CHAPTER IV

HISTORIC OR PERIOD COSTUMES

Importance. The study of Period costumes is important for two reasons:

(1) From a psychological view point. In following the development of styles, we find that they illustrate certain fundamental principles which are modified to meet present conditions and form the basis of the successful modern costume. The reason for this is because the instincts that prompt and control our desires never change, therefore if women have once thought of certain style tendencies as enhancing beauty, they will think of this style idea again as desirable. Hence the need of the study of the history of costume to know what styles appeal to women.

(2) Man’s desire to clothe himself has become a necessity. Since “necessity is the mother of invention,” it is only natural that man should invent different kinds and types of clothing. These kinds and types are expressed or formed from a variety of materials in different shapes and in different colors so as to satisfy his physical wants (keep him warm), cover his body, and at the same time please his eye. Therefore, we have different kinds and shapes of clothing worn by different nations and classes of people.

Style and Fashion. In order to distinguish the different kinds and shapes of clothing we use the terms “style” and “fashion.” Style is a term used to designate the kind and shape of clothing that has stood the test of time and is constantly revised in whole or part. Fashion, on the other hand, is the term used to designate a kind or shape of clothing that is popular for a short
time and then disappears, never to return as a permanent contribution to the clothing of mankind.

**Description.** In order to describe a style of clothing it is customary to include the following points:

1. The outline or side-view (profile) of the costume on the person. This outline is usually called the *silhouette*. (The term *line* is used in the trade for silhouette.)

2. The kind and finish of the fabrics used in making the costume.

3. The details of the finish of the costume, such as decoration, trimmings, and dress accessories.

Since the style of the costume is first determined, then the fabrics that will bring out the style effects to best advantage selected, it follows that the style of the different costumes should be considered first and then the style of the fabrics.

**Causes of Styles.** Changes in the fashions of clothing are influenced by (1) natural tendencies — the desire to imitate, (2) craving for novelty, etc. — the desire for distinction, (3) political, (4) religious, (5) social, and (6) geographical conditions.

**Instincts.** Each human being has certain impulses — desires to do certain things — which depend upon heredity and environment and which we call *instincts*. There are many of these tendencies in our nature and they differ in kind and degree in both men and women and vary at certain periods of life. These tendencies prompt us to do or want certain things, and they really dominate the life of man. The common instincts are those of imitation, self interest, modesty, religion, emulation, etc.

**Imitation.** Since there is a tendency in us toward imitation, it is only natural that we should imitate in general outline the dress of the people we associate with more or less. Hence, each nationality has had a standard of dress usually dominated by the leader of that class. *Style* is the term we use to designate an approved standard of dress. Many styles are designated by the name of the person or country that originated them or by that of the period of history in which the style originated.
Self Interest. Fashion does not depend upon artistic quality alone for its success, but often upon the varieties of self interest of the leaders. In most of us there is a varying desire to appear to advantage in the eyes of our friends and fellow men, and thus gain their approval. This desire has been, is today, and always will be a part of human nature. It exists in varying degrees of intensity. To illustrate: we have had all styles of dress from the modest and old-fashioned to the radical and grotesque, favored by aesthetic or materialistic standards, according to those approved by the multitude.

Emulation. The history of costume shows us that protection from the elements has not been the sole reason for clothes. The desire of human nature to receive the approval of one's neighbor is often so great as to cause one to try to outdo one's fellow man in dress, and is responsible today for many changes in costume or fashion. The desire for attention and recognition of our superiority dominates our lives to the extent of causing us to desire clothing that gives us dignity and individuality.

Personality. The manner of wearing the complete costume depends upon the carriage of the woman, which in turn depends in whole or part on her temperment and personality. The movements and actions of different people, such as the poise or position of the body, the line of the legs, the position of the arms and hands when in repose, the gestures or actions of the body when talking, etc., taken altogether determine their physical expression and reveal their personality. This characteristic — personality — determines the beauty lines and hence determines more or less the character of the clothing to be worn.

The different types of personality may be classified as follows: (a) girlish, (b) graceful, (c) care-free, (d) aggressive, (e) mannish.
The girlish type has a sweet, lovable way about her which can be suggested by materials made in soft lines with bright and dainty colors, supplemented by a few novelities or accessories. This type should have novelty shoes, but simple hats.

The tall and graceful type is usually slender with a rather dignified and precise manner. In order to overcome the tall effect, she should wear costumes made of soft materials, in plain lines, with clear and modish colors and a few accessories.

The care-free type is usually easy-going in her manners, but wiry and high strung. She takes little interest in the care of her wearing apparel. Therefore the costumes should be made of the best materials, of durable quality, with somber colors, and simple lines, so as to require little care.

The aggressive type is usually dependable, capable, and happy. She should wear clothing conservative in material, color, and lines, with few accessories, so that she may be comfortable; this sometimes implies clothing that will wear several seasons.

The mannish or boyish type refers to girls and women who are inclined to be athletic. Their wearing apparel should be simple in line and color, with few accessories.

Some women can wear the spectacular, unusual thing in costume and be in good taste. Other women cannot do this; in the same garment that another type could wear successfully, one woman will look showy and vulgar. Therefore, it is wise for us to discover early in life what type of personality we have, and what type of garments best suit that personality. We must remember that there are types of personalities as well as types of coloring.

Modesty. Modesty is the characteristic of human beings in observing the established principles or customs of their associates in regard to dress, action, etc. These principles or customs differ at different periods and with different nationalities. Religion too has had a tendency to influence to some degree the principles of dress. To illustrate: Religion considers that the body is sacred, and that immodesty in dress amounts to irreverence. Then there are those who, without believing that the physical person is a temple, do look upon it as the abode of a personality too fine to lend itself to the mere advertisement of physical charms. The feeling of modesty with regard to exposing parts or outlines of the human body to view
has changed at different times in the history of civilization, due to religious feelings and the theory of hygiene prevalent among the people.

Aesthetic Taste. It is natural that the aesthetic sense of each person should find expression in his personal appearance. Some clothes that appear to us as charming do not always register style. They may be very simple, but their becomingness to the individual and the way in which they are worn and the wearer’s own charm of personality make them appealing. The extent to which the beauty of color and form has satisfied the cultivated aesthetic sense is in a measure a test of one’s artistic taste.

Political Influence. Political refers to the acts or conduct of the heads of the government — king, queen, etc. — or to the policies of the government that rules the community, state, or country. If we glance over the history of civilization, we shall find that political events like the French Revolution dominated the minds of men and women to such an extent that they refused to wear the costumes of the nobility. Then again, if the prevailing influence of a time is war, we find the military aspect reflected in the costumes of the people — metallic luster on the fabric, and shapes of hats and coats resembling military uniforms.

Three great events have taken place among the English and French-speaking people in their struggles for freedom. The first was when the people of England rose against the tyranny of Charles I and drove him from the throne. The second was when the people of America rose against the oppression of George III and won their independence. The third was the uprising of the French people against the evils of their government and the founding of a republic. In each case there were simpler tastes in dress, due to the spirit of democracy that prevailed during the fight for freedom.

Different classes of people in a nation usually wear different types of costumes, yet all classes may show the influence of one person. We find the women of a country influenced by the wearing apparel of a queen, and the men by the dress of the prince or the king. The
power of monarchs or leaders has been such as to impress their preference on the upper class and their imitation on all classes below them. In this way they have become dictators of fashion. If this power lasts for any length of time, it may crystallize into a permanent form or style, as that of Louis XV, Prince Albert, etc. The nobility are not today the only ones to determine fashion.

With the spread of democracy came the feeling and possibility that all could wear more or less of the fine fabrics. To illustrate: Many years ago silk was worn only by the nobility, due to the restrictions placed upon dress by antagonism between the classes and the high cost of silk. Today it is not uncommon for a working girl on limited income to have an entire silk wardrobe. In a democratic form of government like the United States, every woman who has the money to patronize the smart couturier has an idea that she is a queen unto herself.

Religion. Every race has some form of religion. It varies from the belief of Christians, Jews, etc., among the civilized races to superstition among the savages. The savages are surrounded by Nature, which they do not understand. In attempting to explain the cause, they are led to believe in spirits. In striving to win favor with the spirits they worship them and offer sacrifices. Charms and different devices are used to ward off evil influence. Hence, we find the uncivilized wearing queer objects in different forms and colors to carry out their religious conceptions.

The people in Asia practice the worship of idols to a great extent. Ancestor worship is practiced in China, while millions in India believe in the doctrine of class distinctions as part of their religion, and this is reflected in the color and style of their clothing. Both of these ideas are part of the religion of the country.

The dress of the women of the early and Middle Ages became beautiful and dignified, as the religious reverence shown to the Virgin Mary was reflected in the dress of all women. At different times in the history of the Christian religion, there have been periods when people became either conservative or liberal toward the conception of modesty because of their religious views. This is reflected in their form of dress, as in the time of Charles II.

Then again, the combination of certain materials, forms, and colors has been emphasized by certain religious ideas. Hence, we
find religious celebrations have influenced the selection of material and color in the dress of the people — such as cardinal red.

The oriental nations particularly have allowed their religious ideas to dominate the dress of both women and men. They have held very closely to the traditions of their religion, hence the form of clothing is constant and not subject to as much change as among the Christian nations.

Religious beliefs have had much to do with inventions and the growth of industry. The Chinese, for example, have long opposed new inventions because their ancestor worship led them to have too much reverence for past customs.

