FASHIONS of the MOMENT

NEW YORK.—Straight lines and beguiling simplicity are lost in eccentric, draperies and unique trimming effects. Nothing is too bizarre or too unusual to be countenanced by fashionable dressmakers, and even women who heretofore have had a reputation for conservatism in matters of dress are allowing themselves to be drawn along by the giddy throng Verily, fashions this winter are a merry medley.

Extravagance is the cry, and unmistakably there is a recklessness about the situation that causes one to wonder whither it all is tending. At the same time there never was a season when one could draw so freely from the bargain counter, nor with such certainty that the prizes could be used immediately.

There is great feeling for the cloth gown and for the tailored suit that is of more or less fanciful construction, since not even the silk and satin costumes offer more excellent opportunity for clever color combinations, and combining colors cleverly is what makes for the supremest successes.

Ratine Not Appreciated.

Ratine, over which French women are raving, and which has been heralded as the queen of cloths for street wear, has, so far, not been appreciated over here except in a line with polo cloth and camel's hair for separate coats, but, undoubtedly, mid-winter will see American women running about to teas and matinees in furtrimmed suits of it, just as enthusiastic over it as their French sisters are now. It really is an ideal fabric for snappy cold weather, barring the fact that it catches every particle of dust that floats near it.

The sketch illustrates this week a model charmingly suitable for either ratine or plush, which latter is also a favorite with Parisians, that may be counted upon to have a certain share of the favor accorded such rich materials, and it—the model—shows one of the newest methods of draping.

The skirt is, fashioned in a single piece, the breadths sewed together in straight lengths. Then it is started at the right hip and literally wrapped about the figure until, crossing the initial end, it is caught high enough at the left side to form a graceful jabot. The cloth is faced with bright-colored silk down the floating edge and across the slanted front.

Sealskin Trimmings.

The trimmings are of sealskin. Three large rimmed sealskin buttons are ranged down the inner diagonal fold, while the little jacket, that reaches barely over the hips, in a quaint, old-fashioned looking cutaway, that, nevertheless, is very smart, is given a large shawl collar with banding of the sealskin. The banding is twisted into a loop as it turns the corner above an ornamental design in satin cording, enclosing small sealskin motifs, and, incidentally, outlines a bolero. The muff is of the sealskin with lining to match that of the coat and the skirt facing.

Russian coats in their various modifications are extremely well suited to such fabrics as ratine. They are, in fact, one of the newest forms of the tailor-made and, especially if combined with velvet and fur, as in a model from which is being designed a going-away costume for a prospective bride, they have all possible chic. This particular suit is blue, bright enough to be a French blue, except that it has none of the harshness of that shade.

Going-Away Costume.

The skirt of it is narrow, straight, and plain. A tunic, long and rounded to a point in front, gently curves from either side until, at the back, one side overlaps the other in a sort of surplice effect, fitting quite smoothly about the hips and, at the waistline which is raised an inch all round. A band of ermine, four inches wide, starts at the center of the rounded point and finishes under the lap-over at the back.

The Russian coat reaches well over the hips, is gathered with the least possible fulness into the belt, and has the opening at one side of the front. The blouse part then fastens diagonally across to meet this opening, the line that joins it to the skirt being covered with a heavy silk cord that ties tasselled ends at the side. A sailor collar, deep enough at the back to all but conceal it, is of blue velvet of the same color, banded with ermine, and continued over the shoulders and down the front in a good-sized shawl collar. The sleeves are short, not quite touching the elbow, and are banded with ermine.

Braids for Suits.

Braids figure often enough on coat and skirt suits, and occasionally on dresses, but rarely without some other trimming—an inset of embroidery, with pipings or emplecements of silk velvet, plush, corduroy, brocade, or tapestry, not forgetting ratine, which, embroidered or plain, is wonderfully popular for both suit and gown trimmings.

Bold garnitures, such as the metallic beadings and high-colored embroideries, are still preferably veiled, either with a tulle that merely casts a haze over them, or with a slightly heavier effect. The recklessness with which the most incongruous trimmings are combined is one of the chief notes of interest in the prevailing fashions. The most daring ventures seem to work out sometimes to the most pleasing harmonies and just as often, perhaps, what would seem to the laywoman the most natural combinations developed would prove tame and commonplace.

If a dressmaker has any of the essential esprit in her, she must be thoroughly en rapport with her vocation. For, notwithstanding the freedom in the use of materials and the seeming unconventionality of designs, the stamp of success is readily recognizable and so clear that it might even be declared that costumes are of but two classes—successes and failures. There is no such thing as a "rather" smart costume—either it is or it is not.

Wearing Small Furs.

The continued moderate weather has afforded an unusually good opportunity for wearing short dresses with small furs. These are largely of velvet with long sleeves, for the transparent tops are giving way to those of the dress material, and if yokes there are, they are of the smallest dimensions, and introduced merely for the sake of becomingness, few women being at their best without the aid of some light material at the neck. This makes an excuse for berthas, bretelles, yokes, etc., of white cloth, which is the

"newest" idea, and one that is capable of being worked out in many effective ways.

