

What Well Dressed Women Will Wear

By ANNE RITTENHOUSE—Copyright, 1923, All Rights Reserved

France Suggests To America A Return to Mannish Tailored Suits

One can do anything with a tailored suit by treating it right. It deserves distinction, which it rarely gets. We act as though it were a poor relation to the richer gowns in the closet. It is given any kind of a blouse, any hat will do for it, the oldest shoes are worn with it, it goes about in the rain and snow, while better frocks hang in muslin bags awaiting formal occasions, motor cars, and sunshine. All this is to be changed.

France brought to our attention the shabby treatment we have given this kind of dress, which, above all others, is supposedly 100 per cent. American. Just as Paris has shown the Londoner what a very alluring and frivolous thing an umbrella can be, instead of an ugly, serviceable, rainy-day thing that one hated to carry, she is trying to prove to America that her own type of costume is more than a passably good thing; that it has dash, charm, style. Therefore, it has a new incarnation.

It is given a chance to play a larger role than it has done for several years. Days were when it carried an ornamental blouse after we had graduated from the wash shirtwaist. Such days have returned, but curiously enough, not through the French influence. It appears that there will be a wide divergence between the Paris and the New York manner. We intend to widen the scope of the coat and skirt, including it among the costumes that are not limited to one kind of usage.

Overblouses Make Costumes

The overblouse makes this possible. Its glories and attractions are too tempting to limit it to the separate skirt, or to hide its light under a coat. Let the rule be what it may concerning a lady removing her coat in public to appear in shirtsleeves, she will break it. Once she was still a lady, even though she took off her coat in the very eye and teeth of the public, and those were days when ladies existed, not flappers, gamines, romps.

If she wears an expensive and colorful overblouse, be it of printed Indian silk, gold-embroidered crepe de chine, silver tissue with colored monogram, Persian brocade, she intends to show it. A fig for what constitutes a lady. She is right. The fit and finish of the overblouse makes her right.

When the jacket is removed she appears in an excellent semblance of a one-piece frock. It is only under these conditions that the coat comes off. With a tucked-in shirtwaist of wash silk with an embroidered dimity sport waist, the jacket stays on. Realizing these rules, every woman tries to

make the overblouse do its full duty by taking on the coloration of the suit.

It is permissible to imitate a tailored suit with a one-piece frock that carries the brilliancy of an overblouse as its top portion, but the newer idea is not to do this. It is the incoming of the genuine tailored suit, not its imitations, that makes for news.

memory of those who once wore covert cloth jackets with separate skirts of dark blue serge and mannish shirts of striped madras or wash China silk. Those were times when women had waists and wore corsets and were proud of both, caring naught that curving hips swelled outward. Will such figures arrive with the revival of the jackets? Hardly. Fashions



Indian printed silk stock collar worn with black tailored suit for the street. The hat is of silk plush with more of a brim than usual, the ribbon crown band tied at back in a stiff bow and the front decorated with a slide of cut silver initials.

We have had much of the so-called three-piece suits. We like a bit more variety. It is rather stimulating to put on a different kind of waist for various hours and opportunities.

This is easily done with the present three-quarter coat, sometimes embellished with peltry at its hem, certainly at its neck and wrists, which gives it somewhat the air of a protective wrap. It might be a top coat cut short for reasons of weight and convenience. The incoming short jacket, however, presents more of a problem. It will cause some wrinkling of the brow.

This newer garment has nothing of the well-worn jumper jacket in its make-up. It stirs the

change too quickly for figures to change with them. Diaphragms and waists are not under control these days. Furthermore, these jackets of the near future are cut on straight underarm lines, except by those who insist upon being different from their fellow-women. Such insurgent individuals nip the underarm seam

into the pretence of a curve and flare the hip part of the jacket into a faint suggestion of crinoline. There is no doubt that both these features of fashion will obtrude themselves upon us.

Copied From Men's Garments

Masculine is the coat, feminine are the accessories, is the creed. France copied the present jacket from the loose lounging coat worn by the men of that nation.

Its underarm seams are plumb from shoulder to hem, its armholes are small and snugly fitted high into the armpits, the lapels and collar are well-known accessories to men's coats, there are three buttons above the waist or three below it, and real pockets are placed at each side, one at the breast.

With such a jaunty jacket goes the most severe skirt, almost too narrow to step in, short enough to show a goodly portion of the transparent stocking in a light color, swung to a camisole top as a rule, unless one is afraid to cut off all chance of wearing a tucked-in shirtwaist. It is often made of black or rust velvet, a material that was not considered proper for the walking suit in other times, but no one pays attention to creed and code of the preceding generations. Pearls were once kept for gala occasions, but now they are worn to business, which is a striking example of what not to do, but what everyone does. Patent pumps with immense silver buckles placed below stockings that closely resemble flesh are as frequent on highways and byways as were black lisle and sturdy boots in less capricious days.

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