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WOHLEN BRAIDINGS

STRAWBRAIDS, FASHIONS AND FURNISHING

The vogue for strawbraid accessories has returned with the fine summer weather. Every year brings something new, novelties conceived by the manufacturer's creative fancy ; which adorn displays in stores, shops and windows. We have already seen that strawbraid can be employed not only in the fashion industries but also for interior decoration.

The strawbraid industry is gathering momentum in its development thanks to the substitute and replacement materials specialists are now placing at its disposal. The present shortage of real straw has not hampered production and resources are indeed not lacking in the least for, contrary to what one might expect, the utilization of synthetic products — which sometimes absorb dyes better than real straw — allows for a play of colours before unknown. This means that new discoveries have considerably encouraged the manufacture of straw articles, and the public can now be supplied with remarkably supple and resistant products. As regards fashion properly speaking, the craftsmen's ingenuity is not restricted to millinery alone ; they also produce any number of bags, belts and shoes. Here, the aim is to ally elegance with practicalness. That is why admirable and most ingenious models have been brought out, especially as regards sports wear. For instance, this season we find raffia week-end ensembles in all shades to match light summer frocks and including a wide-brimmed beach hat (in some cases with large chin-strap), airy, comfortable shoes, and a sort of compromise between belt and handbag, that is to say, a wide band of braided material held at the waist by clips or lacing and provided with two straw pockets on each side, so convenient for hiding a medley of sport and beach accessories and even sandwiches.

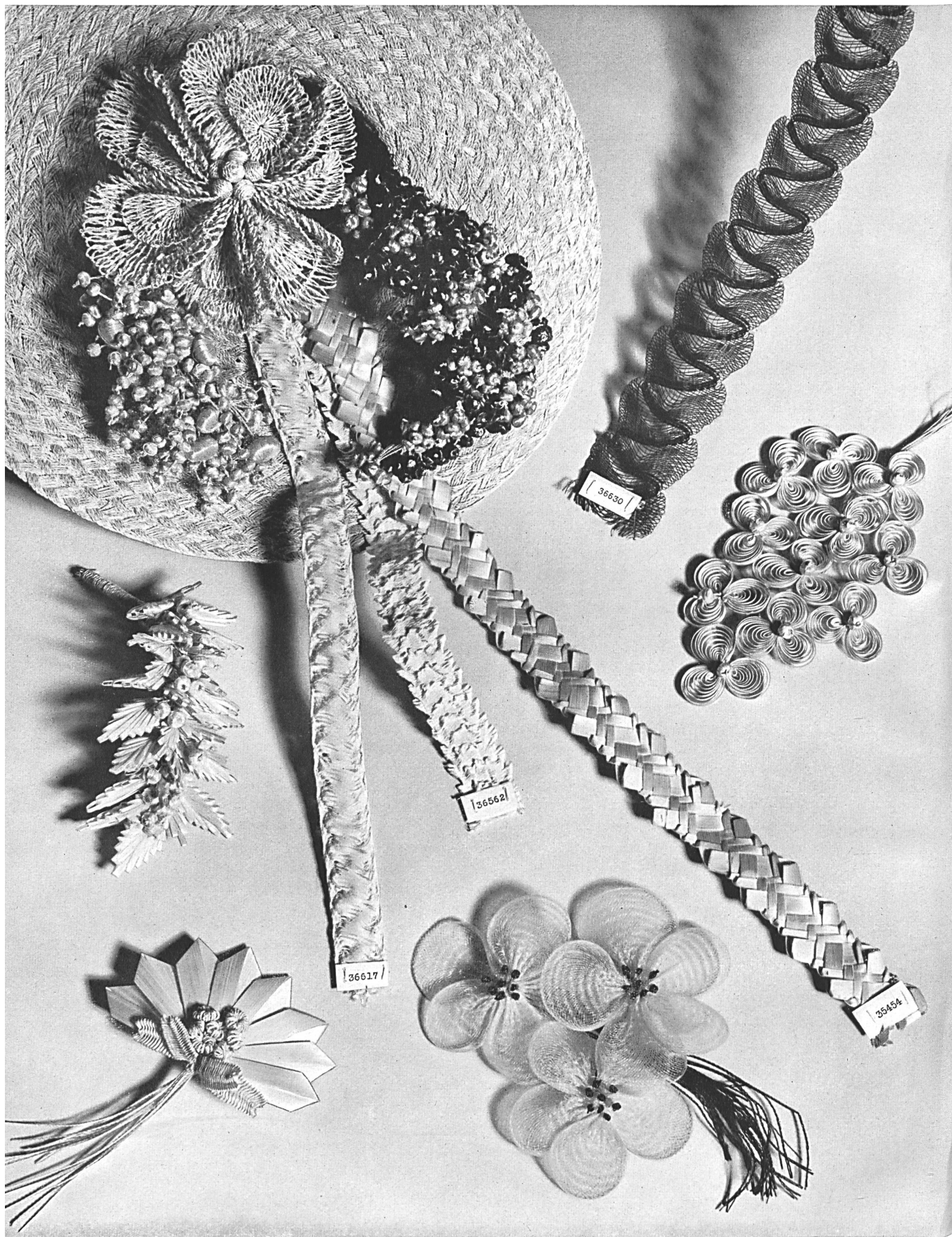
The variety in the shape of these straw bags is unlimited. They hold the most diverse assortment of things, leaving the cyclist free for riding. The ensemble is completed by shoes to match, for strawbraid shoes are all the vogue this year, not only on account of the leather shortage, but also because they are agreeable to wear, supple and very cool. The thick soles made of layers of woven straw also isolate the foot from the heat of the road, a most appreciable detail.

But the choice of straw articles displayed before our wondering eyes seems inexhaustible. All sorts of objects, formerly made of leather are offered us : dressing cases, field-glass and camera cases. Oh, don't protest ! There are some really lovely things, even parasols covered with multicoloured straws matching the dress fabric.

For the home, too, amusing novelties are to be had, of course more for the summer bungalow than the town residence. Braid manufacturers have sought inspiration in the Ticino, that southern lying Canton of Switzerland, and have brought out a whole range of charming and useful articles : table mats, flower-pot covers, pitcher covers with enormous handles, lamp-shades, hold-alls for hanging up on the wall, picture frames, in short, all sorts of solutions to daily problems which we would not have found of our own accord and which, in especial, delight us by their unexpected practicalness.

The resources of this ancient craft, ever renewed by its inspiration, are inexhaustible. We shall never tire of the thousand and one uses to which straw can be turned.

Catherine.



M. Bruggisser & Cie S. A., Wohlen.
 Strawbraid manufacture.
 Photo Droz.



Jacques Isler & Cie S. A., Wohlen.
Modèle Charles Muller S. A., Zurich.
Photo Bettina, Zurich.