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MAINLY FOR WOMEN

A woman's handbag is one of the "musts" of her outfit. It has to hold a variety of objects — a man will tell you that she carries far too much in it — but it is also one of the "accessories" which the well-dressed woman will use to enhance her get-up. It is a far cry from the bulky hold-all and cumbersome travel or shopping bag to the dainty cocktail or evening bag. Just how glamorous the latter can be was vividly demonstrated by our fellow-countryman, Mr. L. W. Krucker, of 114 New Cavendish Street, W.1, at the Leather Goods, Luggage and Handbag Fair at the Mount Royal Hotel in Oxford Street, London W.1, from 11th to 15th February. In two rooms Mr. Krucker displayed dozens of lovely evening bags in silk and gold kid, in brocade, gold and silver mesh, diamanté, sequin and pearl embroidered, in antelope or grosgrain, made from rich Chinese hand-embroidered kimonos or gros-point. But amongst the most beautiful of the whole collection was the display of petit point evening bags, which apparently are one of the centres of interest at each succeeding Fair. "Leather Goods", the monthly journal of the Leather Goods and Allied Trades, published the following article on Mr. Krucker's speciality in their January 1963 issue.

"The technique, which entails anything between 232 and 3122 stitches to the square inch of the decorated material, evolved out of the method used in the great medieval tapestries.

"These earlier tapestries were worked mainly on very coarse material. Only much later did the number of stitches to the inch increase and tapestries become finer, the big technical change being from coarse half-cross embroidery to small point or petit point, which to the naked eye appears as a mosaic.

"New designs come from the painters' studios, first of all as charcoal sketches. The creators frankly rely on Old Masters for a guide in many cases, but floral designs will be wholly original work.

"Designs which are a success in monochrome are now translated into water colour paintings. If these are good enough they are transferred to millimetre-graph paper, in which form a design appears for the first time like a mosaic.

"This is the actual pattern for the embroidery, completion of which may entail many weeks' work. More than 500 colour shades are often required to give the precise effect desired and the selection of the colour yarns themselves is a highly skilled job.

"Working with a magnifying glass the embroiderer now translates the design on the graph paper before her into a woven picture on the silk gauze under her hands, counting point by point from the pattern as she embroiders.

"For each painted square on the paper, she must make two half-cross stitches on the gauze. The colour of the yarn must be changed for each colour change in the picture."

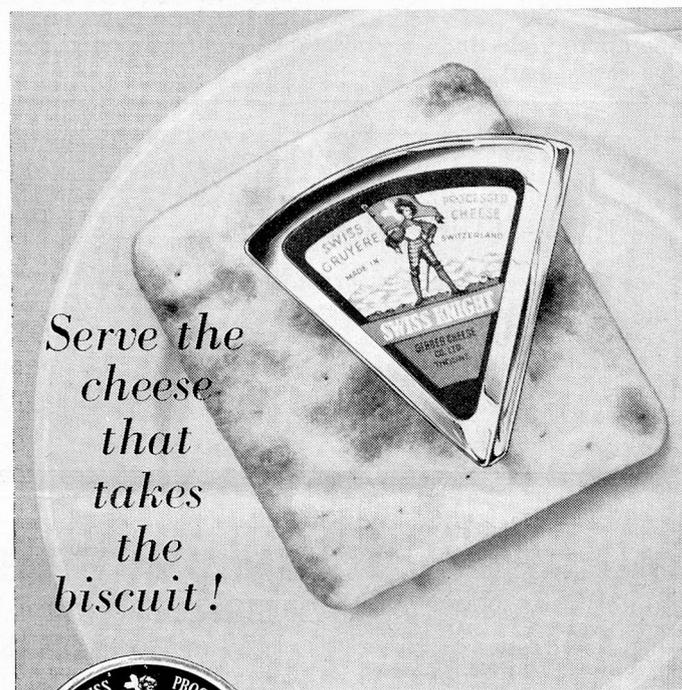
These bags are really beautiful and can enhance a woman's party appearance as much as a rare piece of jewellery. Mr. Krucker has been an expert in the field of ladies' handbags for nearly forty years, and Her Majesty the Queen uses handbags made by Mr. Krucker on official and private occasions.

Mariann.

SWISS SPORTS AND LEISURE FASHIONS

The shorter working hours and the rise in the standard of living that have taken place in a large number of countries have given new importance to sports- and leisure-wear. In order to take advantage of this new situation that is here to stay, thirteen Swiss textile producers and men's and women's clothing manufacturers joined forces to form a "Swiss Fashion Club". The "Club" intends to launch a number of carefully planned new trends each year with regard to colour, line and fabric, so as to create a Swiss fashion for sports, leisure, holidays, camping, etc. The attractive resort of Arosa (Grisons), popular not only with skiers, skaters and curling enthusiasts but also with those who like merely to stroll in beautiful surroundings — in summer as well as in winter — was chosen by the Swiss Fashion Club for this year's showing of its members' creations. This fashion event was well attended by reporters of the fashion and textile trade press from Switzerland, Europe and even the United States. The majority of the hundred models shown, designed mainly for the winter 1963/64, followed the trend selected, a graphic style in perfect keeping, by the quietness of its lines and colours, with the inspiration found today in the works of Swiss graphic artists.

[O.S.E.C]



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