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*	CONTENTS : <i>Swiss Industries Fair, Basle 1947 : Textiles, Clothing, Fashion, p. 9. — Fashions in Paris, p. 17. — Fashions in New York, p. 24. — Fashions in London, p. 26. — Spring is drawing nigh..., p. 28. — IXth Export Week of the Exporters Association of the Swiss Clothing Industry, p. 30. — Exporters Association of the Swiss Clothing Industry, p. 39-100. — A few Swiss Novelties, p. 101. — Publications of the Swiss Office for the Development of Trade, p. 164.</i>	*
*	<i>Index of Advertisers, p. 31. — Information concerning Swiss products, p. 98. — How to subscribe to «Swiss Textiles» ?, p. 32.</i>	*



INDISCRETIONS IN THE WINGS... ADVANCE NEWS OF PARIS FASHIONS

1947 trends

The dainty whirl and blossom of spring fashions begin to bud while Paris shivers in the throes of winter. Whenever a reluctant ray of sunshine lingers on a pale, iridescent sky, one immediately wonders : What surprising novelty will this year bring ? Winter is on the wane, but... are cross-cut effects really out of date ?...

Women, always extreme in their tastes, had begun to dream of still slimmer silhouettes, ethereal waists, nonchalant hip-lines, long shapely legs, shorter, more mincing steps. Hobble-skirts and spring-time — why not ? That touch of sophistication which proved so delightful under winter lighting, might be adapted to the styles for summer days... why not ?

But, in the wings of the stage of fashion, in corridors and doorways of fashion houses, in the course of hasty conversations snatched with the creators of Parisian vogue, your reporter has managed to glean advance news of things to come.

Slim lines for morning wear ; draped effects still swathe the hips, unexpected hints of a bustle. Not very wide skirts for day wear. Gowns, mostly straight, mould the bust.

Supple woollens and soft shades still predominate for tailormades and «little frocks» and, though prints are still in feminine favour, printed and plain cottons will put up a serious fight.

Because, these same prints and plain cottons have of late become the aristocrats of fashion ; they appear so delightful, so charmingly restful, crisp and fresh, after all the years they have been denied us. Of course, they are difficult to obtain, and because of their scarcity only a few privileged women will wear them. But that is not their sole merit : they fall better than the heaviest crepe and when they assume the form of organdie, opaline or muslin for evening wear — why then ! they are fresher and more vaporous than tulle.

Fit to adorn the lawns of Bagatelle, there is one long gown in Broderie Anglaise — a creation of one of the greatest masters — of which every woman could dream. Trimmed with white guipure, it an «off-the-shoulder» style, but with coy little sleeves. The skirt billows out in three flounces which widen out and spread to the ground.

Talk me no talks of « slim silhouettes » in the face of that other model which might well have leapt straight from a canvas by Winterhalter ! A whirlwind of muslin, indescribable unless one uses such terms as « cloud », « flower », « nest » ! — A very demure bodice fastened to the waist by minute lingerie buttons ; elbow length sleeves ; from the waist downwards, a fabulous spread of muslin trimmed with crescent-moon pipings pricked with bunches of margarets tied with black, velvet bows matching long gloves.

And are we to see once again those wide-brimmed, ribbon-trimmed Gainsborough hats, so charmingly romantic and suitable for the crisp gowns in which a woman loves to stand against the skyline ?

For gala nights in town, organdies and embroideries are to replace somewhat heavy satins, pearl

and sequin motifs which we wore so dazzlingly last winter. There is one lovely model, created for a film star, in which a black velvet bodice contrasts with a huge white organdie skirt. A white convolvulus in spring — and the velvet bows are a flight of spring butterflies.

Regal, unforgettable, is yet another Paquin evening gown ! A slim velvet bodice retains a cascade of foam-like organdie flounces. Finely embroidered silver palms gleam softly, as if caught in a net of filigree...

