

THE OMAHA SUNDAY BEE MAGAZINE PAGE

Black and White to be Ultra Fashionable Tones for Summer

By LA RACONTEUSE



PARIS, March 21.—The fashion oracles who sit on their high and mighty thrones in the Rue de la Paix have gazed at the crystal ball, peered into the depths of the mysterious cauldron and have elicited the information that next Summer will see the vogue of black and white as the ultra fashionable tones in women's gowns. Just as if every Summer did not bring forth these contrasted tones in profusion. But more than ever the smartly gowned woman will include these plain colors in her wardrobe as soon as the warm days of June and July are upon us.

It is impossible to conceive of a prettier garment than one developed in shimmering white with a touch of black here and there to relieve the monotony of the pure white.

As the modern woman is becoming more and more an outdoor creature, white flannel and serge suits for wear on the tennis courts, golf links, aboard yachts and at the seashore are almost a necessity. But this Summer the whites are not to be confined to these materials exclusively. There will be a great demand for the filmy materials, such as the fine French linens of the most delicate texture, silk muslins, crepes and other gossamer-like weaves, which are more a suggestion than real material.

The chief charm of the coming styles will be simplicity in the cut of the garment, but they will be daintily yet beautifully trimmed with draperies of all kinds. The new styles are adaptable to the tall and short alike, as well as to the slender and stout. Any woman can now look fashionable, providing her dressmaker is an artist who understands how to bring out her best points. No longer are clothes the main object of attention; the properly gowned woman now uses her clothing merely as an adjunct to her natural beauty. The clothes act as a frame in which is set the jewel of physical perfection.

And this brings us to the point of the feminine figure, which is at present arousing much discussion in Paris. Several prominent artists have charged that the modern feminine form must fit the costume, and not the costume the form. Last week a competition among the sculptors to develop a statue showing the ideal feminine form for wearing the modern dresses was opened. A jury of eight members of the Academy of Fine Arts later will award the prizes. One member of the jury is quoted as having said that it is certain that the winning figure will not resemble the Venus de Milo, but, judging by the present Parisian ideal of feminine figures, the gold medal should be awarded to the sculptor who shows a hollow-chested form, with a convex back, a high wasp-like waist and long legs with an outward bulge at the knees.

He may or may not have been correct in his remarks. Certainly we see every day any quantity of figures such as he described. However, the fashion arbiters do not agree with him. According to their view, the ideal figure now is the natural figure, in which the waist is not too small, and neither the bust nor the hips over prominent. Gracefulness is the keynote which should distinguish the modern woman. Of course, any artist will tell you that the most graceful curve is a long, undulating curve, which seems to flow with a liquid-like movement. From this it would appear as if the tall, slender woman would more nearly approach the modern fashion ideal than a short and stout one. The woman who lives much in the open air, who golfs and walks or indulges in other sports will develop the modern figure. The real outdoor woman is anything but hollow chested, and healthy exercise should tend to straighten the back instead of giving it a convex form. The announcement that the coming Summer is to be

a black and white one in women's garments does not mean that colored stuffs will be entirely out of fashion. In fact, there are many new shades which will be added to the list before Summer is fairly upon us. In outdoor attire, particularly, we may expect some extremely picturesque effects.

Taffetas in changeable hues will be in high favor, especially the red, green and blue tints. Also the navy blue and cafe-au-lait tones will be seen. These colorings are very rich and remind one of the earlier Renaissance paintings. Black taffeta and striped or checked wools will also have a place, and many of the colored materials show narrow stripes of pale colors, such as are now fashionable. In the matter of color effects there will be an endless variety, and the woman who cannot find something to please her must indeed be hard to please.

The new skirts are cut wider at the hips, but still taper at the ankles, then flaring out below except in the case of the short gowns. And we are to see many of the short skirts this Summer, in contrast to the ground-sweeping models of the present.

One new skirt model, which several of the leading dressmakers have been attempting to force to the front, has an effect which, at a distance, resembles a fish's tail. Below the knees the skirt narrows rapidly to the ankles, when it suddenly flares out in small ruffles and plaits. This skirt, however, is not becoming to the vast majority of women and doubtless will attain only the popularity of a fad with a certain few. The standard skirt will be fuller at the sides and wider around the bottom than has been the case. Even in slit skirts the bottom width will be increased, and the proper place for the slit is now directly in the back of the skirt.

Most of the new Spring wraps already shown are of the half mantle style and are often trimmed at the neck with small ostrich feathers, either in black or of a tone to match the cloak. Damask silk and light woollens are the favorite materials for these garments. Passementerie ornaments are still in favor, and these mantles are usually trimmed with them. However, feathers, it is promised, will be universally worn this Summer. Feather boas will be the proper thing in the evening, and hats will be trimmed with them in as wide a variety as possible and they will be adjusted at novel angles. One pretty little hat has a bunch of feathers radiating horizontally from a point at the back.

In support of the contention that the stout woman can find few styles adaptable to her figure, a charmingly draped evening gown is shown at the left. The arrangement of the lines on the bodice and skirt gives a particularly lithesome effect to the figure.

The main part of this gown is of violet charmeuse, while the bodice is a kimono of light mauve silk muslin worn over an embroidery of pearls. A similar embroidered band forms the belt, and over the skirt of charmeuse an apron of silk muslin embroidered with the pearls is draped up, giving a pointed, slit effect over the hip, which lengthens the waist line.

At the back a long embroidered panel veils the décolletage and falls to the bottom of the skirt, which is veiled at the train with a shawl of black chantilly.

The model shown at the right of the page is a striking example of one of the extreme styles recently brought out, and illustrates one of the many uses made of the new striped silks.

