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Swiss Textiles in the Tropics



The Brazilian capital has, for some weeks now, presented quite a different appearance. The return of a cooler and more agreeable season, has brought with it a new way of life.

With the coming of April, Rio's social activities come to life again. Everyone has returned, the round of gaiety has begun anew. Numerous cocktail parties are the excuse for the most elegant gatherings. The theatre season, the concerts, all contribute to giving the appearance of a great European Autumn Season to this capital in the other hemisphere.

These smart gatherings especially have given us the opportunity of forming an idea of the direction in which fashion trends are moving. Rio — and indeed Sao Paulo — may claim to be giving fashions a distinctly Brazilian flavour. Without any pretence to innovation, the couturiers and the smart women of this country know how to choose from among the Parisian creations and the American adaptations, those ideas best suited to this climate and to the South American way of life.

With the preference for the very accentuated waistline, the full skirt predominates everywhere. The slim silhouette, however, is trying hard to gain favour and we have noticed in numerous collections some very successful models in this style; but although they are admired,

they are very rarely chosen. Skirts of exaggerated length, are now assuming better proportions. Décolletés are still very daring.

Through all these trends, the Brazilian woman's weakness will always be marked by her love of embroidery. There would be no point in trying to describe the infinite combinations in which embroidery manages to assert itself. It is to be found everywhere, from the modest little afternoon dress, to the smart cocktail and evening gowns. Guipure trimmings or embroidered nets from Switzerland, rare as they are, are nevertheless to be seen at least once in every collection.

The fabrics used for plain dresses vary very little. Failles are the most popular, followed closely by taffetas and then the irreplaceable muslin. Some models made of tie-silks, produced by Swiss looms, attract particular attention and their scarcity is very much regretted. The gowns that are most desired are in printed taffetas, the ambassadors of the Zurich silk industry. These all too rare appearances create a situation which cannot possibly last. The recent granting of some import licences gives a glimpse of future possibilities. It is to be noted that the fashion industry has been developing rapidly during the last year or so.

Beside the ever important activities of the fashion houses, there

has been a great increase in the manufacture of chic ready-made clothing, where great efforts have been made in the presentation of the materials used. We do not doubt for a moment that, in spite of their desire to give Brazilian fashion a character all its own, its creators will always be able to recognize the contributions to be made by Swiss Textiles.

Fred Schlatter.

