

The open door

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Springtime Preview of the Parisian Theatrical World

After a rather dull beginning, the theatre world has sprung to life with the coming of spring. Charmingly magnetic, contradictory, magnificent, uniquely homogeneous as a whole, the spirit of Paris is now finding its expression in a wealth of theatrical productions.

Every poster is attractive; the present and the future combine, sometimes in dreamland, in the land where time is not, because the spirit needs a timeless refuge. Let us first visit that lovely, smiling country to which Jean Anouilh can guide us; his *L'Invitation au Château* is intended as a fairy-tale and its very title invites us to a universe where simplicity and magic reign. This playwright has nevertheless a certain acid quality and his pen tends to scratch a little. He makes us laugh, as Labiche did when he charmed our eyes and ears, but Anouilh's fairyland is sometimes veiled. He gives us a «happy ending», nevertheless, because he wanted to do so: vaporous gowns, dainty colour schemes, a youthful heroine incarnated by Dany Robin — but the dream tends to evaporate. Do not linger to listen to the strange, prolonged echo awakened in our hearts by this play; with laughter on our lips, let us hasten away to catch more smiles, to another magic land where history is decked in gala dress.

Paris protests and yet feels a certain, vague sensation of rebirth on viewing the poster announcing *Le Diable boiteux*, in which Sacha Guitry presents, in his own fashion Lana Marconi and a fictitious, but most amusing Talleyrand. Say what you like, here is a restful play and relaxation... well, it's a valuable thing in our day! The incredible life of the great diplomat unfolds against an exquisite setting. Talleyrand and Sacha Guitry combine to carry us away into a fairyland: costumes, flowing lines of the dresses, colour schemes, wit tinged with topical in-

tent! Is it all froth?... Nothing but froth? Maybe, but it is far more digestible than lead.

As smiles are the fashion again, François Mauriac has attempted to place comedy scenes in his new play *Passage du Malin*. But here this author has had a less fortunate touch than in his previous works, he has gone farther than his subject allowed... and, indeed, beyond truth itself, there is but a void. Henry de Montherlant's new production *Le Maître de Santiago* is more homogeneous; it brings a vivifying breath of fresh air and in its admirable French are mingled both mystical and earthy inspiration.

Every modern French playwright seems to have wished to blaze his name in the lights of the Paris theatre land: Armand Salacrou with his *Archipel Lenoir*, Maurice Rostand with the revival of his earlier *Le Procès d'Oscar Wilde*; *La Parisienne* is reborn in the person of Alice Cocéa. *Marie-Antoinette* is applauded, and Little Sister Theresa of the Infant Jesus lives in *La Statue brisée*.

The films too speak of spiritual things; *Monsieur Vincent* (St-Vincent of Paul) reveals a rather distorted XVIIth century; but if historical exactitude is not always respected in this production, the film is very moving, thanks to the admirable acting of Pierre Fresnay.

To conclude this all too brief purview, let us mention the stars which have dropped into Paris from foreign firmaments: Maria Montez who filled *Mille et Une Nuits* with life. And, after having dragged us into the passionheart of Spain in *Arènes Sanglantes*, Linda Darnell is soon to impersonate in France that universally known figure — *Amber*.

Lights, laughter, smiles, exquisite elegance and talent, pithy sayings about a hard world — in this bouquet of productions, you will always find the old well-known perfume of... Paris.

M. de Louzan.

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The present number had already gone to press when advance news about the Parisian haute couture spring styles reached us. In our next issue, which is to be published shortly, we shall have pleasure in reproducing these magnificent documents of Parisian fashions stressing the value of St-Gall products and fabrics.

In the journal we are presenting today, our readers will find a very brief purview of the type

of fashion products Parisian dressmakers have selected and employed for their new creations. The modern trend emphasizes the feminine note; embroideries and laces for gowns, millinery and lingerie are extremely popular. The delicacy, smartness and quality of St-Gall embroideries are the precious auxiliaries of milliners and dressmakers who seek to enhance the «New Look» of their creations.

Union S. A., St-Gall.
Organdie flounce with appliquéd
embroidered butterflies.
Embroidered cotton piqué.
Embroidered organdie dicky.
Photo Bauty.