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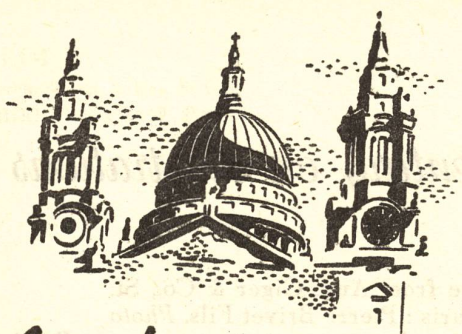
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London

The New

When our ten leading British dress designers showed their new Export Collections to the overseas buyers and the members of the press in London recently we quickly realised that after years of little variation, the female silhouette has radically changed in the past few months.

While most of us were pleased with the new lines decreed for us, not a few were prudently dismayed at the sight of long narrow skirts for day wear, billowing hips and high neck lines. The downcast thought not so much of what they would look like, but rather of the difficulties involved in achieving such Edwardian elegance on the few coupons allowed us and with such scarcity of materials and accessories as we are experiencing in Britain at the moment.

We realised, of course, that the lovely clothes we were looking at, inspired by exquisite materials culled not only from our own manufacturers, but also from foreign countries and particularly Switzerland, were not for us at present. They were destined for export, to be worn by lovely women in countries as far apart as the U. S. A., Canada, South America, South Africa and Egypt, where they would serve as good Ambassadors for their designers and for the manufacturers of the fine materials used in their composition.

But womanlike, we all feel that we cannot stand aside and be mere spectators in the Battle of the Skirtline. Come what may, every woman who has

seen or read about the new silhouette is determined to achieve it. And so we observed every detail of the new collections, marked each change, noted the subtle new colours, the sumptuous new materials, and finished by carefully comparing what we saw here in London with the reports we received of the Paris openings which took place the following week.

What are these changes of silhouette which have been so emphatically outlined and underlined in both London and Paris for the coming seasons, and what do they mean in terms of materials and accessories?

Although there are many differences in the thought behind the collections of each country, there are a surprising number of points on which London and Paris are unanimous. There is a profound figure consciousness common to both, a determination that skirts shall not be parted from the ground by more than fourteen inches, preferably twelve inches, an abundance of trimmings and embroidery, and Oh joy! a resplendant return of lace. London especially emphasises the importance of lace as trimming and for evening wear.

When I saw the exquisite evening dresses full length for dinner, ballet length for dancing, designed by Hardy Amies and inspired by the wonderful quality and colouring of sequin embroidered laces — the first we have seen in England for many years — I wondered how we had managed to do without

