

Dress & Vanity Fair

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October, 1913

The Triumph of the French Traditions



A Scotch cap of black velvet suitable to wear with a plaid walking suit

French traditions clearly shown in the evolution of ideas originated a couple of centuries ago.

Side influences dispensed with, we have returned to our old love — strictly French fashions.

by Worth



THOSE who have complained—and rightly, too, in some cases—that Paris fashions had fallen from their high degree and were no longer such things of beauty as they were in the eighteenth century, will have no such reproach to level at us this season. Not for many years have fashions been so full of detail, so full of workmanship.

Although the Eastern influence has somewhat abated, traces still remain in the warm, brilliant colors, the jewelled trimmings, the rich brocades — and the Japanese collar. Opposing it we have the direct inspiration of the best

French traditions clearly shown in the evolution of ideas originated a couple of centuries ago. Side influences dispensed with, we have returned to our old love — strictly French fashions. Skirts, especially for evening dresses, are still narrow at the feet, but as they have inner skirts of chiffon, or lace, that fill in the openings made for ease of movement, they appear almost wide, and are not by any means “X-ray” dresses. Even gowns of rich brocades have these inner skirts, while the brocade itself is overhung with one, or more, tunics of tulle or chiffon, edged with fur, flowers or jewelled trimming. Often over this falls a long transparent train.

The complication of skirt over skirt is even greater in the case of thinner gowns. A lace dinner dress, for instance, has a chiffon underdress edged with a tiny plaited flounce, and over this a skirt of satin, or charmeuse, cut up at each side, the edges rounded. Over this is posed another skirt, composed of seven finely plaited narrow frills hung with small festoons of pearls, which is topped by a long wide sash, fastened in a big bow at the back and falling to the ground.

Tulle and lace are lavishly used for trimmings, as well as for the doubly or trebly disposed tunics. Even the long trains are sometimes edged with a frill of tulle. The sleeves for afternoon frocks are chiefly of transparent lace, or tulle, gathered together just a little above the wristline under a narrow band of ribbon, jet or velvet, leaving a frill to fall below, but not over, the hands.

The length of the sleeve is most varied. The coat sleeves are long and often very full at the wrists; sleeves for the afternoon gown varying in length, extending nearly always below the elbow, but never beyond the wrists, while sleeves for (obscured)

are practically non-existent. However, where they do exist they take the form of “angel wings” of tulle or consist of a mere nothing caught together on the middle of the upper arm, leaving the shoulders as well as the upper arm uncovered.

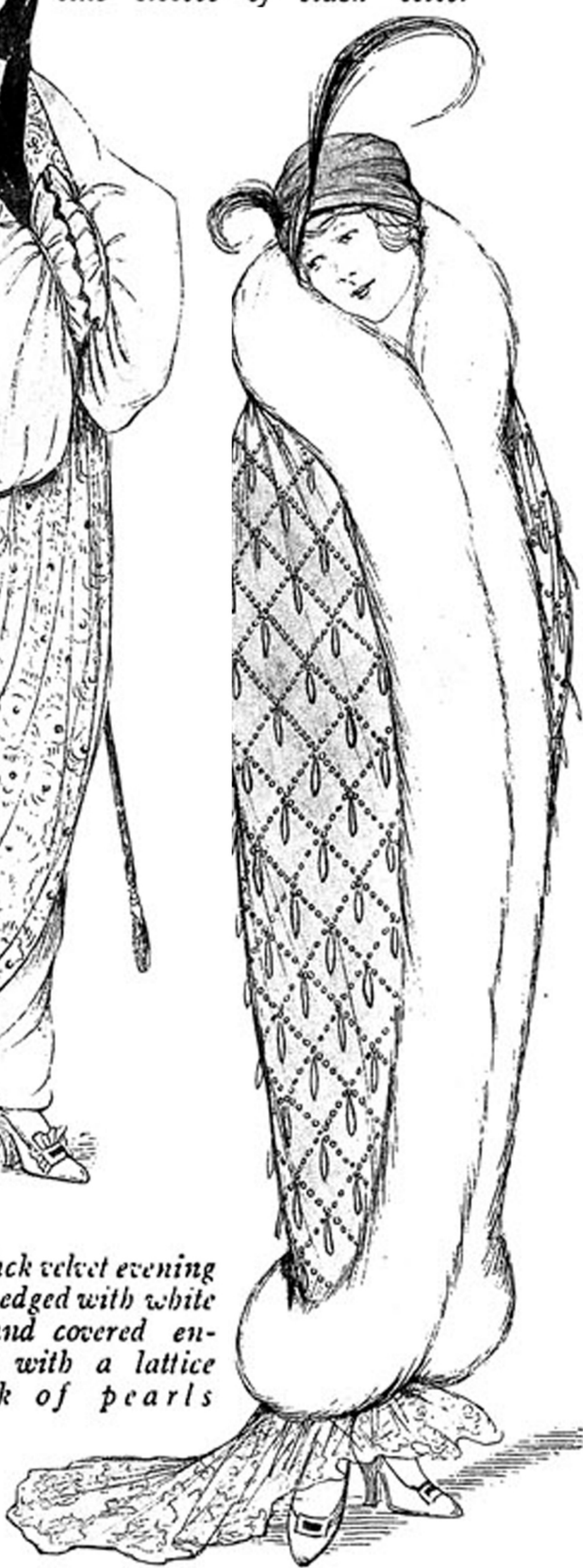
The most striking note about this season’s fashions, however, is the attention that has been shown to the back of the dress. Not that the front has been neglected, but the backs are more trimmed than they have been for a long time. Usually the trimming takes the form of big flat ribbons, knotted and looped.