Women dream of waltzes, escapades, Pré-Catalan and lovers bemused, as they gaze at these gowns — all somewhat unreal, crisp and naïve — gowns to be seen at twilight or at dawn, in a fairy-tale setting where nymphs still linger, where mirrors are silvery lakes and carpets are green lawns...

Countess de Semont.

PARISIAN LINGERIE FASHIONS

Spring 1947

The « latest thing » in hats, a chic gown, do not entitle us to self-congratulation if, in the intimacy of home, our mirror reflects careless undies. Of course, the war and textile restrictions have made us hide a multitude of sins, especially in France, but Paris still remains the cradle of fashion, and the tradition of fine lingerie has survived the storm, despite the shortage and bad quality laundry products. Because a woman simply cannot resist lovely lingerie ! And, in fact, there has been a paradoxical revival of trimmings which can only be explained by the fact that lingerie manufacturers must employ the greatest number possible of seamstresses and use a minimum of material... And so, soft furnishings, for instance — curtains, table linen and the like — are now laden with insertions and embroideries. The same development has taken place for underwear.

Another factor which has caused this very marked change in fashions is the type of fabric employed. Plain or threefold muslins, threefold voiles, have gradually replaced heavy crepe-de-chine, and this for reasons of weight. These delicate materials are more suitable for very fluffy styles, frills and pin-tuck trimmings. Nightdresses are becoming more and more similar to ball dresses for debs or tunics for Cathedral angels. Skirts are vaporous, bodices tightly fitting, sleeves — when there are any — are full on the shoulders when worn short, or very wide and tight at the wrist, when worn long.

How have we managed to do without lace for so long ? What a joy to find it again in insertions, or used for a whole bodice over a wide, tightly-fitting waistband. Sometimes one side of the bodice is of lace, and the other of fabric — a concession to the present vogue for asymmetry.

Petticoats have no story to tell. They are still cut on the cross to avoid as much thickness as possible under the dress. But there has been a revolution in knickers. One famous Parisian lingerie maker, noticing that panties are gaining more and more popularity in the feminine world, thought of making them in lingerie, sheathing the figure perfectly, but covered by a wide embroidered or lace flounce, like a small petticoat, as in the model illustrated here (page 20). It really is a more gracious style.

