

CURRENT FASHIONS.

It is decidedly much easier to tell what is not fashionable, in the way of dress, than what is. A prominent Parisian authority says that there will be no so-called fashionable color this coming season, but that soft tints will be preferred to harsh ones and that light shades will supersede dark ones whenever possible. Another equally good authority declares that brown and green are to be the leading colors; however, as they are not "infallible" it may be that we shall see quite an unthought-of color occupying the first rank. If the statement of the French writer, Balzac, be true, i. e., "that a woman's character finds expression in her favorite color," we shall undoubtedly have positive fashionable colors which all will adopt, for no woman will be ready to label herself as quarrelsome by wearing her favorite color of orange, or as a coquette by adopting white.

In many of the heavier woolen fabrics suitable for winter wear, is seen the crepon finish. These goods are crinkled in stripes, with plain stripes between or else crepe all over, like crepe cloth. Chevron, or V stripes of bias lines coming from the selvages and meeting in points in the middle of the breadth, remain in as great favor as when first introduced. Narrow zigzag stripes in wool fabrics are seen again in all serviceable colors. Besides the figured wool goods, the prominent feature of which is their roughness and which take the preference of plain ones, embroidered cloth robes are meeting with great favor. In these the new Persian border is embroidered in the true oriental colorings and the points of the design are sometimes eighteen inches deep.

Some of the cloth robes show applied borders in velvet and cloth of a contrasting shade outlined with steel beads.

Every store has its choice of robes a disposition, from the simple merino costume, ornamented with a few scrolls, to the rich silken gown on which the most complicated designs are wrought in silk and beads, or glittering threads of gold and silver. There is also embroidered silk and satin, embroidered China crepe and nun's veiling, embroidered gauze and net for entire toilettes or in combination with plain fabrics. Even the finest productions of the Lyon's looms stand second this season to plain, silken fabrics, decorated by machine embroidery, a species of ornament that can be modified as occasion serves according to the kind of dress it is intended to adorn and the person who is to wear it.

Fine cloth is especially adapted to the *fourreau* and princess dresses which mold the form almost without a fold. The trimmings applied to them are rich although somewhat heavy; embroidery holds the first rank which is generally in the Renaissance style.

Passmenterie will serve the same purpose although not so flat while fur is in great demand and will be used in one broad band at the bottom of the skirt or in several narrower bands, alone or in combination with embroidery. Dark lined fur, like sable, is sometimes applied to light cloths but it is considered more stylish this season to choose a fur trimming that recalls the tone of the cloth.

There is no doubt but that the tendency at present is towards draped skirts, though as yet draperies are only applied to dressy gowns. The more simple costumes remain straight as ever. The basque, varied in form will remain the leading style for bodices of wool material. The most fashionable dressmakers are cutting cloth gowns to clear the floor, if for street wear, a style which will be favored by all sensible women. Skirts are box-plated in the back and for stout figures the fashion of trimming the zored seams is gaining ground as it gives a taller and more slender appearance. Fleecy plaids are handsomely trimmed with bands of fur, or velvet bands and a plain cloth vest braided in black.

The tea gown has a potent rival in the house dress, which has grown out of it. This is trained, brighter in color, and richer in material than an ordinary gown for everyday wear, but closer fitting than the tea gown, and with no suggestion of a *neglige* gown. Many tea gowns can be worn without corsets and are loose, but this is not the case with the house gown which gives a good excuse for wearing handsome silks, velvets and woolen broades, which with the present severe style of walking gowns have been given a second place. A pretty house gown of brown serge has a tuche on the edge of the skirt lined with pink surah, which flows with every turn of the wearer.

Black net heavily covered with fine, cut-jet beads and nail heads is used for plastrons, and sleeves on jet-trimmed gowns of black or colored silk, black net, lace or velvet. Some Parisian modistes are even putting fur borders on ball dresses of lace and gauze.

It will undoubtedly be what is called a fur winter, whether a cold one or not. All kinds of fur trimmings will be worn; borders, cuffs, hems of skirts, collars, bands on dresses, hats, bonnets, etc.

The newest seal skin jackets are three quarters length and have a wide, high collar which is capable of many aspects, but most becoming with the corners turned down in front. A new form of jacket is fastened on the left side and edged with a narrow border of Persian lamb. There are other special novelties, the Newmarket for example modelled on the ordinary garment of that name, and having hip pockets. The sleeves are no longer extravagantly high, but just sufficiently full to be becoming.

The Tudor fur capes are made with a shoulder yoke edged with a double row of fur, from beneath which the cloak is pulled to a three quarter length.