A slightly draped crown and a square brim are the novel features of this black velvet hat. It is smartly trimmed with a wreath of grayish-white aigrettes and, at the side, a big upstanding aigrette.



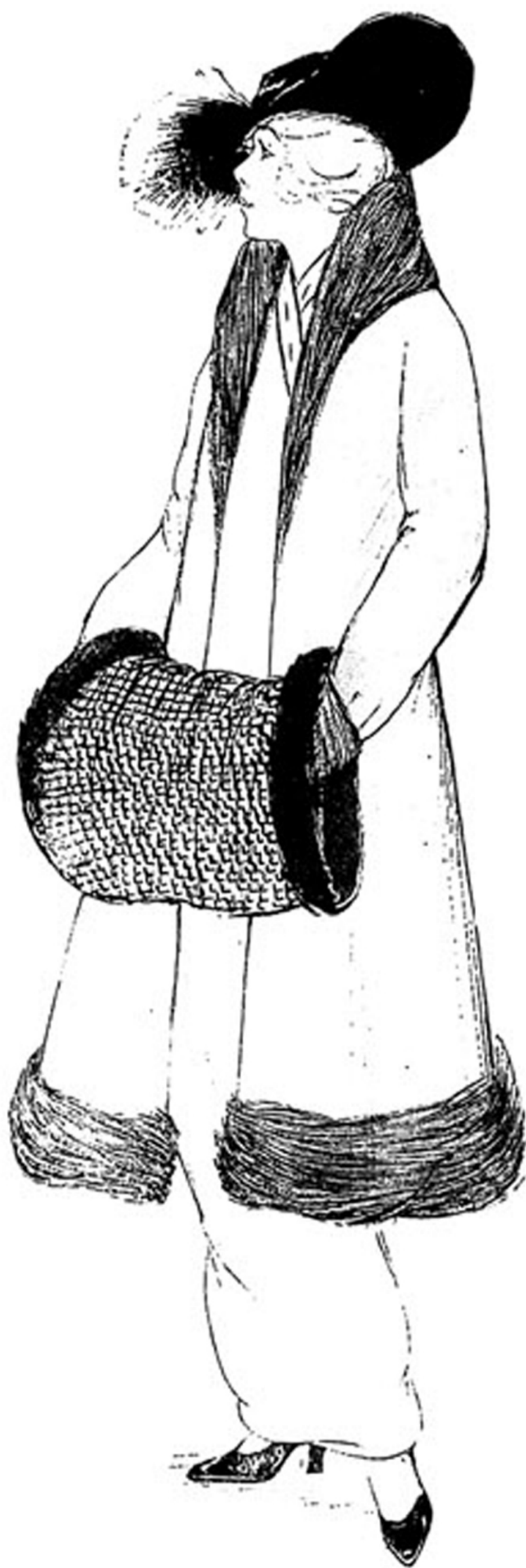
An opera wrap of brocaded silver tissue with the high Japanese collar and the muff-like sleeves of black velvet



A black velvet evening cape edged with white fox and covered entirely with a lattice work of pearls



An excellent color combination is this green velours de laine afternoon tailor-made with its squirrel trimmed bolero worn over a buff satin waistcoat



This new crinoline coat is developed in dull red ratine and edged with purple skunk. Dyed fur is the Parisienne's latest fad



An almond green trotteur has a basqued coat made by Buzenet to fasten over the right shoulder and down the back — and is quite as novel as the manner of carrying the muff



The Japanese collar and the Persian tunic are combined in this tailored suit of a new shade of yellow velvet. The crinoline coat is lined with black satin while the collar and cuffs are of skunk



A dance frock of gauze and lace. This favored new skirt has skirt over skirt of pleated gauze topped by a fur edged tunic. Ripe velvet fruits at the girdle give the note of color



Ermine trims this short peasant's coat of black velvet. This tops a full-hipped, bagged skirt of pink taffeta which has the foot of skirt upcurved in front. Made by Grouet

A WELL known Paris paper has aroused sensational interest by asking various clever people which style of dress worn to-day, will be handed down to posterity as typical of this epoch.