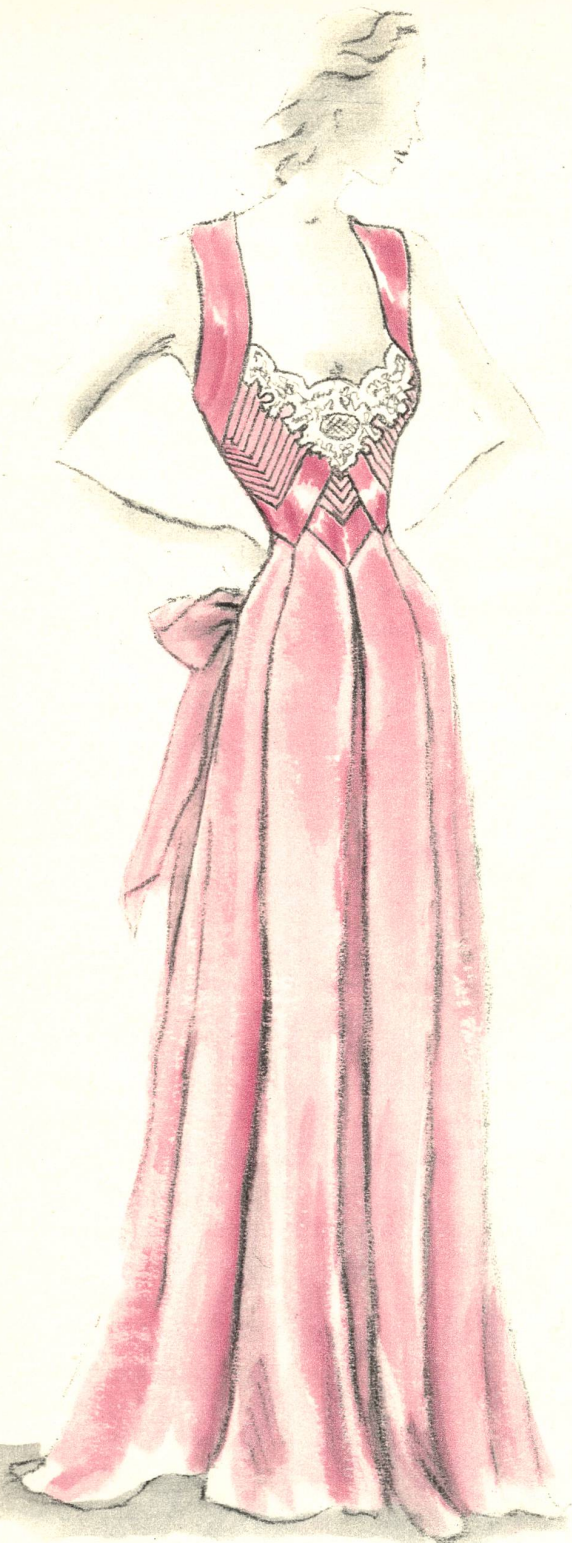
For lingerie, as for all Parisian dressmaking, the main thing now is to preserve intact the heritage of specialized seamstresses whose manual skill is almost perfection itself. As one turns the pages of « Swiss Textiles », one falls to dreaming of the time when frontiers will be opened wide again, when France and Switzerland will once again be quite free to co-operate in the creation of exquisite luxury articles of feminine apparel.

Constance d'Heigny.

En soulevant le rideau des
secrets d'une grande collection :

Organdi imprimé de
STOFFEL & C^{IE}, SAINT-GALL





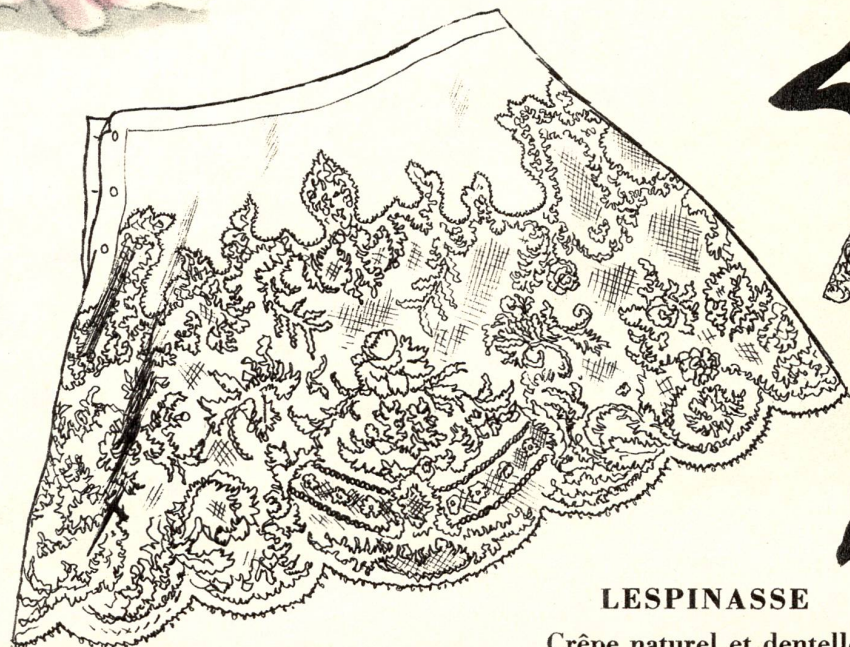
SUZY

Satin naturel, incrustations à contre-sens
Mousseline quadruple travaillée de plis lingerie main, dentelle d'Alençon



WORTH

Crêpe mat blanc, incrustations satin



LESPINASSE

Crêpe naturel et dentelle

Allegretta

Nous étions dix fill's dans un pré, Caut's les dix à mari — er : Of a...



