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Paris



Paris Triumphs

Mythology could certainly supply us with a nymph or goddess to illustrate the theme «Triumph of Fashion». One can imagine her, draped in ribbons and garlanded with fine feathers and veils, looking out at us from against the gay and pastel background of a Gobelin tapestry, or standing in a group of bronze statuary set against a sheaf of rainbow waters. It would have to be in a dream-land Versailles, of course, or in a landscape made of sky and monumental stones of eternally romantic beauty and strewn with that opalescent light only Paris can shed. For in Paris there is an eternal breath of youth and inspiration — and it is Paris which for centuries has provided the beautiful styles we term «fashion».

It could come only from Paris. Only there could fashion spring to life, survive and spread its bold and wonderful tendrils, grow in a garden where good taste is the foundation of pleasure.

There are flowers which should never be transplanted and fashion is one of them. It needs the air of Paris and no tender care or subtle art can replace the native air. In the darkest days of war, an attempt was made to make Berlin the substitute of Paris. But no Parisian dressmaker would consent to this treachery. Some did cross the Atlantic to enter the «land of unlimited possibilities», dreaming

of finding there new impulses which could spring from more favourable material conditions. But they have returned with all illusions shattered. «Only in Paris can fashion be created», they say and here only have they found that unique atmosphere which favours the flowering of creative inspiration and its realization, the only place where such ideas can be accepted.

After the Liberation, Parisian dressmaking had to face many seemingly insuperable obstacles — lack of materials and labour — which have been overcome. Today, the prestige of Parisian haute couture flames across the world as before, and no other centre can escape its influence. Wherever she may live, the well-dressed woman returns to Paris to buy her clothes, like lovely Martha Firestone of New York, the bride-to-be of William Ford III, who has just arrived to buy her trousseau and bridal gown.

An old tradition has been revived, a tradition which might well find an appropriate symbol and a «Triumph of Fashion» we would wish some artist to create: a group of five dainty women, the five Continents, seeking inspiration to enhance their eternal femininity, looking out at us from a Gobelin tapestry or the greening bronze of a Paris fountain.