

Verbundkatalog Kalliope

Galleries

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What is selling these days in Paris' biggest department store, the famed "Galeries Lafayette"? And what does its "Directeur General", M. Lemaréchal, have to say with regard to the present state and future chances of his business?

The Paris store forms the capital link of a chain of "Galeries" that stretches from here to the cities of Nantes, Lyon, Nice, Cannes, Nîmes and Montpellier. In touring the vast premises of the Paris Branch on the Boulevard Haussmann one covers the sister branches as well. And in listening to M. Lemaréchal one listens to the number one salesman of a concern which owes its nation wide popularity to the quality of its offerings and the reasonableness of its prices.

How - I inquired - had the galleries ~~been affected by~~ the occupation, ~~and~~ ~~what~~ ~~did~~ ~~the~~ ~~look like~~ ~~today~~ ~~?~~

I've just spent half a day at the "Galeries" and a couple of hours with its busy ~~boss~~ ~~directeur~~. Here is what I learned.

Of the 5000 employees working for M. Lemaréchal before the war, 3200 are still on the job. 350 are prisoners of war in Germany, some few have been deported and about 1400 had to be dismissed.

Lack of ~~goods~~ rather than ~~lack of customers~~

~~that~~ ~~had~~ caused their dismissal. I inquired which kind of goods

~~were~~ particularly scarce.

~~declared~~ "All kinds" M. Maréchal ~~had~~ ~~sadly~~.

~~Until the spring of~~ 1944 the galleries had been fairly well equipped, although ~~even~~ ~~then~~ ~~all~~ ~~raw~~ ~~materials~~ ~~required~~ ~~by~~ ~~the~~ ~~German~~ ~~war~~ ~~effort~~

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and future chances of ~~thhhWhhhhHhhhhhhhhhh~~ his business?

~~Whhhh~~ The Paris Galeries In listening to him one listens
to a man

Before inspecting the "Galeries" I went to see
store forms
The Paris ~~HhhhhhhhhHhh~~ the capital link of a chain of "Galeries"
that stretches ~~hh~~ from here to the cities of Nantes Lyon, Nice,
Cannes, Nimes and Montpellier.

there was a ^{serious} ~~severe~~ shortage of ~~all~~ raw materials required by the German war effort. But pre war stocks had been huge and during the first two years of the occupation ~~business~~ ^{business} it ~~had been~~ ^{It} ~~satisfactory~~ ^{worsened} with ~~disappearance~~ ^{disappearance} the gradual ~~of~~ ^{the opening of} a number of irreplaceable commodities; ~~it was not before we opened our~~ ^{yet} all out air offensive against ~~French~~ ^{French} railways and communication lines that it ~~fully~~ ^{badly} deteriorated. For the past three months ~~no goods at all had been received~~ ^{sheep} from either the silk producing south or the ~~wool~~ ^{sheep} raising North. Pure wool ^{is} was virtually unattainable; so ~~leather~~ ^{were are} and inexpensive furs. ~~All clothing was~~ ^{is} ~~rationed~~ ^{have} just how severely it ~~was~~ ^{is} difficult to state. Tickets had been issued from time to time in irregular intervals and very small numbers. During the past year no more than 20 per person ~~had been~~ ^{have} distributed. ~~It took~~ ^{It takes} in between 33 and 40 tickets to buy one dress. ~~This~~ ^{does} did not however mean that ~~nobody had been able to buy anything.~~ ^{dresses could not be bought.} In addition to ~~the regular tickets~~ ^{the regular tickets} ~~socalled~~ ^{socalled} "points de recuperation" were ~~given out in exchange for old~~ ^{given out in exchange for old} cloths and wool-containing textiles. At present a daily average of 80 000 tickets and points were ~~surrendered~~ ^{any} at the "Galeries Lafayette". Both prices and wages ~~Prices had risen steadily.~~ Before the war a salesman had ~~earned~~ ^{earned} 1700 francs ~~a month~~ ^{a month}; in 1942 he made 2000; in 1943 2500 and by ~~now~~ ^{now} his salary amounted to 3650 francs, - (73 American dollars at the present ~~rate~~ ^{a month}) ~~Profits made by the company had been small. But here~~ again - according to M. Lemarchal - it was hard to say just how ~~much~~ ^{little} had ~~been gained.~~ ^{been gained.} ~~Not worded by design by getting away from it.~~

There was very little choice in men's shirts. In fact the very cheapest kind of workman's shirts was all you could find.

They cost 261 a piece. Before the war, the salesman told me,

similar shirts of better quality had sold for 65 francs. Men's coats, too, were scarce and expensive.