Sleeves receive most attention in connection with day-time gowns. The full length ones are far and away most emphatically of the moment, but compared with the freedom allowed by the shorter ones they are so uncomfortable that they are evaded. There is no denying their distinction, however, nor that they preserve a certain dignity that the abbreviated modes lack, and that is consistent with the character of velvets and brocades and the various other stately materials in vogue, minus only their former uncompromising stiffness.

Recent Striped Cloth.

Some strikingly attractive striped cloth gowns have put in an appearance this last week, particularly interesting because stripes, although reckoned in the list of fashionable fabric patterns, are nevertheless not so popular as was anticipated. Chestnut serge, marked off at intervals with hair lines of black, with black velvet lavishly used as a trimming medium, composes one of them. The skirt of the serge has a broad inset of the velvet, filling in the entire front and continued in a straight flounce across the front, the whole outlined by a six-inch banding of the material applied as a flounce, to produce the illusion of a separate tunic.

All conventional gowns are long, but in some wise, known only to the clever designers of them, they never appear obtrusively so. It often is the case that an observer may have been much impressed with a costume, yet in recalling it be unable to say whether it was round length or en traine, unless she shall happen to have got in the way of it, for most the trains are snake-like things yet, wriggly appendages that, though they are entirely separate from the rest of the dress, are so in keeping with it as not to impress themselves as separate features any more than the sleeves of the tunic.

A dainty dance frock, shown in the illustration, a pretty and seasonable design, is carried out in chiffon over satin trimmed with roses

Ducks and Geese.

With such fast growing birds as goslings and ducklings, especially if these latter be of the large breed, care must be had that they get enough bone and muscle building material in their rations, otherwise they will suffer from leg weakness, says a writer in exchange. I very much [illegible] tion of lime to water for [illegible] any kind. It keeps tanks [illegible] nishes bone building material, and it is just as important for poultry as any other stock. When it is remembered that rickets can be cured by the addition of lime to a child's or young animal's milk, it is surely worth while to guard against deficiency by having some lime about tankage and alfalfa, both furnishing lime in fair quantity, besides enabling ducks and geese to grow with amazing speed by building up the muscular frame, and to get best results a grain ration should be balanced by these for best results.

Building Hog Fence.

A very good way is to set posts in the winter and stretch the woven wire on a warm day when the ground is still frozen solid. In this way every post takes up the strain gradually, and though the corner posts must be well set and braced at the same time they are not so hardly used of a sudden as when newly set. The barbed wire which is necessary on the ground to prevent hogs from rooting under may be stretched when the corner posts are in and used to set the intermediate posts by if desired. At any rate, it should be put on previous to stretching the woven wire.

BUOY FLOATED SIX YEARS

Belonged to Ship Wrecked Off Japan and Ocean Currents Carried It to Scotland.

A strange story of the seas and their mysterious currents was told in a letter received by Stanley Dollar, of this city, from John Gear, at Lerwick, Scotland, inclosing a clipping from the Shetland Times, published at Lerwick.

The item is to the effect that there was picked up on the beach at Cullivoe, Papastour, north of Scotland, a life buoy, tattered and stained, bearing the inscription: "Passed by J. Guthrie, San Francisco, Cal., June 1, 1905."

Capt. Guthrie is an assistant local inspector of steamboats for his district.

The Stanley Dollar was wrecked off the west coast of Japan in August, 1905, and the buoy must have been floating in the ocean curents until it landed over in Scotland. Whether it went around the Horn or through the Northwest Passage or down [illegible] Australasia and around the Cape of Good Hope into the Atlantic, is a mystery of seafaring men. The buoy holds the world's record for drifting the longest distance ever known.

Equally marvelous is the fact that it was not found before, but this may be explained by the theory that it floated in parts of the two oceans unfrequented by many vessels.—San Francisco Chronicle.

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The claim is circular, about ten or twelve feet in diameter, and the ants allow no plant but the ant rice to encroach upon the cleared space anywhere.

The produce of the crop they carefully harvest, though authorities are still disagreed upon the final question whether they plant the grain or merely allow it to sow its own seed on the protected area.

One thing, however, is certain—that no other plant is permitted to sprout on the tabooed patch. The ants wage war on weeds far more vigorously and effectively than our own agriculturists.

What He's Going to Give Up.

"For ten years I have been trying to give up smoking."

"That so?"

"Yes, but this year I am going to give up trying."

An Endless Job.

"How do you pass the long winter evenings at your house?"

"Studying the magazine club offers, trying to select a combination that [illegible] family."

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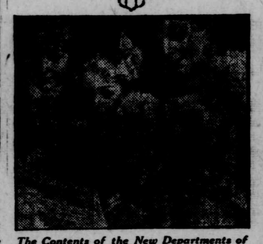

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