**Social Influence.** People tend to live together in a community, which may be large or small. In order to live peacefully and happily, they form rules and regulations for their guidance, called customs or laws. These rules and regulations may differ in part or as a whole with different classes or races, but whatever they are, they are called the social laws of a community or race. These social conditions or customs are due many times to the religious beliefs and traditions of the people. To illustrate: The Hindus have different classes or castes. No class or caste can marry into any other caste. To insure a more complete separation of living conditions these castes are often compelled to wear a special form of clothing as a mark of distinction.

**Geographical Influence.** Each community or race has a definite place on the earth which we call its geographic location. Countries near the equator have a warm climate, which does not require heavy or warm clothing. Countries in the far North and the far South have a cold climate, which necessitates heavy, warm clothing all the year. Between these two limits we have a temperate zone with four distinct seasons, each quite different from the previous season, and calling for changes of clothing.

The division of the year into four parts in the countries of the temperate zones means that every one must change from heavy to light, and from light to heavy clothing at least twice a year. In fact today it has been possible to place on the market in New York, etc., six distinct styles in response to changes in season: winter, spring, mid-spring (May), summer, fall, and mid-fall (October). Because of these changes it is natural that all should
desire new clothes with the change of season. Experience shows that it really takes a year to plan, make, and distribute clothing, so it is necessary to create styles a year in advance. For this reason styles are created in February and August for the following year.

**Commercial Influence.** Commercial interests now dominate fashion also to a great degree. The desire on the part of dressmakers, costumers, manufacturers, etc., to increase the volume of business by developing new styles is well recognized. Prosperity of a group of people makes extravagance possible, this in turn allows for new desires, for new line of styles, new colors, and new materials.

**Conception of Clothes.** As we read the following pages, we shall notice that clothes are the reflection of the age in which they are worn. Clothes have had reason for their existence since the time when man was the only animal unprotected by Nature from the weather. It may seem difficult at times to trace the causes of some of the extremes of the fashions of women's clothes, although in all graceful and attractive modes the reason or their existence can be easily seen. In other words, clothes are a barometer or indicator of political, religious, social, or geographical conditions. Note also that the clothing of the human form does not proceed by mere accident, but is guided by the mysterious operations of the mind, which acts on the principle that in all fashions of clothing an architectural idea exists, that the body is the site and the cloth is the material wherewith we build the beautiful edifice of the person.

**Period Costumes.** Of course there have been thousands of styles of costumes during the history of the world. Some have remained with us and are constantly being revised in whole or part. These costumes that have stood the test of time are Period styles or costumes, and are valuable for us to know in order that we may use them in creating new styles or fashions.

The question may be asked: Why have certain Period styles remained with us after they have gone temporarily out of
fashion? The instincts of human nature as explained above are the same today as they were two thousand years ago. Hence, the costumes that appealed to our ancestors and conform to the laws underlying beauty described in the previous chapter will appeal to us again in whole or part.

Civilization. As every community, state, or country grew in size and wealth, the people began to make progress in the ways of raising food, in clothing the human body, and living in better houses. After these necessities were met, then enjoyment was found in reading, music, art, etc. The state of progress made by each country is called the civilization of that country. As the people spread out, of course, they take the civilization of the home country to the new country, where it is absorbed or merged with the existing one. Hence each civilization has produced a form of clothing representing the artistic influences of the people as they influence each other.

The Egyptians. The Egyptians were a wonderful people who lived in the northeast part of Africa several thousand years ago. They lived in densely populated communities on the banks of the Nile river in a country smaller than Belgium. The Egyptians became highly civilized and left behind them architectural and sculptural monuments which have been the objects of amazement and admiration of the people of all ages. The country was fertile and had a mild climate. Warmth, light, an absence of rain, spring from October to May, and the rest of the year summer, gave the country great prosperity and power. Consequently their artistic appreciation is represented by the lovely white water lily called the lotus, which was the favorite flower.

The people were divided into social divisions according to wealth and position. The government was ruled by a king, influenced by priests who worshipped the personified forces of Nature. There were wealthy landowners living on estates with a great body of dependents, such as servants, artisans, and laborers, yet it was possible for a son of the lowest class to attend school with the son of a nobleman, and he might by education aspire to the highest post in the empire. Women were assigned a high position in Egyptian life, and were not excluded from the world as in some countries.
They took part in the festivities, and because these festivities took place among the beauties of Nature the women of Egypt attempted to duplicate this beauty and their clothing became a work of art. Since the Egyptians lived in a warm country, they used light and translucent clothing of cotton, etc. The different classes of society wore different kinds of clothing.

The Egyptian type of dress represents the oriental division. The linen cloth worn by the first inhabitants developed into a longer, circular garment that surrounded the lower half of the body. It varied in length and folds and really became a skirt. The costumes were simple and followed the structure of the body. Later both men and women wore over this skirt a loose, flowing garment extending from the neck to the feet. The fabric used at first was coarse linen, but as time went on, the nobility used fine linen, and the outer skirts at different times were held together by eyes and staples (looped), or by a belt (girdled), or arranged in folds on the body (draped). Fancy girdles, belts, and ornamental aprons, etc. were highly developed and ornamented with flowers in soft colors. The colors were bright green, yellow, red, blue, and black on a white background with motifs.

The Egyptians believed that the body should be preserved as long as possible, because it retained the spirit; hence, they practiced embalming. This idea of permanence was carried out in their choice of clothing. They selected the fabrics that would last longest so as to protect their bodies as long as possible. Linen, due to its composition, has great strength, and can be retained longer than any other fabric. Because of this durability, linen was held in great respect by the Egyptians. It was made into very thin fabrics so that many layers could be worn. These were worn arranged in starched folds for artistic effects.

The hair of the ancient Egyptian woman played an important part in forming the outline of the silhouette. Hanging in heavy tresses, first straight, later braided and curled, the hair combined
with the straight, simple dress (narrow and tight fitting) which was supported by straps and braces over the shoulders, gave a straight, simple silhouette. Later a sleeve was added, followed by a full, plaited, transparent overdress, and then by a long, flowing cape. The Egyptian costume repeats the outline of the body and shows unity of line. Variety is given by the lines of the girdle and neck effects.

The Greeks. Another country that became famous after Egypt was Greece. The Greeks were a remarkable race. While they lived near Asia, they are not considered an oriental people. They had characteristics quite different from the Orientals—strong love of freedom, simplicity, and moderation. They had a fine aesthetic sense and love of beauty, and created a new form of art which they drew from their religion; they exemplified it in their clothing, sculpture, and architecture. This fine artistic sense has always been considered the highest form and is often referred to as the classical.

The Greeks worshipped the great gods developed from the earlier worship of natural powers. Religious festivals fostered Greek unity because they brought together to the sacred ground all the power, rank, wealth, and intellect of the land.

Notice the costumes of the Greek and Roman periods. Hair and wigs in knots and bands, sandals on the feet, a one-piece garment (confined at the waist by a girdle) which falls in folds to the feet. The gown was made by cutting squares or lengths of linen and then adjusting them to the human form by manipulation. The adjusting of the folds developed into an art. The Greeks invented the freedom of dress, compared to which the Egyptian styles were rigid. The motifs used in designs of Greek costumes were the Greek fret, or "meander," fan, laurel, border and wreath, acanthus leaf, and pine cone. All colors were used in proper harmony.

The Greeks had simple tastes in dress and did not borrow any of the highly colored and ornamented costumes from the oriental countries. The outer dress consisted of a garment composed of a
rectangular piece of cloth, measuring twice the height and width of the body. The fabric was folded and allowed to drape on the left shoulder, where it was fastened at first by thorns, later by pins, buttons, or clasps. A girdle was sometimes worn at different heights, which made a marked contrast to the tight costumes of the Egyptians. Men of higher rank wore an additional piece of clothing, a broad cloak thrown in loose folds about the person. The dress of the men and that of the women were quite similar, although the women wore their clothing more full and flowing in order to appear more graceful. The material used was usually white cotton—sometimes wool and silk. Crepe-like weaves were adapted to folds in draping. At a later period the cotton was dyed, particularly by the nobility, who preferred purple coloring with gold.

The headdress of the Greeks followed very closely the outline of the head. The only head covering was a thin veil of cotton or a fold of the mantle. Notice that the Grecian sandal had an ample strap that ran from the toe-piece to in-step, thus giving length to the feet.

Notice in the pictures that the lines of the costumes follow the graceful lines of the body, as noted in previous statements. The Greeks made a study of drapery as adapted to the human figure, showing beauty of line and grace in movement. Because of this characteristic, Greek costumes have served as the models of drapery.

During the 18th century, excavations were made in Greece which brought to light fine examples of art which influenced the costumes during the time of Louis XVI and the Directoire periods.

The Romans. As the Greeks were conquered by the Romans, their artistic influence was carried into the new communities. Rome was the center of a civilization that had conquered many other peoples beside the Greeks. In fact, the Romans developed a
civilization that included all the earlier civilization, and from this our own civilization has come. Rome had different classes of citizens — the wealthy, the poor, and the slaves. Her history consists of struggles between the first two classes, always with the purpose of making Rome stronger and better.