A half length top coat of waterproofed, rabbit lined ^{could have} ~~minnow~~ be had for 9367 francs and 160 tickets

and a full length black ^{affair, equally} ~~piece~~ furlined, too, but of doubtful ^{substance} material, for 10 000. ~~and 174~~ tickets. One of the few materials that appeared to be ~~hmm~~ comparatively plentiful was angora wool, derived from rabbits. Unrationed angora

^{were one} gloves ~~by~~ 405 a pair, while ~~hmm~~ Swedes ^{one} as little as ~~hmm~~ enough ~~hmm~~ were offered at 299 francs. ~~hmm~~

On the whole the most indispensable goods

~~hmm~~ seemed ^{scarce} ~~scarce~~ and relatively more expensive than the dispensable ones. Nobody needed ^{richly} ~~black~~ swedegloves adorned with embroidered ^{embroidered} ~~miniatur~~ roses, whereas, in the absence of woolen gloves, one gladly ^{a pair of} ~~paid~~ 6 dollars for the warming angora gauntlets.

~~hmm~~ costume jewelry, trimmings and all sorts of unessential luxury wares were surprisingly cheap. ~~hmm~~

~~hmm~~ Perfumes sold at pre war prices; so did pure silk ^{2,5 inches broad} ribbons the like of which could not at present be found ~~hmm~~ marketed for in any fighting country and which the galleries ~~hmm~~ 5. 70

a meter. ^{I barely refrained from purchasing} ~~hmm~~

^{at home} I bought a ~~hmm~~ lovely scarf - pure silk, ~~hmm~~ handpainted - for 1200 francs, ^{which} ~~that~~ provided it could be gotten in New York ^{today} - would be twice as dear.

And as to the 550 francs-evening jacket - silver paillettes on black net - for which I finally fell, ~~hhhhhhhhhh~~

~~hhhhhhhhhh; hhhhhhhhhhh hhhhhhhhhhh hhhhhhhhhhh hhhhhhhhhhh~~

~~hhhhhhhhhh hhhhhhhhhhh hhhhhhhhhhh hhhhhhhhhhh hhhhhhhhhhh hhhhhhhhhhh~~

~~hhhhhhhhhh hhhhhhhhhhh hhhhhhhhhhh hhhhhhhhhhh hhhhhhhhhhh hhhhhhhhhhh~~ Silver paillettes on black tulle (?)

And as for the little evening jacket in which I couldn't help

investing 550 francs, ~~hhhhhhhhhh hhhhhhhhhhh hhhhhhhhhhh hhhhhhhhhhh hhhhhhhhhhh~~ it ~~hh~~ wouldn't

~~hhhhhhhh~~ it wouldn't be sold ~~hhhh~~ there for ~~hhhhhhhh~~ sell over there for anything less than 60 Dollars.

This sort of workmanship is strictly Parisian and imports from Paris have never been cheap.

For some reason or other there seems to be no shortage of blouses. Like every ~~hhhh~~ dress shop in Paris the galleries are full of them. You pay ~~hhhhhhhhhh~~ for a blouse that isn't worth more than ~~h~~ 3 and what amounts to 22 dollars for another which would cost you forty at home. I've seen the most exquisite handhemmed linnen hankies for ~~hhhhhhhhhh hhhhhhhhhhh~~ a piece, while ordinary cotton ones ~~hhhhhhhhhh hhhhhhhhhhh hhhhhhhhhhh~~ for which ~~hhhhhhhhhh~~ you wouldn't spend a quarter rated ~~hh~~ more than three times that ~~hhhhhh~~ sum.

Dresses, ~~hhhh~~ though far less plentiful and ~~hhhhhhhhhh hhhhhhhhhhh hhhhhhhhhhh~~ somewhat homelier than ~~usual~~ are readily available at an average cost of 40 tickets and 30 Dollars. The "gift department for allied soldiers" displays a gaudy morning gown in heavy red silk - fur lined, fur-trimmed and fur collared that would befit any Russian princess; and for which ~~hhhhhhhhhh~~ 206 dollars ~~is~~ ~~hhhhhhhhhh hhhhhhhhhhh hhhhhhhhhhh~~ a modearte price. English speaking Handpicked salesgirls stand ready to charm ~~hhhhhhhhhh hhhhhhhhhhh~~ our men; also there are a lot of welcome signs and hospitable posters.

Near the bookstand we are assured that everything here is

"Up to date and inexpensive" - ~~hhhhhhhhhh hhhhhhhhhhh hhhhhhhhhhh~~ and we aren't being fooled either. "Pleasures, Loves and Plots in Postwar Vienna"

he
local in rather an understatement
refers to ~~hhhhhhhhhh~~ 1918 ~~hhhhh~~ it is rather ahead of its time
Got around to reading the thing
. I haven't ~~yet~~ read it yet, but consider the 50 cents I spend on it,
a sound investment.

happens to refer to 1918, this is rather an understatement.
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Galeries

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