The bodice or coat (it is difficult to classify) is modelled on the chasuble shape and is developed of a light gray taffeta striped with green. Under the box plaits at the waist passes a draped belt of green satin. An edging of marmot on the décolletage finishes this novel garment.



THE DON'S WILL - - - By John Runyon

SITTING at the bedside of her dying husband, by the flickering light of the wax candles, Carmencita was watching the old man's pale face, which already wore the imprint of death. From time to time his glassy eyes rested on her with an inscrutable expression. Now and again he seemed to be in great distress, and occasionally a flush of anger and contempt would pass across his face.

At last she could stand the suspense no longer, and exclaimed: "The testament! Your last will, Don Rafael, have you thought of that?"

But the face was motionless now, no spasms of pain or anger flashed across it, and the fingers no longer moved on the sheet. Don Rafael was dead.

Carmencita threw herself into a chair. Seven years ago she had been living with her mother in this small Spanish village hidden among hills

and almond and orange orchards. She made a living by embroidering wonderful things with her needle, secretly envious of the rich señoritas, many of whom were less beautiful than herself, whose carriages passed her door and who seemed to have nothing to think of but how to enjoy life.

Ambitious as she was she refused to listen to the words of love of the many handsome young suitors who sought her company and who serenaded every night below her window. She was waiting for a rich and noble man, and at last he came in the person of Don Rafael, an old adventurer known all over the country for his numerous love affairs. He met Carmencita, was captivated by her beauty, and she played her hand so cleverly that two months later they were married. At the bottom of her heart she hoped that the old man would not live very long and that when she had inherited his estate she might marry some handsome young man of noble birth.

But Don Rafael, who was very superstitious, always put off making his

last will, as he had an idea that this might hasten his death. To-day, when returning from a walk he had suddenly been taken ill, and only a few hours after he had taken to his bed he died.

"All is lost," sighed Carmencita. "And it is all my fault. I have been stupid not to force him to make his will long ago. Now his nephews will swoop down on this place like a flock of vultures and will throw me out of here as if I were a servant or a mangy dog. Then I shall have to go back to my old miserable life. But, no, I will never do it! Never! This fortune and this estate belong to me, and I am going to keep them."

Tears of rage filled her eyes. Gradually, however, she grew more calm, and an idea came into her head. She got up, blew out the candles, threw a mantilla over her back curls and left the room.

"Juana," she said, to her chambermaid. "I am going out for a little while. Don't let any one disturb Don Rafael on any account. He is feeling very badly, but he is asleep now." The whole village seemed to be

asleep. It was bright moonlight, and behind the white houses the outlines of the distant sierras were plainly visible. The church bell struck the hour.

Carmencita walked quickly through the main street towards the woods. A light was shining from the windows of the inn where the soldiers were playing dice. After a while she caught sight of a miserable ramshackle cottage in which a single light was still burning.

She opened the door, crossed the threshold, and went inside, where she found a very old man sitting on a chair packing oranges into boxes.

"Onorio!"

The old man raised his eyes.

"By the Virgin! It is the beautiful Carmencita, the needleworker! What may I do for you, beautiful Senora?"

"Do you want to make a bag of douros?"

The old man grinned and stared at her.

"Answer me! There is very little time."

"What is it you want?"

"I'll tell you that on the way

home."

"But I must get these oranges ready for the market to-morrow."

"I will give you two bags of douros."

"The devil himself could not resist your temptations, Senora. Let me get my cloak and I will go with you. It is cold nights now."

Onorio threw his cloak over his shoulders and followed Carmencita to her house, where they got into Don Rafael's bedroom without having been seen by anybody.

Carmencita lit the candles in the chandeliers and Onorio caught sight of the waxen face of the dead man in the alcove bed.

"Don Rafael! Dead!" he gasped. "Poor fellow, he was no older than I am."

In the meantime Carmencita compared the features of the dead man and the living man.

"Yes," she murmured, "the resemblance is striking."

"He! he!" grinned Onorio. "Everybody in Aragon once knew that my mother Arabella—"

"I know," Carmencita interrupted

him, "but I have no time to listen to such old tales. Help me to carry Don Rafael's body into the next room. That is it. And now get into his bed."

"You want me to take the dead man's place. No, Senora, I dare not do that."

"I'll double the reward. Listen, Don Rafael died without making any will. Nobody yet knows that he is dead. You look so much like him that I have an idea. I am going to call the notary and you are to dictate the testament to him, making me his sole heir."

"I understand," grinned Onorio. The notary came very quickly. He found the beautiful wife in tears at the bedside of her husband.

"Don Rafael has sent for you because he wants to make his last will," she sobbed.

"I am ready, Senora," said the notary solemnly, and, producing his pen and paper, he sat down near the bed and said:

"I am at your service, Don Rafael."

"We must hurry," said Onorio in a feeble and broken voice. "my time is

nearly up. Write: I, Don Rafael del San-Martino, being about to die and being of perfectly sane mind, do declare that I leave to my beloved wife, Senora Carmencita del San-Martino, half of all I possess, the other half to go to Vincente Onorio, whom I have always considered my real brother—"

The notary, who himself was surprised at this declaration, which corroborated old gossip in the village, found nothing strange in the exclamation which escaped from Carmencita's lips when she saw herself robbed of half her husband's estate by an old orange peddler. He stammered a few indistinct words and left the house.

"You scoundrel, you thief," roared Carmencita, "you have robbed me."

"The chance was too good to be missed," said Onorio, getting out of the bed.

"Pit hadn't I promised you—"

"I don't take much stock in promises," said Onorio. "Besides, I don't see that you have any reason to complain. Have I not acted like a true hidalgo? Nothing could have prevented me from taking everything."