The costume worn by the Romans was similar to that of the Greeks. At first it consisted of a single garment, called a tunic. Afterwards, the men adopted a loose garment (toga) thrown in folds about the person, and the women wore in addition a shawl large enough to cover the whole figure. During the prosperous times of the Roman republic and empire, the dress became expensive and was made of wool, fine cotton, linen, and silk elaborately trimmed. The women began to wear expensive jewelry and personal ornaments, particularly bracelets.

The Romans were an intensely practical people, warlike in character. They conquered the parts of Europe now occupied by Great Britain, France, etc., and carried into those countries their style of clothing.

The motifs used in designs of Roman costumes were scrolls with acanthus and suspended garlands and roses. The garlands were used for men’s garments. Certain colors were used for each class in society — royal purple, red, creamy white, etc.

**The Dark Ages.** About A.D. 476 Rome was conquered by Germanic tribes, and during the following 700 or 800 years a very slow development took place in the art of dressing. This period is referred to in history as the Dark Ages. During this time men of the family were often at war, leaving the women and children at home. Most of the people lived in the country, where the houses were primitive, with few comforts, but plenty of work to do. Men were obliged to work most of the time for the landlord or lord. Laws were passed prohibiting the spending of much money for clothing. The idea was not only to prevent extravagance but to develop class distinctions in dress. During this period the making of a costume took approximately a year — all the work in spinning,
weaving, and sewing was done by hand with crude implements. Therefore strict economy was practiced among the ordinary people — garments were handed down from generation to generation.

Commerce and industry had declined as the results of wars, and land was the only form of wealth. In fact, the mass of the population came to live more and more in isolated communities. The feudal system involved the ownership of land by a few lords, and the land was occupied by tenants who rendered service and loyalty to the nobility. Such a system did not develop art.

Cities opposed the feudal system. The cities, particularly in the northern part of Italy, became quite large centers of industry and trade. The trades developed a system or organization called the guilds, which became very powerful and wealthy. A person in the city with ability as an artist or tradesman might prosper and rise in his class without regard to his birth or former station in life. Certain cities, like Milan and Florence, became the style and industrial centers of the world.

During the Dark Ages the only place for artistic development of dress was in the cities, where everyone could dress according to his ability. In the towns and country places, the lords prevented people (except those with wealth) from dressing in good taste. The average person dressed very poorly and had no encouragement to improve his dress.

**Dignity of Woman.** The church in the Middle Ages, through the devotion to the Virgin Mary, raised the standing and dignity of women in general. This dignity was exemplified in many ways, particularly through the dignified, graceful clothing of the women of the Moyen period.

**Development of Clothing.** It may be of interest to trace the evolution of wearing apparel during and since the Dark Ages. As most of our ancestors came from European countries, the source of our clothing came from the Romans who conquered at different times what is now Great Britain, France, Italy, etc., and left the influence of their wearing apparel on the people. As the result of the Roman influence the early wearing apparel after the fall of Rome, A.D. 476, was two long, loose garments called *tunics*. These two garments were worn one over the other in such a way that the
under one hung from the neck nearly to the ankles. The outer garment hung from the neck to the knees.

After the fall of Rome, the conceptions of the Christian religion became very prominent. The conception of spirituality of women found expression in the statues of the Blessed Virgin Mary, and the spirituality of men in the statues of the saints. The spiritual conception of the human body was represented by artists and sculptors by a tall, slender figure. This attenuation or lengthening effect of the body was carried into the dress or costumes of the people about the fourth century, as exemplified in the costume of the two tunics. This spiritual expression was later used by artists and architects in building churches in the style of Gothic architecture.

The outer garment of the costume of the Dark Ages, with its loose, flowing form, was difficult to work in, hence it was confined closer to the body by means of a belt. The sleeves were wide, reaching to the elbow. Later it became usual to wear the shorter tunic underneath and the longer one extended to the ground, while the sleeves extended to the wrist and were held in place by a bracelet or cuff. The outer garment was called a costume and the under one a petticoat. A large mantle corresponding to a cloak was worn over all, and a large silk fabric called a kerchief covered the head and neck. Later the outer gown was changed from a loose, flowing, graceful garment to a less graceful but more convenient laced, tight-fitting one, so as to fit the figure more or less closely. There was consequently developed a change in dress because of need.

The women of France and England clothed themselves at this time the same as the Greeks. The Germanic tribes did not come under the influence of the Romans, but lived in the country sections and wilderness of eastern Europe. The costumes of the Germanic people were skins and crudely woven fabrics, made into garments which developed later into strangely made peasant costumes, picturesque in character, due to their coloring.
As time went on, the gown was allowed to hang over the girdle, so as to cover it. Then when the outer garment was divided in two, the lower part was called a skirt and the upper part a waist. If the upper part of the gown was allowed to hang over the girdle, it was called a blouse; sometimes the blouse was covered by the skirt and a belt or girdle was used. Women who were inclined to be stout wore a boneless corset to support the bosom and retain the curve at the waist.

Since the outer clothing might or might not be wool, a thin undergarment with simple decorations, according to the taste of the wearer, was used next to the body. Since it had to be frequently washed it was made of cotton or linen. A veiling, a thin, transparent fabric obtained from the oriental countries, was popular as a face covering. In addition, embroidered fabrics were used for handkerchiefs, aprons, and ribbons for decorations.

**Moyen Age Styles.** From this foundation of clothing came a distinct style which has influenced dress to the present time. The style of dress or clothing used by the French and Italians before the Renaissance is classified by the costume designers under the term *Moyen Age*. Since the Moyen Age period is really the starting-point for costume designing today, it may be well to summarize its essential features:

I. Costumes were made of two garments — the undergarment with rather tight sleeves and the outer garment (with short, loose sleeves) divided into two parts — waist and skirt. The waist fitted the figure and the skirt was full. In other words, a close-fitting waist, often called a bodice, following the natural lines, and extending to the hips, was held close to the figure by a broad band.

II. At the bottom of the outside garment and around the wristbands were free uses of embroidery.

III. To hold the garment a girdle, either double or single, was tied in front, with long, hanging ends.

This period was revived by the Parisian designers in 1908.

Notice that the silhouette was natural, and that the outline of the costume harmonized with the human figure. This style period is often used as a model for the expression "conservative dress." The lines of decoration are in accordance with the structural lines of the costume.
Notice the illustration (page 99) of costumes of the Middle Ages—thirteenth and fourteenth century costumes—and observe the characteristics of style: (1) distinct quality of beautiful, sweeping lines, (2) massed color, (3) details which give dignity with graceful movements, (4) the lines of the shoulders remain normal, beautifully sloping into the lines of the sleeve. The only wearing apparel of today, 1930, that carries out these style qualities is the negligee costume.

This style of costume was artistic on account of the long, sweeping lines and good color used in the embroidery, etc., and was, no doubt due to the architectural influence of the time, called Gothic.

**Gothic Influence.** Toward the close of the twelfth century the spiritual conception of the human body of the early ages was carried into architecture and a movement took place to build churches with pointed arches, broad beautiful windows, slender spires, and rich ornamentation. This style of architecture was called Gothic and was developed in France. This Gothic influence in architecture spread very rapidly to other forms of art and later became a tremendous influence in forming the standards of costume in France. People began to have the costume adapted to the person. This brought forth the idea of the relation between the personality, color, etc., of the person and the clothing she should wear.

Note the effect of the headdress and the tendency of the clothing (clinging lines) to leave an after-image of a tall, slender person—which is the Gothic conception.

Velvets, damasks, and other silk fabrics were used extensively in the costumes of this period.

**The Renaissance.** *Renaissance* is a term used to explain the changes in society, religion, literature, and art which transformed the civilization of the Middle Ages to that of modern times. Since it is a change which took place gradually it covers approximately the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries.
In the northern part of Italy there were a number of great cities like Milan, Florence, and Venice, where men of ability and ambition might rise to any position. The widespread industrial and commercial prosperity brought wealth, which in time gave leisure and a taste for luxury and the refinements of life.

COSTUMES OF THE RENAISSANCE PERIOD

The center of style was in northern Italy. With the development of printing, knowledge of the artistic costumes of Italy spread to France. In 1495, King Charles VIII, son of Louis XI, heard of the great artistic development in northern Italy, and made an expedition there. He was very much impressed with the manners and dress of the Italians and decided then to encourage artistic dress and manners in France. He engaged many of the great artists to come to France. From that time, France became more and more the style center of the world.

During the Renaissance and the following periods up to the French Revolution, the rich were spending much on clothes and the poor were miserably clad. Parliaments and kings regulated the kind of wearing apparel for different people, so that the kind and quality of clothing was an index of the class of society.

An expression of this added wealth appears in the excessive use of heavy fabrics, such as damasks, velvets, etc. A feeling developed
that a sign of wealth was the lavish use of heavy, expensive fabrics, regardless of their artistic appearance on the wearer. This brought about a new style of clothing. The fifteenth century is called the age of draperies, because both men and women loaded themselves with voluminous clothing of all kinds. Shoes had pointed tips two or more inches long.

During the Renaissance, in the days of Catherine de Medici, the hair was curled to a marked degree and then combed straight back from the high foreheads and drawn over a hair-pad much higher at the sides than in the middle.

Notice the costume of Queen Elizabeth and see how absurd it looks: excess of clothing, including wigs, packed or upholstered on the human figure without meaning. The dress of this period — Renaissance — represented by the picture on page 98 is the highest form of absurdity in the history of costume.

Moyen Age and Renaissance. The great change in the line of the costume was due to the introduction of a special type of corset, called basque, the hoop, and the vertingale. The hoop made the skirt funnel-shape in appearance — narrow at the waistline and quite wide at the feet.