The answers have been varied and interesting. Capiello, the well-known caricaturist, Mme. de Polignac-Chabannes and Mme. Claude Lorry agree with La Gandara. This painter, par excellence, of fashionable women voted for the flat skirt that clings to the form like a caress, but has no special dominating note, "as it would appear almost as if a piece of stuff had been taken and arranged anyhow."

Princess Murat — inspired no doubt by Paul Poiret, who gowns her — and Jules Bois, the writer, declares in favor of the "jupe-entravée"; Madame Madeleine Lemaire, that exquisite painter of lovely women, and M. Andre de Fouquières, "le roi d'élégance," for the "jupe-culotte," and Mme. Jeanne Farmant, for the dress of the "present day" which gives to woman "a fine silhouette but with nothing to characterize it in the details — neither crinoline, jupe-culotte, nor "entravée", with the hips flat and narrow — devined rather than designed — and drooping shoulders." Strange to relate, M. Léon Bakst, the originator of so many wonderful Oriental fantasies, favored "the tailor-made."

In the face of so much contradiction it is difficult to come to a definite conclusion, and the problem is all the more difficult to solve when one visits the ateliers of the Paris dressmakers. Here one gets no help at all, for they appear to have obeyed all, or any, of their inspirations, without any thought of creating a "type." She who wears the Louis XV dress is as much in the fashion as her neighbor whose clothes are Directoire. The Persian tunic appears to be the last word said, but even that is capped by the frilled dresses that seemingly have stepped out of a Winterhalter picture — yet all are beautiful and becoming, and harmonize perfectly together, because under all these attempts, whether tending toward the crinoline or the Asiatic tunic, the "silhouette" remains always the same.

It has been the avowed aim and object of the French "grands couturiers" to return to the "essentially French," and to render the models too complicated to be copied with impunity by the unauthorized.

In the latter case they have certainly succeeded, for this season all depends upon the cut, and the manner of hanging the drapery, wherein, properly, the French claim undisputed heritage.

The new models undeniably show a decided return to French traditions but with a foreign influence too strong to be disregarded. For instance, can one call French the pretty Spahi costume made by Drécoll? The warm shade of brick red, bordering on Bordeaux, is the shade the Algerian soldiers wear, yet with its embroidery over the hips, in black, and the short bolero, over the draped sash, embroidered to match, is it not Oriental in its tendency? Long before Algeria and a part of Morocco became French territory the Turks, and still earlier, the Persian nobles and officers wore the bolero and the full skirt wide at the knee and narrow round the ankles.

Another instance of Oriental influences is shown in the wonderful gold brocades and supple velvets, sewn with pearls that would make even a Florentine noble of the Italian Renaissance die of envy. On these we see a huge Japanese collar of fur, while large "mousmee" bows have taken entire possession of the waist and back of the bodices of dinner gowns and afternoon frocks.

Worth is, perhaps, the only one who has remained true to his French ideals, and even he has in part surrendered to the all-conquering Japanese collar, al-

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though he does not make such lavish use of it.

The Japanese sleeve has gone, in its place we have the wide Japanese collar. It reaches high up over the ears where it is pulled out to give an almost square effect at the back. This leaves space for the lace ruffles, of the dress beneath, to be clearly visible, and to ensure them from being crushed. Often it is worn well down over the shoulders in an almost straight band, but standing well out from the shoulder line. This influence is again seen on the tailor suits, but here it is modified. Even the evening gowns show the prevailing obsession — for that is what it amounts to at the present moment.

Needless to say, Poiret does not use the high Japanese collar — he has another trump card up his sleeve in the form of a most decided Chinese influence which Chinese mandarins' richest gowns have served to inspire. However, Poiret never stops at one idea, or at one given period, or influence. He shows a "Tango" model, in reality a Mexican buff colored costume with loose waisted coat and red leather riding boots. Another influence appears in his "opium" walking dress of dark brown velvet with a tunic shaped coat, half brown, half smoke gray, embroidered at the neck in gold. While it is full of the mystery of the opium dens it yet remains a beautiful everyday walking dress. Besides this he shows the "Minaret," a Persian dress with trousers, having a full tunic hooped around the thighs and a wide sleeved voluminous cloak, so reminiscent of the cloaks worn by the magician of old that unconsciously a thrill runs down one's spine.

