

# MAYFAIR'S PARIS LETTER

## BY SOIFFIELD OF PARIS

Paris, Janvier 1930.

PARIS heralds the New Year with many definite dress trends that are appearing in the Collections shown by the *grandes maisons de couture*. In fact, as I journey from one to another, I find them springing up like mushrooms. What's here today becomes different tomorrow. Change is inevitable until the general fashion settles itself into the new grooves.

To facilitate walking and yet avoid ugly fullness, novelties are being tried out in the new mid-way-between-the-knee and the-ankle-length skirts for sports and afternoon wear. These are taking the form of ingeniously arranged pleats of the large inverted-box variety if in front, and a series of smaller ones, if at the back of the skirt. Dresses of this type have not been shown particularly long. The designers evidently wish to introduce them gradually. But there appears every likelihood of their becoming longer, and women who *anticipate* rather than *follow* fashion are already having dresses made a few inches longer than the present models. I am convinced that spring will bring forth many of these that have been kept in the background, awaiting the shedding of the fur coat.

The spring silhouette is long, the tendency to raise the waistline to an almost abnormal level, as apparent in the Winter Collections, having come to a speedy end. Waists, on the whole, have dropped back to the almost long effect, although on many dresses a belt still defines the normal waistline slightly above the hips. Evening dresses, closely moulded to the figure, swing with much fullness below an almost low waistline. There is a preference for flat, almost draped, hiplines for afternoon and evening wear; and in some cases models carried out in the sheath manner are to be seen. Even walking and sports dresses are made with a series of pin-point gathers across the hips.

Briefly, the advance spring silhouette is adapted essentially to youthful contours and will still be unkind to women inclined to stoutness.

Judging from what I have already seen, hats, which usually give the first inkling of spring styles out-of-doors when the chill has not yet been overcome by the spring sunshine and furs or heavy coats are still worn, will be of bright colorings.

*Suzanne Talbot* shows the tiniest of tight-fitting toques in a combination of fine Tagel straw and felt, with cherry-red and citron-yellow as her favorite colors. Incidentally, her effort of two years ago to revive the veil has at last taken effect; in Paris it is now almost as rare to see a woman without a veil as it is to see her without gloves. These veils have a variety of forms: there are little nose veils in fine tulle, finished with polka dots; large meshed veils bordered with fine satin ribbon, and heavily embroidered veils that fly behind and do not drop straight in front, and yet that add a certain chic to the small hats which have been too plainly trimmed for so long.

*Agnes* uses much satin ribbon for her spring hats, some being made entirely of this or combined with felt and straw. Distinctive shapes are not outstanding at present as this type is adapted to the feature of the individual for whom the hat is intended, and a fresh model is practically created for each wearer.

As the chic Parisienne still has short hair, the hat can be as small and as tight-fitting as possible, and the cut off the eye-brow, with deep ear flaps, continues popular.

The all-straw hats seem bigger and more picturesque than last season. The only drawback to the natural barley-straw being used is that it is extremely brittle and makes a hat [See also page 94]

*Jean Patou* swings from ultra-feminine fashions, for the formal occasion, to these ultra-practical ski costumes for St. Moritz. Above: A mannish type of outfit in whipcord. Below: Black, white and orange Russian jacket; the cap is of breitschwantz



—Two portraits by Luliel Diaz, Paris

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