The result was that the simplicity and color of the costumes of the Middle Ages — Moyen period — began to disappear with the
Renaissance. Instead of the lines following one another, as in the Moyen period, solid colors and trimmings were added at the neck, sleeves, and skirt, composed of fabrics of satins, velvets, and brocades in heavy design, over the hoop. All of this tends to distort or change the lines of the human figure. Jewelry, lace, tassels, and embroidery of queer color combinations were used without measure.

The petticoat in different colors appears during this period, and there is a distinct, marked division of the costume into waist and skirt. The skirts became fuller and fuller, while the waist line became smaller and smaller. The sleeves and neck were elaborately trimmed.

This new conception of clothing made a decided change in the general outline of the costume. A tendency took place to have a decorative effect that did not follow the general line of the human figure; the hoop skirt and the tight corset were introduced to make the waist smaller.

The small waist is not beautiful, and the attempt to make the waist appear smaller is done with the idea of making one appear taller and the bust fuller. The size of the skirt was balanced by sleeves voluminous at the top.

The hoopskirt effect was introduced during this period, and very stiff cotton fabrics, such as crinoline, were manufactured. The effect of the hoopskirt (petticoats with hoops called farthingales) was to make the hips project and the tight waist look as slender as possible by contrast. This made one look taller. This hoopskirt effect was revived again as an extended hip effect in 1918. The long-waisted, pointed bodice effect that has been frequently renewed was introduced during this period. Tight waists made one uncomfortable and women sought relief in fans which were made on a beautiful and elaborate scale.

During this period we find some well-known styles that have been handed down to us. The following represent the most important:

1. The ruff collar worn at the neck was introduced by Catherine de Medici, widow of King Henry II of France. She was of Italian birth, and inherited an artistic sense, greatly influencing France during her reign.

2. During the reign of Henry VIII men’s dress reached the
highest degree of elaboration. Plain and untrimmed frills at the neck and wrist were used. The general effect was to make the lower part of the body broad.

3. The Mary Stuart collar is among the styles handed down to us by Mary, Queen of Scots, who had married Francis II of France.

This period marks the distinction between the ancient and modern costume.

Look at the picture of the costumes of this period and notice that ladies wore frilled skirts, tight at the waist, and over a rich petticoat; the hips were padded with whalebone and steel. A large ruff was worn about the neck by both men and women. Men wore felt hats with broad brims, and overcoats with tight sleeves. The coats were pointed in front, short, and tight fitting.

**Hairdressing.** During the middle of the sixteenth century the ladies of the court of Henry II and III of France had their hair drawn over three pads, giving the effect of three wide waves, and held down by a bandeau of pearls. During the reign of Henry IV, of the sixteenth century, a definite movement took place to arrange the hair itself as a headdress. Powdered wigs and false hair became the fashion and lasted for two centuries. A variety of styles of coiffure, ranging from short curly hair arrangements, à la garçon, to towering edifices called commande. Long ringlets, called "ladies' mustaches," were pinned to the sides of the hair and fell to the shoulders.
After-Renaissance Periods. For a hundred and fifty years after the Renaissance, men dressed as elaborately as women and in some cases more so. In fact, many modern ideas in fashion are drawn from men’s and not from women’s costumes.

The Stuart Period. During the seventeenth century there was a strong religious feeling between Catholics and Protestants. The Protestants became very conservative in their dress. Under Cromwell the royalists and Catholics were defeated, and Charles I was beheaded. This victory of the people against the king was reflected in a more simple form of costume. The Puritan influence dominated the style of dress in England, which corresponded to the style of clothing worn by the Puritans and Pilgrim fathers in this country.

This style period represents the median between the two extremes — Moyen and Renaissance periods — showing variation in the outline but not enough variation from the line of the human figure to lack harmony.

Note the disappearance of the hoop in this seventeenth century costume, but with drapery and puffing of the overskirt at the hip. The passing of the ruff allows low dressing of the hair.

To summarize: The seventeenth century saw the awkward styles of the previous period change to a more pleasing costume of the following:

1. Hoop skirts were discarded and skirts draped over the hips and allowed to fall in folds to the floor. The sleeves were large, but padding was eliminated. Pillows were used.

2. These periods include the picturesque costumes of the cavaliers in England and the mousquetaires in France. The principal parts of the costumes were a broad hat of velvet, with a large ostrich plume, over a face having a pointed beard and on a head with long curly locks. The stiff, starched ruffle of a former period has been
changed to a falling ruffle of lace and embroidery. The shoulder width is increased by curved epaulets. A richly ornamented belt supported the sword. The breeches were loose and tied at the knee with ribbons. Long gauntlets and a short cloak trimmed with lace and, with a silk lining completed the costume.

3. The women wore sleeves to the elbow, loose and richly orna-
mented, and the corsage long and pointed. The large skirts were
gathered at the waist and trimmed around the bottom with em-
broidery, often raised to show a petticoat of rich material. The
overskirt and sheer embroidered underskirt of today is taken from
this period.

The Age of Louis XIV. Louis XIV of France raised his country
to the position which it holds today as one of the foremost world
powers. Indeed France at that time was unrivalled on the conti-
inent of Europe. This supremacy, abetted by increased facilities
for travel and communication, gradually obliterated nationalism
in a way among the various nations of the continent. Italians,
Spaniards, Germans, and Russians looked to Paris for fashions in
decorations as in clothes. French became the language for polite
discourse among persons of quality in all countries.

The English alone largely rejected what they considered this
Frenchified nonsense. But even they were influenced to a certain
degree. Great rivalry existed between the two powers, and on
certains occasions it took a humorous turn. Charles II of England
at one time invented what he fondly fancied to be a style of dress in
the Persian taste. He wore it himself and his courtiers followed suit.
No sooner did Louis XIV hear of this than he dressed all his lackeys
in the same fashion.

The outcome has been that the French are the ones that lead and
initiate the styles for women while the English lead in the style for
men.

This period was noted for exaggeration in style. The men wore
wigs, and large, round castor hats trimmed with feathers. The
tight-fitting body garment had increased in length and was deco-
rated with lace of gold or other material. It was buttoned from the
neck to the waist, and the skirts were made open. The coat was
made without collar or lapel and was open at the neck to show the
waistcoat. A lace necktie was carelessly knotted around the throat.
The sleeves of the coat were rather loose and were turned up so as
to be quite short, showing ruffled shirt sleeves of fine cambric. The
front, shoulders, and cuffs of the coat were richly laced. The
breeches were of moderate width and were tied at the knees with
ribbons. High shoes gave way to low shoes with a buckle of gold or
silver. Toward the close of the reign, men’s dress became simpler,
although still elaborate in trimmings. Women’s corsage was décolleté, the bodice rather pointed, the sleeves less than elbow length, with long folds of lace. Long gloves were fashionable. The skirts were full, rather simple, short in front, with fullness given at the sides and back by means of an overskirt open at the front. This style was common in 1921. The hairdressing of the women was similar to that of the men. Necks were very low. Capes were introduced to protect shoulders exposed by low-cut costumes.

**Louis XV Period.** Louis XV succeeded Louis XIV with an open court. Great extravagance prevailed. This was a continuation of the previous period with the following changes in dress: kid and netted gloves took the place of badly shaped leather gloves. The draped bustle was extensively used; this style was revived in 1885.

At the beginning of the eighteenth century the pendulum swung
toward the classical or Greek style, due to excavations in Greece and to the discovery of classical relics.

A more graceful costume was adopted than in the last two centuries. While the hoop skirt, called *pannier*, was used again, it was greatly modified. Lighter-weight fabrics were used, and the decoration was much more dainty and graceful.

During the eighteenth century great inventions took place in the mechanical and chemical fields, which made possible the manufacture of better grades of silk, cotton, and linen with printed designs. These new fabrics in pretty designs took the place of the heavier velvets and brocades. The heavier laces, like Venetian and French point, that were used in the previous periods, were replaced by the point laces, d’Alençon, Valenciennes, and Mechlin, which gave delicacy to the costumes.

**Louis XVI Period.** The French government from 1610 to the French Revolution was ruled by kings Louis XIII, Louis XIV, Louis XV, and Louis XVI. Louis XV was followed by Louis XVI and his wife, Marie Antoinette. Both were kind-hearted, well-meaning young people, but the country was deeply in debt, causing poverty and misery to the people. The nobility and clergy owned two-thirds of the land and paid no taxes.

This period was noted for many fashions, such as the powdered wig and white lace collar similar to those we see in pictures of Revolutionary men and women; light shoes with buckles, and high shoes for riding; gaiters buttoned on foot and leg during bad weather. Waistcoats became part of women’s clothing. Lace ruffles were worn at the wrist and a lace cravat at the neck. The tricorned hat was richly adorned with lace and silver. Madame de Pompadour, leader behind the throne, introduced the combed-back hair. The bodice was *décolleté* and trimmed around the edges with small floral designs (Pompadour designs). It was made
over an undervest and laced up the front in corset style to resemble the appearance of the peasant girls. The skirts were decorated at the bottom and knee with flounces, and were looped up.

Marie Antoinette was an Austrian princess, who delighted in playing rustic scenes after the paintings of Watteau. Parks were transformed into dancing courts, and a new style was devised every week to carry out new ideas. Dainty decorations, flowered silks, and artificial flowers were introduced. The following changes were important: the figure became narrower and the bust and bustle were exaggerated.