Collections



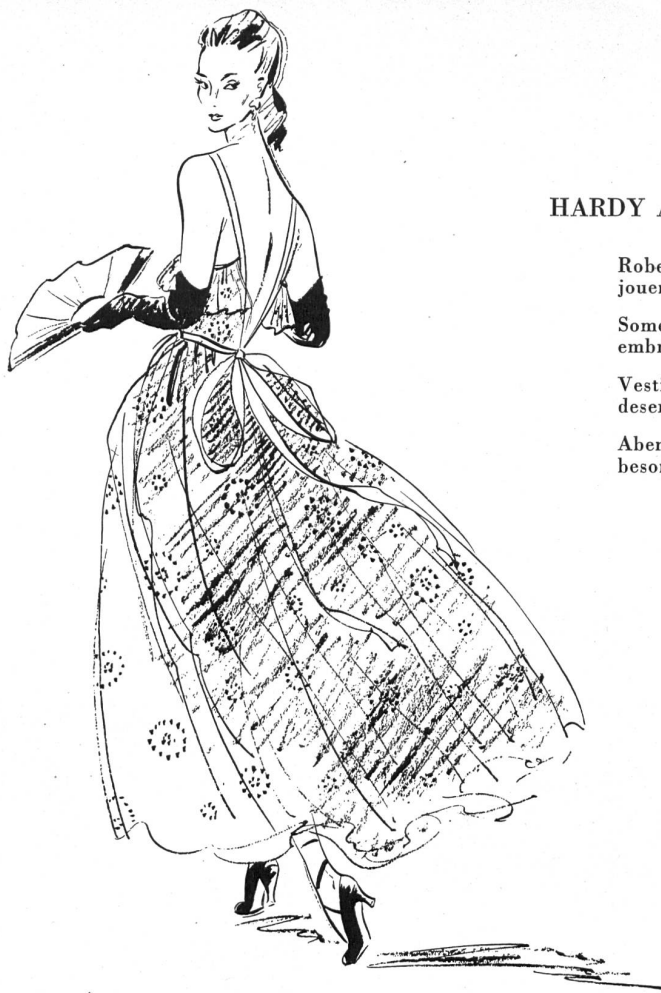
Photo Steiner

Le Conseil Fédéral Suisse a offert à S.A.R. la Princesse Elisabeth, à l'occasion de son mariage avec le Lt. Philippe Mountbatten, un des plus fins tissus brodés de St-Gall, ainsi qu'une montre-bijou, chef-d'œuvre de l'industrie genevoise.

On the occasion of her marriage with Lt. Philip Mountbatten, the Swiss Federal Council presented H.R.H. Princess Elizabeth with one of the most beautiful specimens of St.Gall embroidered fabrics and a jewel-watch, a masterpiece of the Geneva watchmaking industry.

El Consejo Federal Suizo ha ofrecido a S.A.R. la Princesa Elisabeth con motivo de su boda con el Ten. Felipe Mountbatten, uno de los más finos tejidos bordados de St. Gall además de un reloj-alhaja, obra maestra de la Industria Ginebrina.

Der Schweizer Bundesrat liess Ihrer Königlichen Hoheit, der Prinzessin Elisabeth, zu ihrer Vermählung mit Lt. Philipp Mountbatten eine der schönsten St-Galler Stickereien, sowie eine kostbare Uhr - Meisterwerk der Genfer Industrie - überreichen.



HARDY AMIES, LONDON

Robes du soir où la dentelle et la broderie jouent un rôle prépondérant.

Some evening gowns in which lace and embroidery are widely used.

Vestidos de noche en los que la puntilla desempeña un papel preponderante.

Abendkleider wo Spitzen und Stickereien besonders zur Geltung kommen.



The New Collections (continuation of page 44)

lace for so many war torn years, and with jealousy I speculated how long it will be before we can share such loveliness with our luckier sisters overseas.

Another prominent designer, Angele Delange, who is popular in London especially for her elegant evening dresses, showed in her collection a charming new fashion on several dresses, particularly those made of lace or net. It is short, gathered elbow «cuffs» with tiny frills at the top and bottom. Such cuffs effectually break up the bare expanse of arm and cover what is often anything but a beauty spot for many women.

Norman Hartnell who designs dresses for H.M. The Queen, and has made our Princess Elizabeth's wedding dress, showed in his collection some magnificently jewelled evening dresses and coats. His colour sense is so skilful that his models do not look theatrical, but are a feast of richness in design and embroidery and will show off to advantage in the South American backgrounds where most of his more spectacular models are exported and eagerly sought by chic women. One charming model was a dance dress in black net with a strapless bodice covered with sequins and a full skirt with many small flounces arranged spirally and picked out with scattered sequins. This popular designer sponsors in his new collection a wide variety of fine net, lace, satins, and more than one model was finished with a returned old favourite — eyelet embroidery.

It was refreshing to see in all the collections evidence that the trend of fashion veers more and more away from straight and angular lines to which we have been accustomed for so long, and now the more soft curves we have the better. For such fashions we need fine materials with which to inspire our designers, and they in their turn welcome as never before the beginning of a steady flow of lovely high quality and high fashion embroideries and laces from Switzerland.

And now to end this letter I must tell you about something different, although it still concerns that little country we all admire so much. As I came away from seeing the collection of one of the London designers I met a friend who had just returned from abroad. Sun tanned and cheerful she bore visible evidence of the delightful and health-giving holiday she had spent in Switzerland. She told me sadly of all the beautiful merchandise she had seen in the shops, things which have been long unobtainable here, and which she was unable to buy for her friends because of an insufficient allowance of foreign currency. «But» she added, «I am no longer worrying about it because I have just seen in Regent Street a shop window full of fine embroidered Swiss handkerchiefs, so I bought one for each of my friends to remind them that if they want good quality or a good holiday they *must* go to Switzerland.»

ENID GRAND