



WORLDLY WOMAN



A becoming hat in grey satin, lined with white. The crown is entirely covered with marabout feathers and aigrettes in black and white; buckle in paste and silver. Model by Maresist Sœurs. Photograph by Henri Manuel.

"CHAPEAU DE STYLE"

WHOEVER invented Paris *snobisme* has much to answer for. To explain it is difficult, to transplant it almost impossible. Yet this is exactly what we do. Every freak of fashion that first saw the light on a Paris boulevard invariably ends its days in Bond Street, only with a difference, and it is this difference that makes the calamity. Was there ever a typically French play that struck the right note on English ears, or a French hat that looked convincing on an English head? Yet we translate the one, we wear the other, forgetting that the *esprit gaulois* that made them admirable is not a thing to be acclimatised. Fashion rules the world, *le snobisme* governs fashion, and we all become the clumsy imitators of a brilliant little clique that will always remain inimitable.

One is struck with the marvel of it when one considers the *Parisienne snob* of the day. She is beautiful without beauty, clever without intellect, and yet who cares whose opinions she gabbles off as her own, whose knowledge she annexes, where she gets her complexion, or what *régime* has made the slim perfection of her figure? The result is so good and so natural, and yet it is no easy thing to achieve. One's brain reels before the enormity of the task. To be *snob*, she must be literary nowadays, and to that end picks up what shreds and patches she can at a scholarly *discours*; she must be original, and therefore gleans ideas from some lion at a dinner party. Old pictures, old china and furniture must have no secrets from her, and above all she must be a miracle of elegance and taste. Any one of these things, surely, would have made a woman's reputation in those happier days before *snobisme* was invented.

It was with that example before us that all the world in London gathered at literary *causeries* last winter, and a certain great little man lectured on Plato to duchesses. Ah, *le snobisme, le snobisme,*

what follies, I wonder, shall we next commit in thy name?

These are as yet early days to know. The Paris season, always so late, has scarcely begun in earnest. At present there is a rage for shows. There have been the usual automobile and chrysanthemum exhibitions, and last, but not least, the *Tout-Paris élégant* has literally fought its way through queues and carriages to catch a glimpse of the *camisoles* and slippers of the Princess Marie Bonaparte. Because it is the snob thing to do, we are obliged to know all about that trousseau of six hundred thousand francs, of the veil that cost a fortune, and the *lingerie* that will require an army of laundresses and lace-menders to keep in order. Therefore, we are not spared the smallest details. In all papers, in all languages, the most stolidly indifferent must read of those sixty gowns, those sables and diamonds. There is no escaping when *snobisme* decrees.

It is almost impossible to exaggerate its influence, and the hopeless way in which it makes for monotony. There are, perhaps, twenty or so unusual women, and all the rest cling desperately to the skirts of their originality. It does not exactly make an amusing world. How tired we all were of the grey stripes of last summer. *Le snobisme* insisted on them. How weary we are now of the pleated skirt and cut-away coat; but *le snobisme* decrees them. Every woman in Paris is like every other, and the same thing is happening in London. There is, as I have said, the coat called "*le smoking*," sloping backwards, short-waisted, edged with braid and buttoned often with one button only, the sleeves mannish and long, the cut irrefragable; the skirt that goes with it is always pleated and always very short. Lastly, the hat is a magnificence in satin and feathers, the furs that adorn the shoulders in profusion cost a fortune. This is the ideal at which every woman aims on more or less expensive lines; these are the unwritten laws of *snobisme*.

Surely nothing could be more ridiculous than the top-heavy effect of this gigantic hat and skimpy skirt. Where are "Sem" and "Caran d'Ache," unkindest of all caricaturists, that they might show us the absurdity of our ways, or have they, too, grown *snob* in their middle age?

Furs are still an all-engrossing subject, and there are still some novelties. One of them is dyed pony, which masquerades as broadtail, not too successfully; another is the newest muff, which looks like everything except a muff. Imagine several layers of chiffon, lined with satin, like a gigantic sachet, and flung carelessly over it all a silver fox, or several sable skins fringed with tails.