In the reigns of Louis XV and XVI dress was an affliction — the body was imprisoned and the head top-heavy.

After Louis XV, coiffures became more and more monstrous. Marie Antoinette led the style of dressing the hair by massing it into miniature gardens, seascapes, or pyramids on which tall forests of feathers waved. Sometimes upon a sea of waving hair would be a ship, Belle Poudre, with masts, guns, and sailors, representing a recent sea fight.

Watteau Styles. The artist Watteau, at the beginning of the eighteenth century, made a number of paintings of costumes which have remained part of the history of the subject. To illustrate: A Watteau bodice is a style of women's dress having a square opening
at the neck; a Watteau pleat is an arrangement of the back of a woman’s dress in which broad folds or pleats hang from the neck to the bottom of the skirt without interruption.

The French Revolution. A meeting of the representatives of all the people of France — called the states general, which had not met for 125 years — was held in 1789 to consider the question of taxes. Many radical measures were passed, abolishing feudal and special rights and privileges. The king opposed these measures, and he was removed. From 1789 to 1795 the different factions of the Convention ruled, and each faction attempted to annihilate the others. Finally, in 1795, the Convention at Paris adopted a new constitution which placed the rule of the country in the hands of five men, called Directors, who ruled from 1795 to 1799. This time is called the Directoire period.

Directoire Period (1795–1799). This period represents the styles
in vogue at the time of the French Revolution while the government was conducted by the Directory. While the revolution altered women's clothing, it also changed that of the men. The spirit of democracy and equality compelled all men to wear uniform clothing. Simplicity of dress took the place of extravagance. Men wore long trousers of dull colors, long greatcoats, cutaway coats, and dark hats. The clothes were arranged badly and fitted badly. The men were very careful about their dress and introduced the Directoire coat with a short front and cutaway lines.

The dress of the women also reverted from extravagance to simplicity — to that of the Greek and Roman period. The beautiful costumes and designs of Watteau and Pompadour, together with the face coloring (rouge), disappeared. The picture of "Psyché and Cupid" brought paleness of the face into vogue, and ordinary white paint was used to give the à la Psyché appearance. Sandals were used instead of shoes and stockings; then flat-heels shoes replaced those with high heels. There was a tendency to use as little clothing as possible. Transparent materials were popular; skirts were trailing and were slit from the hem to the knee or waist. Corsets disappeared, and gowns had straight lines, high-waisted girdles, and little, if any, sleeves. Shoulders were covered by small scarfs or a small coat with long sleeves. Light shades of blue and pink were popular. Women cut their hair.

Empire Period. Napoleon was the commander of the army and set about conquering the surrounding countries of Europe. He was worshiped by the French people and was made emperor in 1804. From 1804 to 1814 is called the Empire period.

After the Directoire was abolished, dress became more dignified — long trains, subdued classic drapery, with embroidery, India and cashmere shawls, and handkerchiefs were used.

This period brought about many social changes, but the effect on dress was slow until court functions were established, when styles became very elaborate. These costumes have never been surpassed, and were copied from oriental tendencies: (a) Richly embroidered muslins, (b) drapery interwoven with gold and silver, (c) profusion of jewelry.

Ruffles were used about the neck. The hair was drawn "in tight" and was surrounded by feathers. Greek fashions prevailed,
with the short-waisted effect called Empire style. The gowns had long skirts of simple lines. Hats and bonnets were ugly, large, and elaborately trimmed. Artificial flowers were used. Note the characteristics of this period in the gown, cloak, and bonnet. The Napoleonic era started the progressive emancipation of women's clothing.

**Restoration Period — (1815 to 1830).** In 1814, Napoleon was defeated by the combined armies of Europe, and he had to abdicate. A brother of Louis XVI with the title Louis XVIII took the throne.

This is called the Restoration period. With the return of the monarch, of course, the nobility began to fill the courts, and social functions were planned on a large scale. This in turn stimulated the costume business in Paris. There was a tendency toward a more sober style in dress, due to the changed political and social conditions. Fashions were centered on proper hats, and over
3,000 different styles were produced during this period. White dresses, ornamented with flowers around the skirt, were worn. Sleeves were full and raised up with several layers of ruches or puffed at the shoulder. The sleeve tapered to the wrist, where it was fastened with a ribbon. Thus developed the "leg of mutton" sleeve. During this period, particularly at the beginning, the styles were ugly, due to long shoulders, enormous sleeves of elbow length, and huge hoops, throwing the whole figure out of proportion. Skirts were full and short. The front of the hair was usually parted and curled so that the curls were arranged at each side.

Women wore small bonnets, and had fancy handkerchiefs with lace. Bouquets were carried to all formal functions. During this period, and for a long time after, women living in the country or urban sections looked on costume from a utilitarian point of view and not as an object of beauty. They often wore costumes that were shabby and out of style.

**Second Republic.** In 1824, Louis XVIII died and his brother, Charles X, took the throne. His ways were old-fashioned, and he fancied he could rule France as in the old days of the French kings. A new revolution broke out in 1830, and Louis Phillipe was made king. While he was liberal to some degree, the people wanted universal suffrage, so a revolution took place in 1848. A second republic was formed and a nephew of the great Napoleon was made president. Later he was made emperor because he granted universal suffrage to men.

The costumes were a continuation of those of the Restoration period with the following modifications: Longer shoulder lines and small waists. Small black lace mantles were popular. Black velvet bands were used at the wrist and throat.

**Second Empire Period.** During this period the silhouette changed. The gown was made long-waisted, with basque and voluminous train.

In 1854, fashionable dressmakers decided for wider skirts in order to make the wearer more corpulent or to increase the stoutness of thin people. They made the skirt stiffer, so as to support the flounces that were in vogue. The result was the creation of the ugliest mode the world has ever seen.

In order to make skirts wider it was necessary to add interior
stiffening. Various things were tried, such as starched linen petticoats, crinoline, or horsehair cloth, but these failed. Hence a device of hoops of steel and steel springs was adopted, much like the farthingale of Queen Elizabeth and the hoops of Louis XVI; so that skirts became very large with the aid of crinoline, and the bodice was tight fitting with rather tight sleeves. In 1859 there was a strong tendency to Turkish jackets and dress accessories — fan, parasol, handkerchief, smelling salts, etc. Headgear consisted of a "pork pie" hat, a simple round hat without brim, trimmed with quill or ostrich plumes. This hat was revived in 1901 as a polo hat. The pannier effect was introduced during this period. The skirt was held up high at the back and extended.

**Ready-Made Garments.** Up to 1865–1870, clothing and costumes were made by individual dressmakers. During these years the style included heavy cloaks. The average dressmaker was
rather expensive, and not able to make a good cloak, due to the fact that she did not have facilities for pressing down and "shrinking on" pieces of fabric to give plumpness to the cloaks. Flaps and portions of corners and edges were not pressed and fitted properly; the cloak failed to fit the figure and did not hang smoothly like the coat of a man. The result was the beginning of the cloak business as a separate industry. Here was the first sign of a universal feeling on the part of women for stylish and well-made garments. Dry goods stores began to make a large number of models, in fact some of the dry goods stores devoted special attention to this work. From this beginning the business has expanded until now ready-made garments are worn by the majority of women.

The Third Republic. In 1870 a war took place between France and Germany, called the Franco-Prussian war, in which France was defeated and the emperor removed. France then became a
republic for the third time. The dress continued the styles of the preceding period with the bustle prominent. The skirts were made plain and pulled back by string so as to fit with snugness in the front. Later they were made very tight all around to such an extent as to make it difficult for one to sit down. They were sometimes ornamented with as many as twenty flounces on a single skirt. The hair was dressed high and was moved over the forehead.

**Victorian Period and Influence.** As has been stated before, the costumes of this country have been influenced by both France and England. We have already discussed the French influence. During the period of 1840–1900, this country was influenced to a marked degree by the tendencies in England, which in turn were dominated by the reigning monarch, Queen Victoria. This influence was one of gentility and sobriety which had a certain attractiveness. In England, the feminine manners and characteristics have always been dominated by the practices of the queen. The quiet life and the romantic simplicity of the Queen, together with her harp playing, fancy needlework, and sentimentality, appealed strongly to the feminine mind. As a result of this influence, women assumed the duties of the quiet routine of home life, surrounded by a barrier of respectability, and attended social affairs and the theater under the guidance of a chaperone. All of these conditions influenced the style of dress as opposed to the gayety of the French.

In 1870 the dress clung to the figure, except at the back, where the bustle made an appearance. Yards and yards of materials were piled in draperies over the bustle, descending in a train. Ruffles, flounces, bands, borders, and fringe were placed on the front of the skirt.

The “Grecian bend” was a position assumed by bending the body forward from the waist, so that the lady with the bustle advanced somewhat like a camel. Even the bonnet was tilted forward over the head. By 1890 the bustle had disappeared, the skirt was
cut round, and the hour-glass figure was the fashion. The basque fitted over the corset without a wrinkle.

All skirts during the Victorian period were lined with muslin to increase the weight. Bustles were made in various combinations of wire, whalebone, and crinoline. Some reached to the knees, while others were only a foot in length. Strings held the bustle in place. Fancy bands of passementerie in various designs and heavily beaded were used on all parts of the gowns.