The light fitting coats are all long reaching almost to the knees, double breasted, with revers and hip pockets,



No. 1288.

The coat basque has a full front of pink surah to match with collar, cuffs and pockets of brown and pink shot velvet. Fancy velvets, silks and satin are used for these dresses in combination with wool materials. Scroll patterns are a marked feature in the fancy velvets, the pattern being nearly always black on a heliotrope, gray pink, electric, or the fashionable duck-egg blue, which verges closely on green; the newest color of the moment is however grasshopper green.

For evening dresses for young girls, come brocaded bengalines and a light make of shot satin, with tiny patterns as cubes and dice in white on pink, or gray on orange, or dove on rose; also the China crepes in delicate colors having fine satin stripes, in the same color, and made up over the plain crepe to match. Another silk mentioned in our last Paris letter is *Eolienne* diagonal which has stripes like ropes carried in a slanting direction across the material in colors that are most exquisite, such as old rose, yellow and Chartreuse peach. Printed chiffon, the designs representing rosebuds, violets and other flowers in their natural colors on a white ground, make charming evening toilettes for the young people; this material is draped over silk foundations, and for the neck and sleeve trimming the design is printed on either edge of the goods and to match the wider fabric.



No. 1290.

No. 1289.

Silk blouses, which are now fashionable and largely worn, are made of Oriental silk, with yokes and soft falling plaits to the waist inclosed by a waist-belt, below which falls a deep flounce of black or white lace. Others have a rounded yoke formed of puffings of silk alternating with lace insertion, or want of harmony in color. Lace, either white, black or cream colored, has never been used to such an extent as during the fall season and will without doubt be continued. Guipure, Renaissance, Venetian guipure, antique guipure, guipure d'art, silk guipure with jet ornaments, imitation Chantilly, *point de Venise* and *point de Bruges*, are all used. Guipure trimmings are employed for dresses of ladies' cloth or other woolen goods in the shape of plastrons, revers, collars, hip skirts, etc.

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they are edged throughout with fur, or have revers, collars and cuffs of fur. The old fashioned paletot is again revived for outdoor wear, fitting at the back with straight fronts. The cloth caps are warm and useful, with broad hairy stripes and astrachan collars. As the winter advances these caps are to be worn with sealskin or astrachan yokes and collars. The fashionable wrap cloak is made of rough cloth, checked or plain, with a hood; others are in tweed, lined with chooks or stripes.

Boas are to be as much worn this year as last and the three quarter fur caps of fifty years ago. They fall much below the waist and are rather high on the shoulders. Muffs will be larger than those of last season.

RUTH CUTLER.



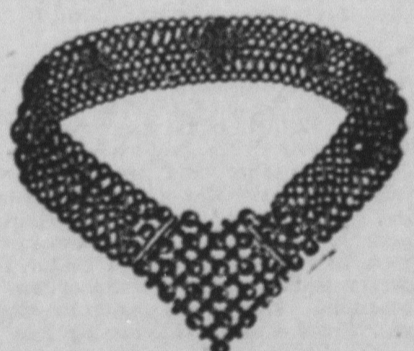
No. 1289. BACK VIEW.

No. 1287. VELVET WRAP.—The materials for this are black velvet, feathers and jet passmenterie. The back, with three seams, is cut half-long and in points at the lower edge above a plain basque, supported at the waist line and trimmed with feathers, as is the front of the sleeves, the long tabs, the edge of the fronts and the flaring collar. The flat collar pointed in front and open in the back is heavily embroidered with jet; the same embroidery of jet ornaments the sleeves of the mantle. The ends of the tabs are pleated and ornamented with feathers, and the mantle is closed in the centre of the front with fancy clasps.



No. 1290. BACK VIEW.

No. 1288. PLASTRON.—Plastron of anaw colored surah to be worn within an open vest. It is formed of a high collar and a plastron surrounded by a narrow edge of silk embroidery; it opens in the centre under a puff of the same tissue attached to the collar by a knot of the surah. The top, at the neck, is pleated then spreads itself in the form of a loose chemise.



No. 1291.

GIRL'S CLOAK. A COAT FOR A LITTLE BOY.—No. 1289. The girl's cloak is made of beige-colored wool which has a border of brown stripes. It is lined with flannel in the waist. The back of the waist is cut plain the fronts wide enough to permit plaits to be laid at the neck, the fulness being shirred at the waist line. The caps are cut so the stripes form a border: is plain in the back but pleated on the shoulders in front and back where it is ornamented by a box-pleated ruche of pinked cloth. Pointed belt of the stripes.

