



PAULE DE GIRONDE

## THE FASHION DRAWING IN FRANCE:

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### *A Retrospect*

OUR ancestors (God bless them spite of all!) were full of prejudices. One of these—which took a long time to exterminate in our old France with its ancient traditions—was this: Art which does honor to its name, that is to say, Art with a capital A must take care not to serve utilitarian purposes. There are high things and low things, noble and common things. Art must consecrate itself to the one and despise the others.

Among these "others", there were, apparently, all those that dealt with the representation of Fashion. And that was the reason why we saw Fashion for a long time only in two aspects: as a

fashion sketch (which, rapidly drawn at races in the *bois*, or at elegant assemblies, was nothing more than a superficial reproduction of an impression of elegance, and as the actual fashion drawing—manufactured by tenth-rate designers—real mechanics in the art of draughtsmanship.

These times, happily, are gone forever. There is no longer a barrier between fine art and applied art. Today in France we have a veritable galaxy of young artists such as Benito, Benigni, Henri Mercier and other specialists in the fashion drawing which have given a wonderful impetus to this once minor art.