



The figure treatment of the coming season will reveal and emphasize the beautiful curves of the natural body. The statement "straight figure lines prevail" is an absolute contradiction of the real fact, because what natural figure is really straight? On the contrary, it is the curving figure, the natural and beautiful lines of the body, which is retained and expressed in the fashions of today.

If the term "straight" is used to signify this natural line, in contradistinction to the artificially diminished waist measurement with the "pinched in" look of the figure corseted according to the decadent standard of ten

years ago, the present figure is "straight," but it is straight only in that sense.

Since the departure from the "wasp" waist very many forward steps in corseting have been taken. Unfortunately, most of the devices previously employed by the corsetiere have been for the giving of a wholly unnatural line. Now the work is to be directed toward maintaining the natural, beautiful lines of the body.

The pronounced movement in skirt draperies, however, is the lifting of the fullness in the front. This drapery accords perfectly with the eastern idea, and it gives a new figure line as well, as the effect is to heighten the abdomen and depress the diaphragm, giving the bowl-like curve now dominant in the fashionable figure.

In all of the new draped effects the skirt is close about the feet, and the fullness spreads just below the curve of the hips, giving another bowl-like curve to the figure. This is very characteristic of the season's form, and this figure outlining will be obtained in every possible way.

This is a complete departure from the figure lines that have heretofore prevailed, and is a digression both from the panier of the artificial modes and from the drapery of the oriental or classic form.

All the narrowness of the skirt has been retained at the hem, and the fullness has been put in at about midway its length. This fullness is often let in in the form of hoodlike or loop draperies hanging from the belt.

Such a thing as a dart for fitting a skirt is practically unknown. If the material cannot be adjusted to the belt through the dropping down of a part of the fabric fullness, it is laid in irregular plaits or gathered, but quite without regard to any hitherto existing rule in skirt fitting.

As for the bodice, quite as many new and extraordinary ideas prevail as in the skirt. The jackets of the day and coats of the day also come in for their share of eccentricity in cut. They defy all rules, having seams where seams are least expected to be and having no seam where heretofore one was seen.

In some of the newest bodices and coats the under arm seam no longer exists. The shaping, if any is done, is in the shoulder seam or through the application of a curving yoke which extends down to form the top of the sleeve. The basques of the coat, cut in most interesting new ways, are attached to the seamless body. In contradistinction to the kimono cut of the ordinary form, which has no shoulder seam nor under arm seam, likewise no armhole seam, the new bodice now has no under arm seam, but has an armhole and a shoulder seam.

Another vital point in designs is the bulging or thick neck collar applied to so many of the bodices and coats. This is an effect taken wholly from the dress of the east, which, as will be readily recalled, is finished at the neck with a straight, curveless piece which rolls or bulges at will across the back of the neck, there being no attempt at fitting. This is just what is being attempted in the fashionable neck finish of the day.

Sleeves, generally speaking, will be long—that is, the fashionable effect for general street wear is the long sleeve. Separate waists as well as costumes of the simpler character will have full length sleeves, but there also will be very many of the more dressy gowns with long sleeves.

The kimono form has been retained to a very considerable extent, but it is the kimono set on the dropping or extended shoulder and brought down into fitted form.

There are a hundred variations of this style of sleeve, some of which are straight hanging, others flaring and open, and still others in the bell shape. Designers will be allowed much leeway in sleeves, and it looks very much as if there would be a strong representation of fancy styles.

To describe in detail the various forms would be difficult, but a glance at the forms shown in the garments imported for illustrating this spring's fashions affords conclusive evidence of the sleeve variation that will be found in forthcoming fashions.

The Paris market shows considerable variation in suit coat lengths. Several of the important houses, notably Paquin and Cheruit, are emphasizing the long jacket.

Most significant, however, is the fact that Callot, who, as everybody knows, is a great leader, shows many very short coats of the bolero or short blouse style. Thus it is evident that Paris makers have no intention of confining themselves specifically to one length.

However for the general line of merchandise the recommendations that have been made by the leading factors in the American garment trade are absolutely correct.

Coats of twenty-six and twenty-seven inch lengths will make up the bulk of lines, while novelty effects will run both shorter and longer.

A point to be taken into consideration in the present season's showing is the development toward belted coat and blouse effects. These should have representation among novelty styles; and while the belted or blouse coat perhaps does not seem so desirable an article for spring as for autumn, there is some reason to expect there may be a leading up toward a general line belted and blouse coats for the coming autumn.

The strong new feature in separate coats is the quite general adoption of three-quarters and seven-eighths lengths. The newest wraps are in this style,