No. 1290. The little boy's coat is made of dark blue serge and trimmed with narrow gilt braid on the sailor collar and with two rows of brass buttons.

JET BELT.—No. 1291, illustrates a fashionable pointed jet belt.

No. 1292. RECEPTION DRESS.—Gown of tea rose *peau de soie* trimmed with white silk brocaded with heliotrope, colored flowers, and velvet of the same shade. Plastron and belt of white silk. The skirt is of *peau de soie* with a narrow puffing of velvets on the lower edge. On the hips are double flounces of brocade forming a sort of panier with the lower edge, both front and back, arranged in the form of a cascade. Bodice with round waist and draped belt of white silk; the full fronts are draped in V shape at the top and crossed at the bottom. High collar of white silk bordered with a puff of velvet; knots of velvet on the shoulders. Full sleeves of *peau de soie* with the lower parts close, of brocade and finished with a puff of velvet. Feathers may be used instead of velvet.



No. 1292.

No. 1293. DRESS FOR A YOUNG GIRL.—Gray wool checked with a narrow blue velvet stripe is the material employed for this plain but stylish dress. The bodice of plain gray wool has the back pleated; the fronts, pleated on each side, open on a pointed plastron of blue velvet. Attached to the lower edge of the bodice are draped paniers of plain gray cloth; a girde of passmenterie is placed at the bottom of the bodice forming a running knot in front and a knot with fringed ends in the back. High, straight collar of blue velvet and sleeves of the striped goods.



No. 1293.

A Woman's Wit.

Many of the first settlers of Illinois were rude in speech and rough in manner. Money was scarce with them, and service was paid for in produce. Governor B. used to illustrate these incidents of frontier life by the following anecdote: One day when he was a Justice of the Peace there came to his office a young man, accompanied by a young woman.

"Be you the squire?" asked the many youth.

"Yes, sir."

"Can you tie the knot for us right away?"

"Yes, sir."

"How much do you charge?"

"One dollar is the legal fee, sir."

"Will you take your fee in bees wax?"

"Yes, if you can't pay cash."

"Well, go ahead and tie the knot, and I'll fetch the wax."

"No," said the squire, thinking there was a good chance for a little fun; "bring in the beeswax first, and then I'll marry you."

Reluctantly the youth went out to where was hitched the horse upon which, Darby and Joan fashion, the pair had ridden, and brought the wax in a sack. On being weighed, its value was found to be only about half a dollar.

"Wal," said the anxious groom, "tie the knot, and I'll fetch more wax next week."

"No sir; I don't trust; that's against the rules of this office."

Slowly the disappointed youth turned to go out, saying:

"Come, Sal; let's go."

"I say, Mister," answered Sal, with a woman's wit, "can't you marry us as far as the wax will go?"

"Yes, I can, and will," replied the "squire," laughing; and he did.

It is said that there are five citizens of Kawanda Falls, Penn., each bearing the same name, John A. Libson. They are not related in the remotest way, as far as they know. It is certainly a remarkable coincidence.

FANCY WORK.

HINTS FOR CHRISTMAS.

Father Time jogs steadily on and waits for no man. It seems only a few weeks ago that we were in the midst of Christmas gaieties, and now if we will not be caught napping, we cannot afford to buy the many Christmas gifts designed for our friends, must turn our thoughts and attention to planning these "love gifts." And surely they are rightly named "love gifts," for it is only love which prompts the spending of time, that in some cases one can ill afford, in order to make them. And does not a gift, no matter how simple, if made by the hands of a friend touch a chord in your heart that no bought gift could do? I remember one bright Christmas not long since when a little mat made of zypher, knit in a round chain by means of an empty spool and pins, was placed in my hands by a little ragged mite of humanity who at the same time wished me "A Merry Christmas."

It was all she had to give, for she was only a "waif," and it was made of odds and ends which had been given to her from time to time; but I assure you that little gift was more precious to me than the elaborately embroidered toilet set besides which I placed it, for I knew that it was the material expression of the warm, heart-felt love of a young child, while the more expensive gift was nothing more than a passing courtesy. In this and several succeeding numbers of our paper we propose to give our readers not only suitable designs with descriptions for Christmas gifts but also now and then hints simple, useful and practical which each one can elaborate according to her own fancy.

