

# TALKS FAIL TO FIX LENGTH OF SKIRTS

Actress Defends Longer Vogue  
Before Women's Federation—  
Writer Denounces It.

## FEMINIST IN OPPOSITION

Elsie Hill Tells Zonta Club Trailing  
Garments Make for 'Exaggeration  
of Sex'—Husband Backs Her.

The long and short of the dress problem were debated with spirit by feminists, fashion experts, an actress and a lawyer at two meetings of women in the city yesterday afternoon and last night. When the debates were over the situation remained exactly as it had been in the beginning: Some liked the long skirts of the present season and some did not.

The first debate was at the home-making centre of the New York State Federation of Women's Clubs in the Grand Central Palace. The second was at a dinner of the Zonta Club, a business woman's organization, in the Women's City Club, Park Avenue and Thirty-fifth Street.

At the federation discussion Miss Gertrude Lawrence, actress, appeared in and defended the long skirts. She found that the longer skirts made their wearers "easier to look at" and, since they hid the knees, were an esthetic advance for which the world could be thankful. She denied that they made women any the less free.

"They make women more free," she asserted. "They emphasize women's femininity. And every woman knows that the way to get things she wants is to be feminine and her husband will let her have her own way."

Rita Weiman, author, dwelt on the floor-sweeping disadvantages of long skirts and declared them unbecoming.

"The long skirts are a retrogression and a discomfort," she remarked. "Short skirts are honest and healthful, and that does not mean any lack of femininity."

At the Zonta Club dinner Miss Elsie Hill, feminist, declared herself unqualifiedly against the trailing garments. She argued that they had turned women back "to the most extreme exaggeration of sex."

Albert Levitt, Professor of Law at St. Lawrence University, husband of

Miss Hill, was the only man at the dinner. He took the same view as did his wife and contended that it was unfortunate that a style committee of twelve men should be allowed to dictate the fashions of more than 100,000,000 women and girls.

Professor Levitt said that the character of growing girls is influenced by fashion; that the change in styles greatly interferes with their conduct in the classroom.

Miss Raymond Ives of Vogue fashion magazine, and Miss Marcia Connor, professional stylist, took a less severe view. They maintained that the advent of the long skirt does not necessarily mean that the short garment must be abandoned. Business women, they stated, can wear the short skirt for office and street, but can lift themselves out of the workaday atmosphere entirely by wearing the longer dress for social events.