo. America has developed a race of



Palést pink taffeta was used to build up this dainty evening gown, so similar in its lines to the gowns of colonial days. The skirt hangs full with the merest suggestion of a gold lace foundation. The wide girde laps a chiffon vesting, and bodice of gold lace with short, kimono sleeves.



This afternoon frock is fashioned of silk in inch-wide stripes, blue and white. The pockets, appearing on everything this year, are outlined in blue, as are also the belt, bands at the sleeves and yoke. The collar is blue.



Brown taffeta was combined with net to develop this ultra-smart afternoon costume. The sleeveless jacket is made of taffeta, and taffeta bands trim the wide cuffs, the front of the bodice and the bottom of the skirt. Tassels depending from each corner of the jacket give a finished air to the whole.

young women for which some historian should find a name. They are as important in their way as were the Amazons. Reckless young boys have named them the Kewpies. Social students are trying to classify them. The type exists in every stratum of social life. They come from the factory and the millionaire drawing room; they stand in the subway and they run their own cars; they go to work at 8

o'clock in the morning, and they have breakfast in bed at 10.

For them all the fashions in the world seem to be designed. They wear everything that is launched with brilliancy and bravado. They are the delight of the dressmakers and the despair of their imitators. They are not French nor English. They owe nothing to any race, or any land, or any tradition. They are made in America.

Of course, they can wear the short skirt and the high boot, for nature seems to have given every one of them the possibility of looking fascinating in whatever happens to be the idea of the moment, but how will the tall woman, the short, stout woman, the woman with the long foot and the thin ankle look in these Russian ballet skirts and boots? A card of warning should be put up in every dressmaking house in the country concerning them.

**Acceptance of the French Boot.**  
When Paris first took up for men and women the almost square-toed shoe, laced up the front and made up of a combination of patent leather and tan colored cloth, it was called the Argentine. All the men, except Englishmen, wore this shoe abroad, and, after this example, the women took it up. It reached America this winter and was scoffed at. Now it is the street shoe of the season, and we look upon it with kindness and buy a pair ourselves, although we wonder in the beginning of its reign how any one could make her feet so conspicuous.

The blocked toe of the French has been changed to the pointed American toe, much to the dismay of a large class of young women who like that shortened appearance of the feet which the short vamp and the square toe give. Deep tan cloth, usually with a heavy twill, is used for the upper part and dull or patent for the vamp, the heel and the bands up the front.

The fashion for this color has brought back the laced Russian leather shoe in its natural tan. The smartest women are wearing it in the morning, laced high on the leg, with their short-skirted suits of covert cloth, or khaki-colored gabardine, or Scotch check in red and brown.

For afternoon wear there are all manner of high boots with colored leather, especially in tan and beige. Some of these are made in the commonplace fashion, with a dull leather bottom and a suede top fastened with small smoked pearl buttons; but the newer ones are far more fanciful. They are of beige-colored cloth with only the vamp and heel of varnished leather. The bootmakers, and many women claim that this type of shoe makes the foot look smaller; and it is a point to be remembered by the woman with a long foot that a break beneath the instep, between the vamp and the heel part, is a trick that always seemingly shortens the foot. However popular these boots are, they look entirely unfit for the street. They are good enough for afternoon occasions in the house or for the motor, but they look out of place with any kind of fashionable street suit.

The bronze boot has also been re-

vised. It comes in the most fragile workmanship which makes it suitable for the afternoon dance, but not the morning shopping. Unfortunately, too many women do not discriminate nicely between these occasions.

**Fashions for Spats Continue.**  
The boot fashion which England has forced upon the world is the wearing of tan or gray spats at all hours of the day. This is an established custom among Englishmen, but it is now the most popular fashion among American women. They wear this cloth upper over the most extravagant patent leather pump with high Louis XIV heels.

Women who go in for sensible shoes—and these are also quite fashionable this spring, with their two-layer heel and flat soles—also place the tan and the gray spat above them. One might safely assert that the strong rivalry at the moment is between the spat and

### Club for Women in Business

By Jessie Roberts.

