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Little by little...

The firm we wish to write about here is a typical case: founded during the last century on a modest scale, it has been able to develop steadily and methodically, thanks to a shrewd appreciation of market needs and manufacturing possibilities, into a factory exactly suited to the character of the producing country: a medium-size firm run with dynamism mixed with business acumen, producing medium and large series in the better qualities. This, in a few words, sums up the activity of Hochuli & Co. Ltd., at Safenwil, whose trademark «Hocosa» is well known to readers of this periodical. Nothing in the birth and development of this firm has been left to chance!

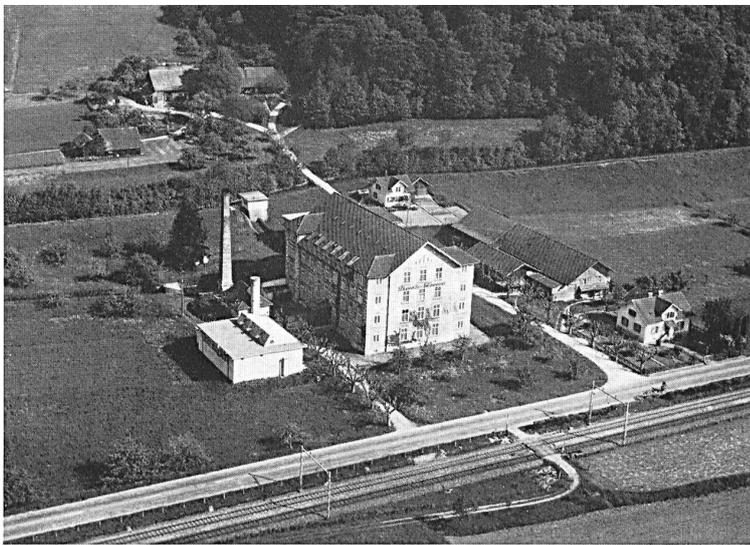
When the young schoolteacher Fritz Hochuli left his class at the communal school in Safenwil, he had no intention of returning to the teaching profession. The horizon of his dreams could not be bounded by a blackboard, and spurred by a spirit of adventure he went abroad, where he lived mainly in Paris and London. On returning to his homeland ten years later, he worked in various knitting factories, while his big plan was taking shape: to have a factory of his own. In 1897 his dream became reality. Making good use of the knowledge he had acquired abroad, he was able right from the start to give free rein to his spirit of enterprise by concentrating on exporting his production. Up till the first world war, Great Britain was the main market for his output of ladies' and children's underwear. In 1917, his son Max, carefully prepared by long periods spent in American factories, joined the business, which his father wisely handed over to his management ten years later. The war and post-war years brought new problems to solve and here, once again, the experience gained abroad proved useful when it came to developing the firm and opening up new markets. The big slump of the 30's marked the beginning of a new economic era and countless difficulties, the most important of which was the loss of the British market owing to the sudden devaluation of the pound sterling. Thanks to Max Hochuli's wise and energetic management, the firm was able — after a total transformation — to establish itself on the home market, in spite of very keen competition and a clientele with very exacting requirements.

After the second world war, in order to help satisfy the big demand for new stocks, the firm extended and consolidated its position on the Swiss market and re-established relations with its former clients abroad. In 1951, as a result of the development that had taken place in the meantime, the firm was converted into a limited liability company, still under the same management up to 1959. At this date, for the second time, the head of the firm decided to give the new generation its chance; a young team took the helm, under the direction of Mr. Hans Hochuli who had been working at his father's side for some twenty years, after an apprenticeship served in the firm and long business trips abroad.

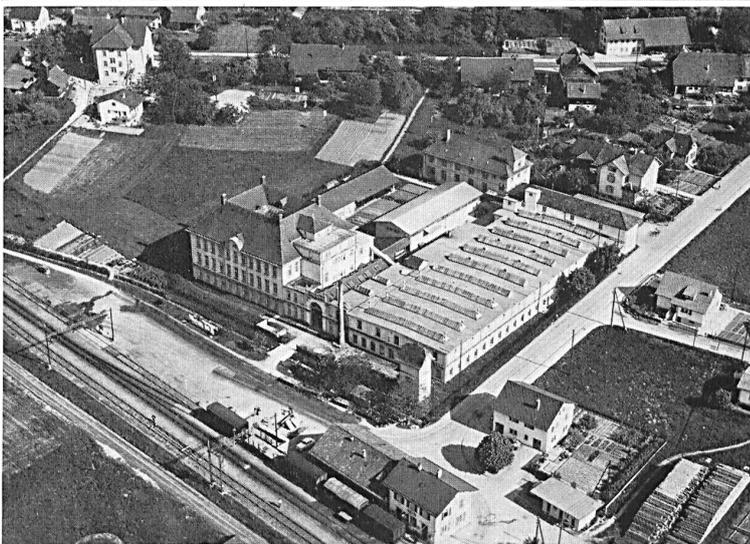
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A century ago, at Rothrist, near Safenwil, on the banks of a canal, a spinning mill was built which still looks most imposing with its robust facade of grey stone.

