

Zeitschrift: Swiss textiles [English edition]
Herausgeber: Swiss office for the development of trade
Band: - (1957)
Heft: 3

Artikel: Economic news
Autor: [s.n.]
DOI: <https://doi.org/10.5169/seals-798432>

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The lives of airmen and airplane passengers may depend on the quality of a parachute fabric. The nylon fabric of which parachutes are made has to possess a specific degree of permeability to air in order to ensure a correct dropping speed. A very simple apparatus draws air through an orifice over which the parachute fabric is stretched. The quantity of air passing through the material is measured. If it is too much or too little, the manufacturer has to modify his manufacturing procedure by increasing or decreasing, as the case may be, the number of yarns to the square centimetre.

Among the tests applied to materials, many are carried out to make sure that the material of a uniform, for example, corresponds on delivery to the specifications of the government service that ordered it. On other occasions it is a question of determining for a manufacturer whether his product is suitable for the purpose for which it is intended. Occasionally, too, it is necessary to discover whether a fabric wears out or deteriorates too rapidly. In such cases, the fabric is subjected to friction, in particular by rubbing with brushes, abrasive disks or other surfaces. The permanent aim of the institute is the continual improvement of testing procedure and machinery so as to obtain ever more reliable results, that is to say independent of the periodic variations that may occur in the working of the testing instruments and spoil the results. The analysis of fabrics also involves the testing

of the yarns — often of different types — of which they are made. In this case the fabric is sometimes taken to pieces, the separated yarns then being rewoven into ribbons in order to carry out separate abrasion tests on each quality of yarn for the purpose of discovering the weakest link in the mixture.

Finally, let us mention the tests carried out on finished articles as a result of complaints on the part of consumers. It is generally a question of articles that have shrunk after washing or are prematurely worn out, etc. In this type of test, analysis unfortunately only too frequently shows that the major cause of damage is lack of care on the part of the consumer (washing or ironing at too high temperatures or contrary to the manufacturer's instructions, too heavy demands made on the wearing qualities of clothing, etc.). Often, it is impossible to take a sample, and the fabric has to be examined under a microscope or by macrophotography, two methods enabling the type of wear to which it has been subjected to be determined.

We feel that these few examples, typical of the daily routine of the Federal Institute for Testing Materials at St. Gall, will give our readers an idea of the great variety of the work that an establishment of this kind may be called upon to deal with in its task of maintaining and improving the quality of textiles.

R. C.

Economic news

A feather in the cap of «Textiles Suisses»!



Photo Krüsi

A feminine subscriber to «Textiles Suisses», living in Capetown in the Union of South Africa, noticed on page 82 of number 4/1956 of this periodical a silk organza dress with large appliquéd embroidered flowers. Wishing to buy some of this fabric for herself, the lady wrote through «Textiles Suisses» to the manufacturer in St. Gall, who

unfortunately had run out of the article in question. At the express request of the fair client, this lovely creation of St. Gall industry was put back into production.

Here we see the final testing of the ten yards of fabric made specially by *Union S. A. at St. Gall*, before being forwarded by air to South Africa.

«Textiles Suisses» in Japan

We take pleasure in reproducing here a photograph sent to us from Osaka in Japan and representing Mr. Fukuichi, head of the firm of Fukuichi Co. Ltd., Osaka, surrounded by his sons and staff. This firm is one of our overseas agents entrusted with the distribution of our periodical in the Land of the Rising Sun.



«Textiles Recorder Annual 1957»

This year's edition of the British trade publication, the «Textile Recorder Annual» has just come out. This well-known annual, which is produced in exactly the same form as the equally well-known monthly periodical «Textile Recorder», is divided into six sections : Surveys of Trade and Industry ; Technical Progress in the Mills ;

New Machines and Equipment ; Trends in Textile Research ; Raw Materials Position and, finally, Textile Statistics. This well printed book of the year, with its 125 pages of well documented articles, is of great value to all those interested in the British textile industry. (Harlequin Press Ltd., Manchester & London.)

ABC of Zurich Silks

During the last few years, the Zurich silk industry has gone in more and more for the use of natural silk. A very original and ever new selection of pure silk articles of all kinds shows the good taste of the designers and the high standard of production of this industry. At the same time, the general public is beginning to take renewed interest in silk and is looking for information about its origin, its production and its history. Since there are comparatively few really reliable works on this subject in German, the Zurich Association of the Silk Industry has decided to publish a sort of ABC of silk entitled

«Zürcher Seidenfibel», which will constitute an indispensable mine of information for all those who wish to extend or complete their knowledge of the subject. Written in an interesting manner by Ursula Isler-Hungerbühler in collaboration with experts, and illustrated with pen drawings and industrial photographs, this booklet with its attractive cover in colour is the perfect answer to the present need. It contains among other things an explanatory list of the main technical terms used in the silk industry, statistics concerning the world silk trade and other useful information.

No. 3/1955 of «Textiles Suisses» showed some photographs of coats made by a Zurich ready-to-wear clothing manufacturer based on models by the Paris couture house of Jacques Fath.

Considering that the coats in question constituted a violation of the laws of copyright, the latter, in conjunction with the Paris Chamber of Haute Couture, decided to take legal action against the Zurich firm.

The couture house won its case and was awarded damages.

In this connection, the Paris Chamber of Haute Couture wishes to point out once more that the models created by the big Parisian couturiers are strictly copyright. They may not be copied without the authorisation of the couturier, whose name moreover may not be used without his express permission.