As if this were not enough, he has revived the culotte, but so discreetly, so subtly, that it passes unnoticed. *Continued*

A red fabric—a vivid blood red velvet pattern, on a chiffon foundation, he drapes at the waist with a wide gold lace scarf. The skirt flows in ample folds to the feet where one side hangs loose, in the ordinary manner, while the other is slit, turned up, and outlined in gold embroidery, forming an opening through which the foot is passed.

The next variation of the jupe-colotte is still more original. A plain ordinary tailor-made gown of dark blue velvet has a basqued coat somewhat in the shape of a Russian blouse. As the girl piroettes before you your eye is attracted by a band of fur round the ankles. On looking closer you find that under that innocent looking skirt the lower limbs are encased in unmistakable trousers, the tight hunting variety. These are tightly buttoned at the ankles with fancy buttons and gradually widening out toward the knees where they emerge into the lining of the skirt. After this comes a white trousered skirt of silver brocade and then very full Algerian trousers which, unabashed, display themselves as a trousered skirt intended for street wear.

Over and over again Poiret uses black and white in various combinations in his latest creations. One dress in black and white shows a black satin foundation



Carlier fashions this "set"—one of the season's successes—of black panne velvet edged with jet and tasseled with steel.

surmounted by a three tiered tunic, each tunic gathered over a hoop, about the size of a child's ordinary-sized hoop, and edged with black fox.

In direct contrast to this he fairly revels in vivid yellow and wonderful warm reds, the new Algerian red, and a warm rose color. He also uses dark blue, but very little green or gray. His materials are silver and gold brocade, gold and purple tissue, soft supple ratines and velvets, figured velvets, and a great deal of embroidery, the latter principally for the short tunics, or to form the band over the hips of his day coats.

Poiret's afternoon and evening skirts are crossed over in front, and in not a few a slit is made both at the back and at the front. They are rather long at the back and very much "hitched up." At the back they trail along on the ground in the form of a square edged with fur, or there is a double train, the first rather short, the second transparent or not, as his fancy dictates, trailing very long after the wearer. This is heavily leaded. In one white dress he has made no attempt to hide the fact that his tunic and train are formed out of a straight width of blue and green flowered satin, the train falls upon the ground far behind and it is edged with a band of black fox, the sides are the simple selvedge, untrimmed and unhemmed.

Doeuillet has one afternoon dress that is a dream of beauty. The skirt is three-tier and gathered at the edge in an old-fashioned manner. A pretty vague bodice has a coat effect at the back with a very narrow basque drawn in under a narrow band. The sleeves show exactly the same "mouvement" as the skirt — that is, they are gathered in at the wrist, with a narrow frilled edge issuing beyond the band.

Immediately above the waistline Doeuillet is fond of introducing a note of color or a trimming of embroidery, and above this are seen glimpses of blue or rose colored ribbon that add a gentle touch, as it were, to the rest of the dress. All his sleeves are set in at the shoulder in a normal manner, and the waistline follows this example and is also in its normal place.

Doeuillet has one or two models with the outstanding tunic, but most of his things are simple, elegant, and charmingly "dame." He makes use of the double tunic and the three-tier fashion of draping a dress, but in a discreet manner like the openings in his skirts which is essentially Doeuillet. It must be remembered that Doeuillet

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illet is an old French house, with its own traditions, believing in beautiful line and the strictly French, and yet even he has one model at least that has a wired tunic inspired, as we all know now, from the Persian.

His models show a delicacy of touch and a regard for detail rather than a search for novelties. A beautiful dance gown is of white tulle entirely embroidered in crystal tube beads with a

(Sorry, the rest of the article was too damaged to be legible.)



An elaborate evening dress of white satin. The short over-tunic of white tulle is edged with rhinestones and overhangs a deeper tunic, bordered with green satin which is covered with gold lace. From this hangs a deep crystal fringe



Pink taffeta, trimmed at the hem with an old-fashioned scalloped ruche is used for this charming evening frock. The tunic is edged with a band of skunk, over which is a ballet dancer's white tulle second skirt. The bodice is sweetly old-fashioned with its Second Empire frill across the bust and the deep black velvet waistband. The shoulders are quite bare



A glittering ball gown made by Doeuillet. The novel fabric is covered with crystal tubes, through which runs an almost invisible pattern woven in brilliants. The skirt is twice looped up with garlands of pin roses, and a similar garland of roses edge the high draped waistband which forms the bodice. These strings of brilliants form the shoulder straps and edge the tulle sleeve.