The cloche hat is still with us. This one is in purple telt, with a satin drapery and *saule pleureur* feathers. Model by Renée Vert. Photograph by Henri Manuel.

A PRETTY HAT

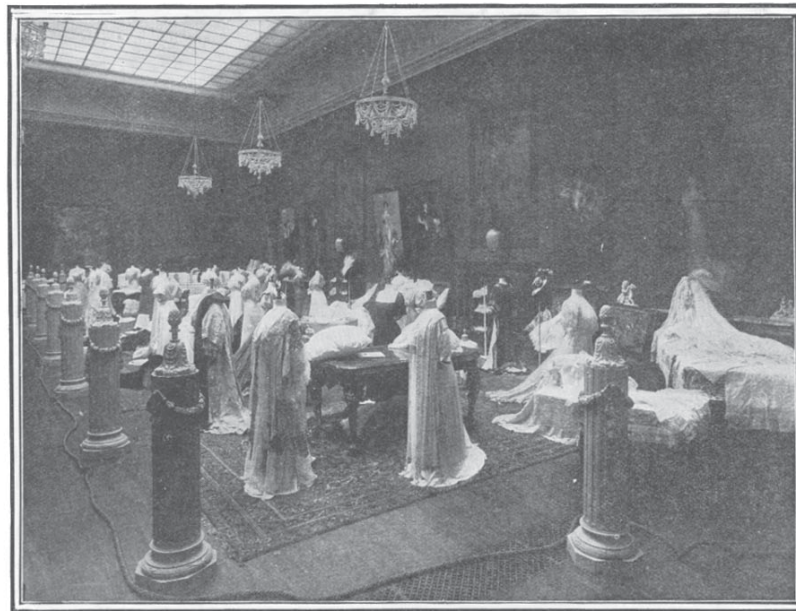
Coats are also aiming at this sort of *abandon*. I have seen Irish lace lined with much chiffon, and satin adorned with a shower of sable skins. It sounds chilly in parts and not in others, rather like a *Soufflé Surprise*, and I imagine would require a sound constitution to wear it.

Another feature of the very newest is the triple sleeve. There is often a Japanese top and a billow under-sleeve of soft material, usually in a contrasting colour. It is a pretty idea, and a new one too, which is a rare thing nowadays.

One hears very often that the *cloche* hat has grown impossible, but one still meets it on the smartest heads. Fur toques have come to the fore of late, and they are an unexpected novelty in these days of cartwheels. Always delightfully becoming, they have only one fault, that of expense. But for the matter of that, is anything cheap nowadays? We spend ten times more than we

spent ten years ago, and for no particular reason that I can see. We talk of money, think of money, even in our plays we do not get away from it. One lady steals the wherewithal to make herself attractive, and always the millionaire stalks a prominent figure through every one of them. Is it because of the Jewish origin of an eminent French playwright, to say nothing of one of ours, that we hear so much of *la haute finance*? At any rate, the worship of the golden calf was never more *snob* than it is nowadays.

L. S. R.



The trousseau of Princess Marie Bonaparte, whose marriage with Prince George of Greece will be celebrated next week in the Greek Church at Athens, cost 600,000 francs, or £24,000, the wedding-dress alone costing £1,200. The *couturier* is the Maison Ch. Drecol, Place de l'Opéra, Paris. Photograph by Henri Manuel.

THE TROUSSEAU OF PRINCESS MARIE BONAPARTE

At Messrs. Liberty and Co., in Regent Street, lovers of the quaint and unusual will find much to charm and captivate their attention in the jewellery department, where, amid much which bears, above all, the unmistakable Liberty *cachet*, there are suggestions of influences ranging from ancient Celtic to Oriental Art. Or, again, it may be sheer barbaric beauty which is cleverly achieved in neck chains, pendants, brooches, and so on, to suit almost any purse.