**Jewelry. Victorian Period.** The jewelry worn during the Victorian period in the sixties included sets of pins, earrings, lockets, wide brooches, and bracelets. Watches enclosed in gold cases were attached to long chains. In the nineties, the watch became open-faced and fastened inside the gown. Earrings were long in the seventies, single diamonds (called solitaires) fastened by a wire in the lobe of the ear, but in 1890 this method of fastening was discarded.

Bags, in the Victorian era, were suspended from the waist by chain and hook. These were followed by leather pocket-books, carried in a pocket in the opening in a seam of the skirt.

**After-Victorian Period.** But tremendous changes in political and social conditions took place in the generation following the Victorian period and transformed woman from a quiet, demure individual to an active person. It was about 1900, when the wasp waist was in vogue, that girls began to take an interest in athletics — bicycle riding, tennis, etc. At that time they could not take part in any games comfortably, confined as they were in tight corsets, so they began to wear looser ones. In addition, they began to wear clothes that made it easier for them to play games comfortably.

Athletics and exercise have also contributed to the increase in the size of the frame of the body and decreased excess tissue, since when a girl is exercising she wears the loosest garments
possible, and in such clothes there is every chance for expansion, which is just what happens.

**Thin-Fabric Costumes.** In the nineties, tailored suits with large-topped sleeves were used. In 1895, the shirtwaist came into vogue. It consisted of stiffened body, collar and cuffs, with four-in-hand tie, cuff buttons, and belt. The tailored effect disappeared, followed by elaborately trimmed waists of silk, satin, velvet, and lace. Shirt-waists were worn with a black skirt.

Up to 1895, women's skin, except her face, was never exposed, due to the opaque materials used. Eyelet embroidery openings in the body and arms of the waist now exposed the flesh, which caused much talk about a woman exposing her flesh — neck, arms, etc.

Then came the introduction of the thin fabrics, gauzes, chiffons, voils, and georgettes. Up to 1900, women wore heavy underwear, due to the ineffective system of heating. Heavy silk, all wool, long-sleeve and ankle lengths, were worn during the cold weather. Under flannels disappeared when the fur coat and thin costume appeared. Transparent gowns showed heavy underwear. Linen underwear was made attractive.

Notice the costume of 1892 in the above picture. It conveys dignity and beauty, due to the severity of outline and the elimination of details, such as found in the previous periods — ruffles, ribbons, lace, hoops, and bustles.

The figure of the American girl is undergoing a revolutionary change. The change is becoming more and more pronounced because girls are going in for athletics on an even wider scale. So much stress naturally falls on the legs of a girl who swims, plays tennis, and goes in for all the popular sports that the limbs are losing some of their fleshiness.
Modern Influence on Dress. During the last generation many social and political changes have taken place in the United States that have had a strong influence on women's clothing. The most important are:

(a) Women going into business
(b) Women's activities in sports
(c) Universal suffrage for women
(d) Development of motor cars and airplanes
(e) Women's activities during the war
(f) Applications of the new principles of hygiene to dress — exposure of body to sun and air as far as possible.

(g) Development of aesthetics — the feeling that every person should be made as beautiful and attractive as possible.

Influence of the Automobile. The automobile has become such an important factor in everyday transportation that it is necessary to have clothing adapted to this means of transit. Moreover, people are spending much money on automobiles that they would under ordinary conditions spend on clothing.

The motor car has revolutionized the head gear of women. There has been a gradual development away from the motor hood and veil to a close-fitting street hat. The exodus to the country which the car has made possible, has necessitated a different type of dress, adapted to different kinds of sports, country club activities, etc.

The peach-basket type of hat came into favor in 1909, and completely concealed the hair. For over twenty years hats have covered the hair. This is due to the motoring habit, so as to keep the hair from flying in the wind. The peach-basket type consisted of a large crown and brim with flowers flattened against it. Lace and finely pleated ruffles were used in place of the brim. The tight-fitting crown has done away with hat pins.

Education and Suffrage. Within the last generation girls have been given the advantages of both general and professional education equal to boys. This added advantage, plus the universal suffrage granted to women in the United States, gave them a
freedom and independence that developed all their potential powers as leaders in sports, business, politics, etc., which has been reflected in their demands for simple clothing.

![COSTUMES OF 1922](image)

**World War.** During the World War women took the places of men who went to war service, and the idea that women must be prepared to take men's places was reflected in the clothing—straight-line and tailored effects. The result was that women evolved clothes in keeping with the new emancipation, such as uncorseted, short-skirted clothing, and hats as simple as those of men.

After the war women still claimed the privilege of dressing for business, and they naturally demanded that clothing for business, leisure, etc., should be (1) comfortable, (2) of lasting qualities — to hold its own against breakage in every-day exertions, (3) easy to put on, such as a one-piece garment, (4) light in weight for hygienic reasons.

Ten years after the war — 1929 — a reaction set in. Women of today differ from their grandmothers in participating in the business and political world and naturally select simple, adaptable clothing, during the day, for these new duties. Nevertheless, the instincts and love for the beautiful are little different in the girl of today from those of her grandmother. Hence, when evening
enjoyment comes we find women longing for costumes with some of the beautiful influences of the period costumes of the past. The wistfulness of the crinoline period of our immediate American ancestry has its appeal in the appearance of the bouffant costume for social occasions.

**Modern Tendencies in Dress.** The business woman in this modern world applies the same common sense and good judgment to the selection of her wardrobe that she does to the transactions of the daily tasks of her business. She knows that she cannot be efficient without that physical comfort and mental ease which comes from being dressed so that she looks and feels her best. This means that she must be groomed for the street as well as for the office, because her place in the business world is no longer limited to indoor positions.

A woman in an executive position, often attending or presiding at official conferences or meeting clients of her organization, likes to be more formally tailored. A bow or flange adds to her feminine charm without jeopardizing the air of dignity and poise which she likes to maintain—especially if she holds to conservative color choices like navy blue, beige, or black.

**Costume for the Home Woman.** A woman should wear at home clothing that will reflect the spirit of the home. The costume should be cheerful and adapted to her social station. If she is a busy housewife, the house dress should be a washable one-piece — chambray or percale. The sleeves should be three-quarter length. For outdoors the housewife should have a coat and skirt of tailored cut, such as a serge or broadcloth or velvet, inconspicuous in color and without fads or frills.
Evening Costume. An evening gown or cloak allows one an opportunity to satisfy her longing for beautiful, fragile fabrics, richness of color, graceful draperies, and exquisite trimmings. The fabrics that may be used are diaphanous chiffons, youthful taffetas, glossy satins, rich velvets, crepes, and metal cloth or lace.

The ideal evening gown is sleeveless and has a low neck line. In order to wear this gown well it is necessary to have a smooth, white neck and a pair of shapely arms. All imperfections, such as thin or stout arms or shoulders, roughened skin, etc., must be tactfully veiled from full view.

The history of clothing shows that most novelties in dress are tried in the evening as no one objects to experiment a few hours on a new costume. To illustrate: The extremely narrow skirt, flesh-colored hose, extremely low shoes, and extreme hair styles have been introduced at night.

Operas, beaches, and race tracks are ideal for the display of styles, for these places are literally a playground for those who know how to play and can look well while at their leisure; and all the visitors come out to see and be seen.

Ensemble in Dress. The expression ensemble as applied to dress meant originally the coat and skirt to match or to contrast, and later meant a costume in which the hat, gloves, shoes, stockings, and shopping bag matched or conformed with the general idea of the costume as a whole.

Business Clothing. Business clothing should be adapted to the conditions of the business. In order to give a clean-cut impression, the costume should consist of a smart-looking tailored
shirt or blouse with a well-cut skirt, a smart belt, and good neck wear, or a simple one-piece dress. The rest of the clothing, such as a hat and outer covering, should be suited to the weather and should harmonize in color. It goes without saying that bright gloves, high belts, and party dresses have no place in a business office.

Notice the straight-line effect and simplicity of the tailored suit.

Straight is the line of duty;
Curved is the line of beauty.

Sport Costumes. Pictured above is a smart riding habit of the 60's — yards and yards of skirt, with a graceful long train trailing in the dust, and a flowing scarf to float in the breeze. Poised, either side, are two very up-to-date habits.

Mannish looking, indeed, in contrast to the costumes of the past, but infinitely becoming to the young women of good carriage.

There are all forms of sport costumes today for women.

The Figure or Silhouette. Dresses during the World War were similar to the Empire in line — high waist-line, long sleeves, clinging skirts of crepe de chine, soft satins, and georgettes. The shoe tops met the skirts. Shoe tops increased in height so that the skirts became shorter until finally they reached only to the knee.

The slender, boyish figure was introduced as a silhouette after the war. This style outline continued for ten years, when a
tendency toward greater elaboration became noticeable in all phases of the evening mode. Springing from complicated cutting, this new elaboration accentuates rather than interferes with the simplicity which well-dressed women have learned to prize.

The brassiere made possible the fashion known as the "boyish form," and succeeded in pressing down the figure until a flat chest that is neither beautiful nor healthful resulted.

**Flapper Style.** The girl from 12 to 18 is rather difficult to dress, due to the fact that she has her own ideas about the subject and attempts to imagine that she is a grown woman.

After 1926 there was a tendency among women to assume the physical appearance of the flapper with the boyish figure. In attempting to attain this form some women go to the extreme of dieting, etc. The Egyptians, 4000 years ago, tried to develop a boyish figure (see figure).