Boston has a club that is entirely for business women, and New York is following her. What is more, the two clubs hope to interchange courtesies between the members who may be visiting either of the cities, much as university clubs do.

It is an idea that should be developed in every large sized city on the continent. The Boston club was founded because several women who live energetic lives in the business world realized that there was too little interchange between women who are working in general do not know, and who do not know each other, yet they are women who know life by actual experience, and who have something to give the community at large. We felt that such women do not meet very much unless by chance, and have no knowledge of the various pursuits in which their fellow workers are engaged. Here they meet on a personal basis. No one has to explain herself, everyone meets on a common ground.

A big part of the club is the restaurant, where the food is well cooked and tempting, but of moderate price. The lunch hour is the greatest hour, for then the women run in from their different offices, shops, or even farms, for a number are farmers, and have a chance to swap ideas. There are also evening lectures on many topics, business points, art, nature, anything the women may choose as an interest or a hobby.

The building is pleasant, central, charmingly but simply furnished. There is also a committee for the exchange of information concerning employment, keeping office hours. It is time for the business women everywhere else to get together and found their own clubs. Boston has proved the success of such an organization, and the speed with which New York is following her example proves that business women are keen for the idea.

the laced shoe, each being in a tone of tan. There seems something incongruous in the juxtaposition of a cloth spat above a Louis XIV patent leather slipper; realizing this, there has come about a fashion for fancy uppers made of corded silk, of thin suede, of heavy brocade.

One sees these on the street in the afternoon, admirably harmonizing with the skirts above them. Summing it up, there seems no place for the uncovered ankle in the fashions of this spring, but the warm weather will surely change his condition. High boots, hot cloth uppers, will both be shelved in the closet when the first hot day strikes town.

It has always been a curious coincidence in fashion that new things are brought out at unsuitable seasons. The designers advance the high neck and the long sleeves when spring comes, and the high boots for dancing when summer is scheduled, and the transparent blouse when the snow begins to fly. Possibly these are just advanced runners of the fashion. If we do not feel tempted to dance in

high satin boots or brocade spats this warm weather season, we shall probably find the fashion in full swing by September.

**Dancing in High Boots.**  
When Mme. Paul Poiret was here she introduced the fashion for wearing the regulation high Russian boot in white, red and tan leather. It was square-toed, flat-heeled and reached far above the hem of her skirt. It was considered a Poiret fantasy.

Today our best women are asking for these high Russian boots. The mannequins who showed off the new fashions in New York wore them. Another fashion of the hour which was introduced at the Paris openings in February is the high laced satin boot to be worn in the afternoon and evening. It has taken the place in smart usage of the satin slipper. The mannequins in Paris are supposed to introduce the newest footwear along with the newest gown, and their high satin boots made of the gown material, worn at the private openings for American buyers, instantly started a new fashion.

## NEWEST FASHION TOUCHES THAT APPEAL TO MILADY

**SIMPLICITY** in line is a strong feature, and it shows the straight path along which the winds are going. There is no complicated drapery or ornamentation. Naturally, the French designer uses more skill in the manipulation of material and effects are usually simpler than the methods when the American sewing woman goes to copy them.

One of the well known Fifth avenue importing houses in New York says that it is no easy matter to rush out new gowns these days. The trick they turned in other times of taking an order for a frock on Saturday afternoon and delivering it on Wednesday morning is too difficult to contemplate now.

Although the high collar is reckoned as a first fashion, the best houses sent over the neck which is opened in a V in front, outlined by a handkerchief collar in a soft material. Or, andie collar in colors is a feature of many gowns. It often extends from the neck to the waist, forming a vest, a double collar, and also a pair of turn-over cuffs.

In the minds of all the designers a strong purpose ran to keep the hips smooth and the waist trim. The second empire waist line is as frequent as the normal line, but the balance of power is toward the latter. Evidently there was some perturbation about the armholes in gowns. Its chief disadvantage lies in the fact that it will be well-nigh impossible to accomplish at home.

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