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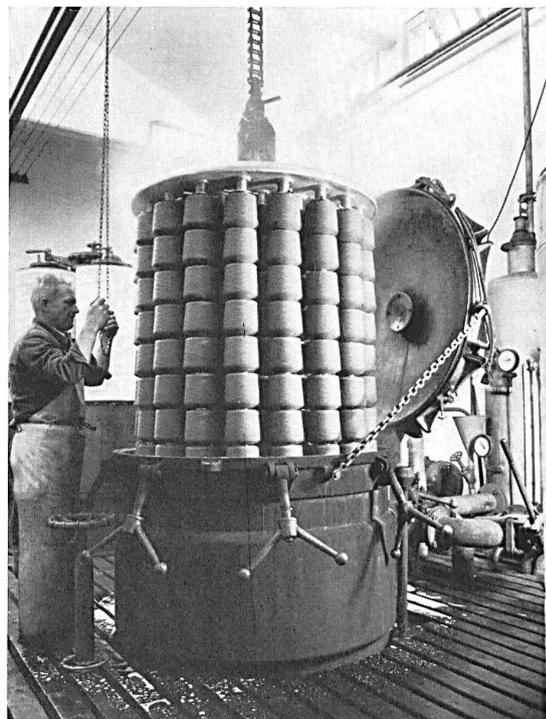


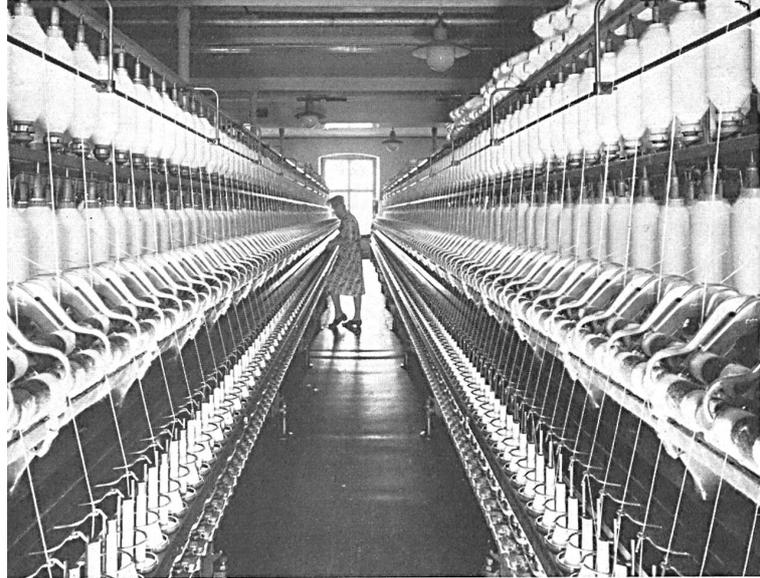
2



In 1925 this factory, which was originally worked by a 40 HP turbine driven by water from the canal, became the property of Hochuli & Co. Ltd., to which it rendered invaluable service throughout the war and immediate post-war years when raw materials and semi-manufactured products were so scarce. After 1940, this establishment produced not only carded yarns but also high quality

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worsted yarns for the firm's own production line. After the second world war, it was completed by a bleaching plant, operated according to the most recent processes, which has since become a small but very profitable dye-works able to satisfy all the requirements of its clientele, particularly in regard to « Felisol » quality dyes. Thanks to this combination of a knitting works at Safenwil and a spinning mill and dye-works at Rothrist, all three working in close harmony, Hochuli & Co. Ltd. is the only firm of its branch in Switzerland producing the major part of its manufacturing programme itself — from the raw material to the finished products — thus enabling it to maintain a high level of production with regard to both quality and quantity.

* * *



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On its foundation in 1897, Hochuli & Co. Ltd. adopted the principle of a production based entirely on top quality raw materials, an ideal that was perhaps not so widespread half a century ago when commercial competition was not what it is today. The firm has remained faithful to this principle ever since. But the modern clientele, growing ever more exacting, is no longer to be won with articles that have only quality to offer. In the field of clothing and especially knitted lingerie, articles today must be comfortable, light and in the latest fashion. More and more fine worsted yarns and even twisted yarns are used in manufacture. Articles formerly made in ordinary wool have now become typical high quality products, knitted in very fine twisted woolen yarns, protected against the ravages of moth by treatment with Mitin and guaranteed against shrinkage and felting by the Dylan process. In addition, fine « Hocosa » lingerie is made even more beautiful and dainty by a lavish use of lace ribbons and fancy knitted trimmings. With few exceptions, these articles too are manufactured by the firm itself.



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Naturally the use of high quality raw materials calls for particularly careful preparation and execution. The more delicate and fine the yarns, knitted materials and accessories, the more the manufacture needs to be precise and the finish perfect. For this purpose, during the last few years the firm has acquired the most modern equipment and machinery, in particular in the field of sewing machines. Packaging too has been perfected. The current presentation of Hocosa articles, in individual packagings, either separate items or complete sets, fully answers present demands in regard to hygiene and sales technique.

Above, we have summed up the main characteristics of a typical firm in the Swiss textile industry, going in for high quality production that is individual in type and aimed at an exacting clientele. To complete the picture, let us finally add that Hochuli & Co. Ltd. at Safenwil, employs highly skilled workers and staff, who benefit from social schemes and advantages in keeping with the firm's progressive spirit.

1. The Rothrist spinning mills
2. The « Hocosa » knitting works at Safenwil
3. Garn-dyeing on crossed bobbins
4. Partial view of the spinning mills
5. Knitting on modern circular looms
6. View of part of the manufacturing process

Knitted lingerie, pullovers and cardigans for men, women and children, in cotton, wool, mixed fibres and synthetic fibres, « Hocosa » Trade Mark
Photos A. Klöti, Rothrist