**Period Costume.** The costumes that we have described in the different periods represent the types that have appealed to the highest group of society at different times and naturally represent the highest form of art expressed sartorially at those periods. These costumes, complete in themselves, are suitable only for special occasions, and were never intended for ordinary wear. They were intended for evening gowns, theatrical purposes, and fashion shows. These period costumes, modernized, are spoken of in fashion circles as *robes de style*, to distinguish them from individual gowns, that is, costumes adapted to the needs of the individual.
Each season's style seems to be a development of last season's efforts. If we look over the history of clothing, we shall find that there have been two distinct developments: (1) Those which have been affected by cosmopolitan influences, that is, reflecting current events such as artistic, political, social, and geographical conditions, and which have been described as period costumes, and (2) the wearing apparel peculiar to some one nation and worn by it century after century — such as the peasant costumes of the Balkans — called national costumes.

**Individuality of Each Nationality.** Each nationality has a special style of dress and color that can only be worn successfully by the woman of that country. To illustrate: Note the colors worn by the Spanish and French women. The same colors cannot be worn successfully by American women. It has taken centuries of inbreeding to wear red, green, and yellow, and to develop a romantic setting and a natural audacity that allows one to wear these colors.

Many countries have a peculiar form of dress that has distinct artistic value and is used from time to time in developing new styles.

A strong indication of the present force of the feminist movement is shown not only in the United States but in other countries — Spain, Turkey, etc. In Spain it is shown by the gradual disappearance of the mantilla and in Turkey by the replacement of the veil by the hat.

The following represent the characteristic costumes worn by different nations that have influenced modern styles:

**Oriental Costumes.** The costumes of the people in the oriental countries have not changed as rapidly as in western countries, due to the peculiar religious beliefs — respect for traditions and ancestors. The rules that govern the life of the oriental woman are rather severe. To illustrate: The Koran pre-
scribes that the Mohammedan (Moslem) women be draped in such a manner that the rhythm of her bodily movements shall be completely hidden, as well as the outline of her face. This means that her clothing must be long, loose, and plentiful.

Oriental countries present a carnival of costumes. The black-robed heavily-veiled Moslem women are the background for all the bright colors. The Bedouins in white, flowing robes, the Jews in long striped yellow and red skirts, with richly hued silk head draperies, Syrians in European dress except for the tall red fez, French soldiers in blue, tourists with tropical helmets and moving-picture machines, marvelously ragged beggars, magnificent Mohammedan magnates, priests, porters, and beturbaned Moslems are all common.

**Hindu Costume.** India has been dominated for centuries by religions and tradition. The natives of India are divided into many classes and castes with distinct social privileges. They have developed costumes with many beautiful artistic effects which have occasionally been a source of influence on our costumes.

Since the Hindus invented cotton clothing, it is only natural that they should have developed wonderful fabrics — delicate muslin and calicoes, both plain and figured. In addition they had silk fabrics and shawls of wool.

Hindus of all classes are turbaned. A veil or wrap of muslin or silk is worn around the waist, with one end falling to the feet and crossed over the bosom, shoulder, and head. This is called a *sari*. The right hand and shoulder are visible. A tunic is worn underneath, with either long or short sleeves. Drawers are worn underneath the tunic.

**Byzantine.** Constantinople became the center of art from the fall of Rome in 476 until the end of the twelfth century. Originally Christian, and located near the oriental countries, this district developed into great prosperity during the above period, and its art and industry became famous and were known as Byzantine. Byzantine artists excelled in all kinds of decorative work and ex-
erted a wide influence. Russia received not only its religion but also its art from the Byzantine. Even the Mohammedans borrowed from it artistic ideas.

The costumes of the Byzantine era were gown, mantilla, girdle, sandals, veil held by a band or crown, and the hair in a long braid. The motifs of the designs were oriental and Christian ornaments, combined as "holy monograms," "dove-lamb" cross, Greek cross, circle, peacock, etc. The colors were rich, resembling those of jewels and metals, copper, gold, etc.

The costumes of university officials and Church costumes have always remained Byzantine in style.

**Arabian Costumes.** Arabs are the descendants of the people who occupied Arabia, a vast peninsula between Asia and Africa. The interior is a desert inhabited by wandering tribes. Other Arabs lived in cities and enjoyed a varied community life. The women wore fabrics of different degrees of quality — silk, etc. — interwoven with gold thread. Square or oblong pieces of cloth were gayly colored and fastened to head and shoulder, with trousers of silk or long tunics, and red shoes turned up at the toes.

**Turkish Influence.** The land occupied by Turkey is between Asia and Europe and is influenced by both continents. More than five centuries before Christ, Turkey in Asia was conquered by the Persians; two centuries later it came under the control of the Greeks; and later still, it became a part of the Roman empire. With the decline of the Roman empire came invasions by wandering Turks, Tartars, and others. About five hundred years ago the Turks, who were Mohammedans, captured Constantinople and the nearby countries and the civilization of this region soon declined. Although Turkey is rapidly following the traditions of dress of the Europeans, and is discarding both the religious and social customs of the Orient, the influence of the Turkish dress has prevailed in certain adjacent countries for several centuries, and is frequently used as a model for costumes of the present day in Europe and America.

The Turkish costume consists of tight-fitting dress opened down the front, with sleeves smooth and wide below the elbow. A full underskirt reaches nearly to the ankle, with baggy trousers below. There are elaborate decorations, borders and embroidery.
Greek Costume. The modern Greek peasant costume is very different from that of the ancient Greeks. It consists of a coat with rich gold embroidery on red or green velvet; and the trousers have effects due to Turkish influence.

Russian. In former centuries, while other parts of Europe were advancing in civilization, Russia was still being raided by hordes of outsiders. The country was so far away from western Europe that it felt little influence from the growing civilization of the West.

The costumes of the northern and eastern Russians include a short, flaring jacket (sleeveless) with the yoke made of different materials; the skirt is full, and most of the costumes show beauty, richness, and variety.

The costume for men consisted of a belted tunic or blouse to below the knees, showing the shirt under a V-opening. Over the tunic was a long, well-fitting coat. The cap was fur-bordered, with a conical crown. Full trousers were tucked into high boots below the knees.

Japanese. The Japanese costume includes a long kimono fastened by a sash with a bow in the back. They wear a form of a
slip underneath the kimono. Several kimonos are worn, with decorated edges at the neck. Closely fitted kimonos interfere with walking, hence the pigeon-toe gait.

**Chinese Costumes.** China is one of the oldest countries and has developed ideas of dress that are artistic in many respects. The Chinese are an oriental race controlled by religious and social traditions that have dominated the costumes of the men and the women. The outlines and parts of woman's form were not to be exposed, hence we find trousers or combination of trouser effects, as in oriental countries.

The Chinese conception of woman was one frail, delicate, and languid. Hence small feet, etc., were stylish. Red was the popular color for happiness. The Chinese invented fabrics of soft texture, such as satin, velvet, brocades, etc., and of course used them in clothing. Embroidery rich in color was extensively used. For ease and comfort Chinese clothing consisted of very loose garments composed of thin or thick silks and cottons. The sleeves were wide and hanging, for comfort in the warm weather. Trousers were completed with an over-hanging skirt. Note that the trousers are usually covered to a marked degree by long gowns or jackets. Women's garments were trimmed — men's were not. Clothes were usually made without pockets, and things were stuffed in the stockings, sleeves, or back. Shoes were composed of felts, whitened — not blackened. Slippers with or without stockings were worn at home.

**Peruvian.** The costumes of the primitive people like the South American Indians, Peruvians, etc., were usually single garments in bright colors with simple decorations. The designs were usually symbols.
Peasant Costumes. Today there is a tendency to have a fairly uniform costume for men and another for women for ordinary wear, except in the oriental countries. It is true the peasant and national costumes still exist, but these are worn only on festival and holiday occasions. But there is still a strong distinction between the oriental (eastern people) and occidental (western people), due principally to religious tradition.

During the eighteenth century the national costumes began to disappear, and we notice the development of peasant costumes in the provinces of Europe. These peasant costumes reflected the artistic feelings of the different localities, and have served as inspiration for the styles of today. To illustrate: the embroidery of the Bohemians and of the Slavonic people.

The fabrics worn in the national dress were those suitable for the climate. Dyeing has always been practiced by the peasants, hence their costumes have a tendency toward a great deal of color.

The Mexican costume consists of a high-peaked hat with roll brim, sash, and colored handkerchief about his head, and a blanket or mantle draped about his body.

The Bohemian costume has large sleeves embroidered or trimmed with colored ribbons. Red is one of the favorite colors, due to the feeling that this color would keep away the evil spirits. The apron is elaborately decorated. A flower wreath denotes an unmarried girl.

Many of the gypsies or Bohemians were of Hungarian origin, and they wandered from country to country dressed in elaborate costumes.

The Spanish people occupy a peninsula sharply separated from the rest of Europe by mountains. The closeness of Spain to Africa has always brought the country into intimate relations with that continent. The name Moor was applied to the Arab people who occupied North Africa and Southern Spain and introduced Arabian culture into Spain.

The characteristic dress of the Spanish peasant is the mantilla (of oriental or Arabian origin) of black lace over a lady's head, held
up with a large comb worn in the back of the hair. The bottom of the skirt is always richly trimmed.