A pretty gift and one that will be appreciated is a crocheted muff, which can be made of black or soft gray wool, and lined with bright colored silk or satin. For this make a foundation chain of 78 stitches. 1st row.—Do 1 ch at the end of the row. 2d row.—One ch in the first ch, always taking up the back part of the loop; take up the back of the second loop, draw the wool through, pass the wool around the hook, take up the same loop again. This makes 3 loops on the hook; continue in the same way to the end of the row. 3d row.—Plain dc; remember to work in the back part of the stitch as before.

Repeat the 2d and 3d rows until the piece is wide enough for the muff. For making up the muff a sheet of wadding, some narrow ribbon, the color of the silk which you may select for the lining, and the lining silk itself, which should be a third larger than the crocheted piece, are necessary. Cover one side of the wadding with dark canvas cloth; turn down on the sides of the silk, which will form the sides of the muff, a narrow hem, on the wrong side which a casing should be run, through which the ribbon is drawn. Draw up the ribbon till your silk is of the same size as the crocheted piece, then sew it up, also the crocheted piece, and draw it over the wadded silk so that the silk side will form the inside of the muff; fasten the edges neatly and finish with pretty bows.

Pretty book-marks can be made of three strips of narrow ribbon of different lengths, fastened together at the top with a flat steel ornament, the lower ends turned to form a point and ornamented with a cross, anchor, etc., also formed of steel. If one is too far from a fancy store where these ornaments are sold, the ends of the ribbon may be fringed and just above a tiny little tag made of some pretty contrasting colored silk, just the width of the ribbon and filled with fine white sand, neatly fastened on.

Twine bags are very acceptable to a housekeeper and may be made very ornamental. They can be crocheted of colored cord, or made of strips of narrow picot edged ribbon or colored plush. If crocheted use the well known shell stitch; begin with a chain of 4 stitches which fasten in a ring then use single crochet for 5 rows after which change to shell stitch, widening as often as necessary till you have a circle the size of your ball of twine, knit a piece without widening to cover the ball wall, finish off with an edge and draw the top together by running narrow ribbon through the meshes after you have inserted the ball. The lower part should be finished either with a bow of ribbon or with a fine cord and tassel made of the same cord that is used for the ball cover. When made of plush cut the plush in the form of an envelope, shaping the four flaps to resemble chestnut leaves. Have a little brass eye inserted at the top of each leaf through which green cord or ribbon should be drawn and formed into long loops for hanging the holder.

Two bags are very acceptable to a housekeeper and may be made very ornamental. They can be crocheted of colored cord, or made of strips of narrow picot edged ribbon or colored plush. If crocheted use the well known shell stitch; begin with a chain of 4 stitches which fasten in a ring then use single crochet for 5 rows after which change to shell stitch, widening as often as necessary till you have a circle the size of your ball of twine, knit a piece without widening to cover the ball wall, finish off with an edge and draw the top together by running narrow ribbon through the meshes after you have inserted the ball. The lower part should be finished either with a bow of ribbon or with a fine cord and tassel made of the same cord that is used for the ball cover. When made of plush cut the plush in the form of an envelope, shaping the four flaps to resemble chestnut leaves. Have a little brass eye inserted at the top of each leaf through which green cord or ribbon should be drawn and formed into long loops for hanging the holder.

CROCHETED EDGING.—This design is very effective and makes a pretty trimming for a bureau scarf or for other purposes. It is worked in the length. Begin with the upper line of circles:

First Row.—Eleven chain, join, 13 s. c. under the ring * 11 chain, join to the first of 11 chain with 1 slip-stitch, which must be worked very tightly, so that the circle joins very evenly; work 14 s. c. under the chain at the lower side, so that the singles in this row all lie on the same side; repeat from * for the length required.

Second Row.—Under the other half of chain work 7 singles, 6 chain, 1 s. c. into the second, 9 chain, 1 s. c. into the fifth, 2 chain, 7 s. c. under the chain, join to first single or circle, worked in last row with 1 slip-stitch worked very tightly; repeat from the beginning of the row.

Third Row.—Work another row of circles as follows: 11 chain, 7 s. c. under the chain, 1 slip-stitch into the centre of chain between two picots of last row, 7 s. c. under same 11 chain; repeat from beginning of row.

