

Parisian Wrappings

Paris wrappings—those elegant containers of sweets, notepaper, soap and other dainty things—feel a great urge to extend their brief existence as much as possible, although it is their natural fate to disappear as soon as they have fulfilled the wishes or caprice of the buyer. German wrappings are above all adapted to their purpose, they are really "wrappings".

The contents of the package are presented in an agreeable fashion. The wrapping may be more or less elegant—but it will never dominate the whole. All German wrappings are remarkable for their objectivity, as compared with French wrappings. There is great deal of text on the boxes and wrappings of sweetmeats.

Almost every wrappings bears the maker's name. In France one scarcely sees any wrappings made by the great firms of sweet manufacturers. All such wrappings come from a box factory. They have no artistic importance whatever. The work is in general slipshod, a few new experiments vanish utterly in the undistinguished mass. The up-to-date wrapper is incomparably more often to be found in Germany than in Paris. Paris wrappings for expensive goods which cater to buyers in the better situated classes of the population are distinguished on the one hand by their conservatism and on the other hand by their romantic note. A great deal of the work seems old-fashioned, as if it had been left over from the days of the last World Exhibition. Others again attempt to revivify a still more remote epoch and awaken it to new life—the days of Louis Philippe and other Louis of the days before the French Revolution. French wrappings are not only decorated with drawings representing scenes from olden times, such as those mentioned above. They also imitate the style of drawing proper to those days, the engravings of the XVIIIth or the lithographs of the XIXth century. They try to reproduce the coloured effects proper to this kind of reproduction. Modern French designers of wrappings seem to derive a great deal of inspiration from the English illustrators and artists of the XVIIIth and XIXth centuries. Perhaps Gainsborough might be cited as the principal source of inspiration, especially where Chardin is concerned. These two are responsible for the scheme of colours which French artists employ in their designs for wrappings—quiet and somewhat melancholy tints.

We see wrappings in the windows of the confectioner's. The drawings sometimes form a series all connected with a main theme. For instance, we see a young man about to undertake a sea-voyage. The style reminds us of "books for young people" and the young man experiences all the joys and sorrows of such a voyage in the course of the various pictures, ending with his safe return. There must be buyers who collect a complete "series" of these packages



W R A P P I N G S O F A. T O L M E R, P A R I S