**Fashion is Dominated by Reason.** As we have studied this chapter, we have seen that there is a reason and a good one for every change in costume. The reason may be political, social, or religious, but the changes in fashion are not introduced by designers altogether to make business, as is often charged. They are made at the desire of the people themselves, because of their wish to avoid monotony in their apparel. A woman obviously could not wear a beautiful gown indefinitely, as it would cease to please her friends, and then begin to tire them, and thus defeat its fundamental purpose, namely, to gain distinction.

Forecasting fashions is "not so much a guessing game as is sometimes thought." It can be done accurately, scientifically, by a knowledge of the past. This involves a scholarly breadth of view and depth of knowledge of peoples and customs, ancient, medieval, and modern, for the rich person in Egypt or Babylon reacted in much the same manner as the rich person of today.

The Paris coutourier does not like to admit this. He prefers to have it thought that some special talent enables him to foresee things. But the real reasons are there just the same. To illustrate: the short skirt is simply another sign of woman's emancipation. It is worn because of the growing desire of women to be free and to feel free. The change came from a long evolution which reached its climax when American and English women received the vote. The short skirt gives them a sense of freedom. Hence, in one form or another it will always be the dress of the active, sport-inclined business woman.

A Tut-ankh-amun's tomb is discovered; soon every home in the country is familiar with its contents, and its influence makes itself felt in many and subtle ways.

No one is more keenly aware of the great educational forces let loose in the world than the merchant. He has become mass-conscious. The merchant has found a new romance in his busi-
ness. He is no longer just a seller of fixed commodities. His office is a channel for world thought; past him sweeps the panorama of modern trends and ancient customs. He watches political and economic movements. He studies the art of his own and foreign countries. He familiarizes himself with social, political, and religious tendencies. Why? Because he has learned that out of them grow fashions and styles.

Fashion, taken in its broadest sense, does not concern clothes alone. It registers the degree of man's interest in the major portion of things that touch his daily life: the clothes he wears, the rooms that he lives in, the house that shelters him, his automobile, his office. The more sophisticated he gets, the more he demands distinction in the many manifestations of fashion.

As in all life there is perpetual change, so there is change in fashion. The appetite for variety is another manifestation of the expanding inner life of mankind. It must never be permitted to sink into monotony; it must never be allowed to become commonplace.

Style caters to man's love of distinction; around it swing the principles of good taste. It is the resultant of good design, harmonious colors, and good workmanship. Fashion, on the other hand, is defined for the merchant's purposes as designating those newer items of merchandise for which there is a present or anticipated demand, based on the changing desires of the public. Style is thus a word most useful to designate fine qualities of design, proper use of materials, and skillful workmanship in the objects offered, while fashion primarily results from a favorable psychological reaction of the crowd toward the merchandise.

The eagerness on the part of the customer to purchase the "right thing," and the desire of the merchant to supply it intelligently, brought into existence a new type of service headed by the stylist. The function of the stylist is centered in what might well be called the merchant's laboratory. Here the elements that contribute to style are studied. The stylist's is a highly specialized job, concerned only with keeping in close
touch with current developments and their interpretation as related to the fashions of the past and present.

In the development and application of fashion knowledge through a centralized bureau, the buyer had to rely solely on his own judgment and taste, looking to the producer of merchandise for guidance. If the latter made an error it was passed on to the retailer — an expensive proceeding. Under the present system the stylist or fashion bureau makes known its findings in time to guide the store buyer, that is, before the season begins, and she is able to check up the information in the light of her practical experience. The methods of thought regarding line, mass, and color of both stylist and buyer coördinate, thus producing a harmonious and balanced relationship in their undertakings.

**Cycle Theory of Fashion.** Since styles constantly change, the old styles appearing in new forms, there has evolved the cycle theory of fashion.

If we glance through the progress of history, we shall find that fashions do not change altogether. They merely repeat themselves in a continuous cycle, with slight modifications to meet the difference in conditions between the past and the present. Peasant hats 100 years old revealed a striking similarity to the modes of 1926. Many of the smartest of modern evening frocks displayed reflected the full skirt and at least a suggestion of the nineteenth-century bustle.

The fashions of the wealthy classes change more quickly than the poorer classes, due to the difference in wealth. That is the reason the national costumes of some peasants — Hungarian peasants — have not changed in 400 years.

The customs, conventions, and standards of living and social conduct have changed in the different parts of the world and also in the different ages. These changes are reflected not only in the manners of the people, table etiquette, etc., but also in the clothing. What would be good manners in one period would be bad form in another period.
During the Victorian period it was improper to wear scanty or thin clothing. Today we know by the latest teachings of hygiene and the customs of people that it is quite proper to have light-weight, sheer (thin) fabrics, and to have the body as far as possible exposed to direct rays of the sun and the circulation of air.

Briefly stated, the cycle theory is this: At stated periods fashions are bound to repeat themselves. Small hats, for instance, enjoying their vogue today, may pass out next year, but will inevitably return after the mode has run its course. Ankle-length skirts, so beloved by the Victorians, may be entirely out of the picture for the moment, but one day they, too, may come back.

Any woman with a taste for the picturesque is bound to be charmed by the frock which, with tight, low-cut bodice and full, voluminous skirt, recalls the earlier glory of kings and courts, the charm of powdered hair and patches.

QUESTIONS

1. Why is a study of period costumes or the history of costumes worth while?
2. What is (a) style and (b) fashion? Explain in terms of clothing.
3. What are the points necessary in describing a style of clothing?
4. (a) What causes changes in style? (b) Give examples showing the causes of changes.
5. (a) What is meant by political and social changes in society? (b) How have their forces changed styles?
6. (a) What is an instinct? (b) How have instincts been responsible for changes in styles?
7. Explain why costumes that were charming a generation ago appear ridiculous today.
8. (a) What is modesty? (b) How has modesty been instrumental in changing style?
9. (a) What is emulation? (b) Explain how emulation has been responsible for changes in styles?
10. Describe how the aesthetic taste and commercial interests have influenced styles.
11. Explain how the changes of season in the temperate-zone countries have been responsible for style changes.

12. What is meant by the expression "period costume"?

13. Describe the Egyptian civilization, telling political, social, and religious conditions that determined the type of costume.

14. What are the artistic features of the Egyptian costumes?

15. Describe briefly the political, social, and religious conditions of the Greek civilization, and the type of clothing.

16. What are the artistic features of the classical costume? Compare to the Egyptian dress.

17. Describe the Roman civilization and characteristics of Roman clothing.

18. (a) What is meant by the period called the "Dark Ages" in history? (b) Describe the political and social conditions and the style of dress.

19. Trace briefly the development of clothing during the Dark Ages.

20. (a) What is meant by the "Moyen Age" styles? (b) Summarize the characteristics of the period.

21. (a) What is meant by the Gothic influence? (b) Describe the artistic qualities. (c) What has been the influence in dress?

22. (a) What is meant by the "Renaissance period" in history? (b) What were the social and political conditions?

23. Why was northern Italy the great center of style and art during the last years of the Dark Ages?

24. How did France take from Italy the honor of being the style center?

25. (a) What was the conception of clothing during the beginning of the 16th century? (b) How did this conception change the general outline of the costume of the previous period?

26. What were the characteristics of costume during the early Renaissance?

27. Compare the Renaissance and Moyen Age periods of dress.

28. Compare the dress of men and women during the period of 150 years after the Renaissance?

29. (a) What is meant by the Stuart period of dress? (b) Why were the costumes during this period about the same in France as in England? (c) What are the characteristics of dress during this period? (d) Give the artistic characteristics. (e) Compare to the Moyen and Renaissance style.

30. (a) Describe the political and social conditions under Louis XIV. (b) State the characteristics of dress under this period.

31. What were the changes in dress between Louis XIV and Louis XV?
32. (a) Describe the political and social conditions under Louis XIV. (b) Who was Marie Antoinette?

33. (a) What were the characteristics of dress during the reign of Louis XVI? (b) What caused the changes from the previous period?

34. (a) What was the French Revolution? (b) What caused it? (c) What effect has this revolution on costume?

35. (a) What is meant by the directoire period in French history? (b) What were the political and social conditions? (c) Give the characteristics of dress.

36. (a) What is the Empire period in French History? (b) What were the political and social conditions? (c) Give the characteristics of dress.

37. (a) Explain the meaning of the Restoration period in French history (b) What were the social and political conditions? (c) Give the characteristics of the costumes of this period.

38. (a) What is meant by the Second Republic period in French history? (b) Describe political and social conditions. (c) Give the characteristics of costume.

39. (a) What is meant by the Second Empire period in French history? (b) What were the political and social conditions? (c) Describe the characteristics of dress at this time.

40. (a) What is meant by the Third Republic period in French history? (b) Describe the political and social conditions. (c) Describe the costumes of this period.

41. (a) What is meant by the Victorian period in history? (b) What were the social conditions during this period? (c) Describe the costumes.

42. Describe the social and political changes that took place after the Victorian period, and the influences.

43. What social and political changes took place during and after the World War?

44. What appeal to us have the costumes of our ancestors?

45. What is the difference between period and national costumes?

46. Name the characteristics of the following national costumes: (a) Spanish, (b) Russian, (c) Bohemian, (d) Greek, (e) Chinese, (f) Japanese, (g) Mexican.

47. (a) Are the national costumes disappearing? (b) If so, express the causes.

48. Is fashion a whim or fancy or is it really a carefully planned change due to certain political, social, or personal reasons?

49. Explain the cycle theory of fashion.