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The 1959 Silk Week

A remarkable joint advertising campaign

For several years now, the Zurich Association of the Silk Industry — which in spite of its name is Switzerland's central organisation combining all associations in the silk industry — has undertaken a large-scale joint advertising campaign in order to promote pure silk among the general public. Among the steps it has taken let us mention the publishing of booklets and folders, the production and distribution of documentary films, the organisation of press conferences and fashion parades displaying models made of the latest creations in the way of pure silk fabrics ; all these different activities form part of the general campaign undertaken by the Zurich Association of the Silk Industry to spread and popularise the idea that silk is the best textile for dresses for special occasions. In this connection we must also mention the beautiful display of silks in the « Creation » salon at the Swiss Industries Fair in Basle this spring (see p. 90) as well as the full-page advertisements appearing in the spring numbers of many women's magazines and fashion reviews reminding the feminine public that « There is nothing lovelier than pure silk ».

The special advertising week, which takes place in shop windows every spring, has its own particular place among these different schemes, for it is the result of close collaboration between the Zurich Association of the Silk Industry and fabric and clothing retailers.

This year some 240 shops again took part in this nationwide advertising campaign, which was held from April 18th to 25th. The distinguishing sign of all these firms was the brightly coloured poster, which was often used inside shops during the ensuing weeks to call attention to silk articles. All firms distributed to their customers the booklet containing the « Twelve Golden Rules for Washing Pure Silk », edited in collaboration with experts in the field of washing and ironing silk.

As the campaign was on a completely voluntary basis, the starting date of April 18th, 1959 was not always strictly observed ; some shopkeepers started a little earlier while others joined in a few days later. Such divergences from the « official » time-table are quite without importance however, especially as the only reward the most zealous retailer or the most skilful decorator can hope for is a word of gratitude and praise from the organisers' representative, as he goes round on his tour of inspection. All things considered therefore, the keenness shown on this occasion was particularly gratifying.

Many retailers went to the trouble of making transparencies with Japanese silhouettes, while painted bamboo lattice work, bamboo trees, Japanese lanterns and embroidered murals added the necessary oriental touch. One big Zurich store had its cardboard boxes marked in Japanese characters with the slogan « There is nothing lovelier than silk ». The same Japanese text was reproduced in the store's ten show windows. But even the small shops in the country or the suburbs, displaying no more per-

haps than two silk blouses and a petticoat or a few silk squares, made a special effort and created an attractive little display in honour of the king of fibres.

Some of the bigger shops had set aside a number of counters for attractive displays or artistically arranged silk fabrics. This was a very good idea, for while window displays obviously exert a great power of attraction, the customer cannot touch and feel the silks displayed there, and one has to be able to handle these soft, shimmering fabrics to appreciate them to the full.

Many shopkeepers must find it difficult to include an advertising campaign of this sort at a given date in the programme of their window displays ; the Zurich Association of the Silk Industry is all the more grateful and all the happier therefore to find so many retailers each year ready to take part so wholeheartedly in its advertising campaign on behalf of silk.