J-A Bonnaud -

Un chapeau fait
le printemps!

AB
ex



PAULETTE

En haut :

Jersey marine, bord picot blanc
garni d'une branche de velours

En bas :

Feutre noir, bord de picot
naturel, ruban de velours noir

Pier. Bovel
47

„LET'S HAVE A WEDDING!“

Bridal gowns must blossom in the spring, or at least in that foretaste of spring which February's uncertain skies may bring. When all danger of snow is past, then muslins and organdies may safely bloom, opalines and Broderie Anglaise may ravish us, daintily exquisite and fragile as hothouse flowers.

In Paris now — whether at the Madeleine or at St. Honoré d'Eylau, on the «rive gauche» or the «rive droite», the brides for whom wedding bells are ringing are all deliciously girlish. Bridal gowns are becoming more and more similar in style to evening gowns worn by very young debs.

More romantic than costly in style, these gowns are not intended to dazzle spectators, but to charm, and the bridal ceremony itself tends rather to idealize than to overpower them.

We have come a very long way from those formal wedding styles in stiff and too brilliant satins which our mothers wore! How dim and faded now appear the heroines of Proust, the brides of Flaubert whose «gown, too long, dragged a little along the ground, causing the group to stop from time to time, so that it might be adjusted...»

If Emma Bovary's destiny was influenced by her bridal attire and her fate then foretold of being forever «misunderstood», our young brides today will surely have a happy and delightful life.

Cotton fabrics, ranging from organdie to Broderie Anglaise, are this year's great luxury: whiter than

satins, more youthful than brocades, they are a more fitting symbol of the childish grace of their wearers and stylize slim figures delightfully.

At a recent, very Parisian wedding, where the gowns had been designed by one of our best couturiers, the bride wore a pure white organdie gown with a skirt as wide as the widest crinoline style. A supple wicker hoop spread out the skirt just below the hip-line. With perfect self-assurance despite her mere eighteen years, the young bride beamed with happiness under her veil more transparent than tulle. The veil flowed to the waist from under a dainty Florentine cap. The bridesmaids also wore organdie, but in sober styles. They too wore tiny halo-like veils held by a minute bandeau.

And still other bridal and bridesmaids' gowns are being prepared in the precincts of a famous fashion house, and this for a very great wedding which is to take place in the church where Gyp was wont to marry off her heroines! An extremely plain bodice, almost austere in cut, from which flow seven graded flounces spreading out to the ground, like some strange, fabulous flower...

All these gowns are different, as different as the brides and their dreams! And yet all have that same touch of distinction, sentimentality and almost naïve freshness, most apt to express the culmination of «love's young dream».

Countess de Semont.

PARIS LOVES EMBROIDERY

Whether a woman be sober and demure, or lavish and expensive in her tastes, true elegance demands a personal note in dress, a note which Parisian dress-makers create by a touch of embroidery and lace, the products of two essentially French crafts.

French too, is that thirst for novelty in which an exquisite and studied elegance is closely allied to «good taste» — two qualities which seem to emanate from the very air of Paris and to inspire its fashions.

Different manufacturing techniques are skilfully combined in modern embroidery products and the most brilliant effects are obtained, even though, in our day, no art can be divorced from commercial

factors, on which indeed the material success of art depends.

And so we find laces blended with jewelry embroidered effects on cloth ground, pearl and sequin loops. Embroidery is abandoning its older technique in favour of more vigorous methods, using more effective materials which stress the final effect more boldly.

Our modern products have not the exquisiteness of the Middle Ages when time meant but little; they are, however, no less choice and audaciously conceived and represent an important element in the harmonious whole of modern fashions.

P. E. Bataille.