Fourth Row.—Fourteen s. c. under each of the three first circles of chain, 7 s. c. under next circle; turn, and work back; 14 chain, 1 s. c. under the ninth 2 chain, 1 slip-stitch into the fifth single of next circle, 4 chain, 1 s. c. into the third, 2 chain, 1 slip-stitch into the seventh of 14 chain, 18 chain, 1 s. c. into the fourteenth, 2 chain; pass over three singles of scallop; 1 s. c. into the next, 7 chain, 1 s. c. into the third, 2 chain, 1 s. c. into the twelfth of 18 chain, 8 chain, 1 slip-stitch into centre of next circle; turn, work 11 s. c. under the eighth chain, 14 s. c. under the next chain and 11 s. c. under the next; work 7 angles under the circle last worked under, and 7 s. c. under the next; turn, and work back; 14 chain, 1 s. c. into the tenth, 2 chain, 1 s. c. into the next scallop of singles, 7 chain, 1 s. c. into the third, 2 chain, 1 s. c. into the eighth of 14 chain, * 16 chain, 1 s. c. into the eleventh, 3 chain, 1 s. c. into the depth between two scallops, 8 chain, 1 s. c. into the fourth, 2 chain, 1 s. c. into the sixth of 16 chain; repeat from * three times more; 14 chain, 1 s. c. into the tenth, 2 chain, 1 s. c. into the next scallop of singles, 7 chain, 1 s. c. into the third, 2 chain, 1 s. c. into the eighth of 14 chain, 7 chain, 1 s. c. into centre of next circle; turn, 13 s. c. under each of three first loops of chain, 17 s. c. under next loop, 13 s. c. under each of three next loops, 7 s. c. under last circle worked under; repeat from the beginning of the row.

For the heading, which is done on the upper edge of the first row of circles, was as follows:—

1st row.—One s. c. into each of three singles, 6 chain; repeat.

2d row.—One d. c. into first stitch, 2 chain; skip 2 stitches, and repeat.

3d row.—One d. c. into first stitch, 2 chain; skip 2 stitches, and repeat.

4th row.—One d. c. into first stitch, 2 chain; skip 2 stitches, and repeat.

5th row.—One d. c. into first stitch, 2 chain; skip 2 stitches, and repeat.

6th row.—One d. c. into first stitch, 2 chain; skip 2 stitches, and repeat.

7th row.—One d. c. into first stitch, 2 chain; skip 2 stitches, and repeat.

8th row.—One d. c. into first stitch, 2 chain; skip 2 stitches, and repeat.

9th row.—One d. c. into first stitch, 2 chain; skip 2 stitches, and repeat.

10th row.—One d. c. into first stitch, 2 chain; skip 2 stitches, and repeat.

11th row.—One d. c. into first stitch, 2 chain; skip 2 stitches, and repeat.

12th row.—One d. c. into first stitch, 2 chain; skip 2 stitches, and repeat.

13th row.—One d. c. into first stitch, 2 chain; skip 2 stitches, and repeat.

14th row.—One d. c. into first stitch, 2 chain; skip 2 stitches, and repeat.

15th row.—One d. c. into first stitch, 2 chain; skip 2 stitches, and repeat.

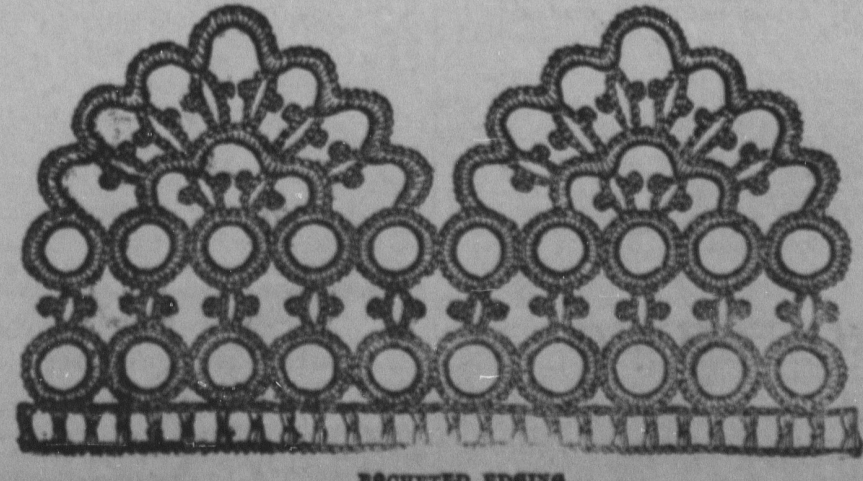
16th row.—One d. c. into first stitch, 2 chain; skip 2 stitches, and repeat.

17th row.—One d. c. into first stitch, 2 chain; skip 2 stitches, and repeat.

18th row.—One d. c. into first stitch, 2 chain; skip 2 stitches, and repeat.

19th row.—One d. c. into first stitch, 2 chain; skip 2 stitches, and repeat.

20th row.—One d. c. into first stitch, 2 chain; skip 2 stitches, and repeat.



CROCHETED EDGING.