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The Swiss Knitwear Industry

Increased exports — Replacement of personnel — The emphasis of fashion

During the last few years, the Swiss knitwear and hosiery industry has succeeded so well in satisfying the tastes of consumers, in European Economic Community countries, that it has been able to create a favourable position for itself on this market. Thus Swiss knitwear and hosiery articles enjoy an excellent reputation in neighbouring Common Market countries. They are looked on as classical but highly fashionable articles. In 1962, Switzerland's total exports of knitwear and hosiery increased by 9.5 % over the figure for the previous year to total 64.8 million Swiss francs (US \$ = 15 million) in value. Compared with its competitors in other countries, the Swiss knitwear industry consists traditionally of medium-size, small and even very small concerns. It employs just under 13,400 workers, distributed among 240 firms. Consequently numerous problems concerning the attitude of these concerns towards export markets can be solved only if individual conceptions and wishes are deliberately pushed into the background.

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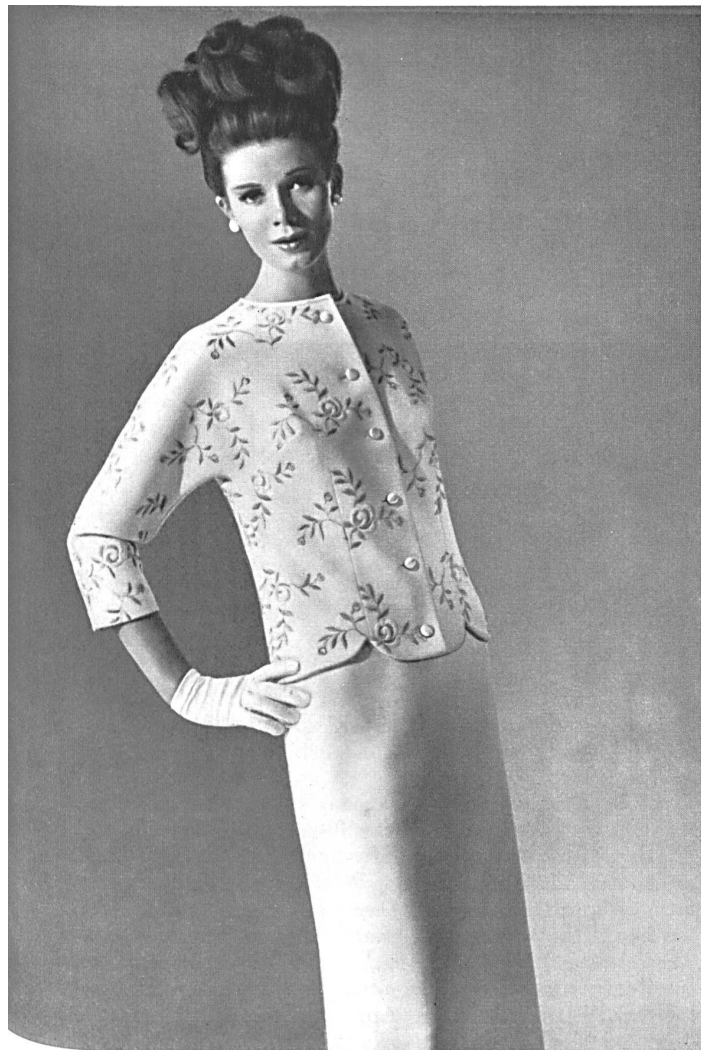
During the last few years, the work carried out by the Swiss knitwear industry with a view to training new

workers has been intensified. The decision to collaborate closely with the textile vocational training schools in St. Gall has proved a very wise one and the possibilities Switzerland now offers for professional promotion in this branch are appreciated far beyond the frontiers of the country. The guiding principle is that the courses and the possibilities for vocational training should be continually adapted to the extremely variable conditions obtaining in the industry so that the training possibilities correspond to the demands for modern and up to date instruction. Two years ago, a new course was added for training cutters for the ready-to-wear industry. The industry also systematically develops the professions that require only very short courses of initiation but which nevertheless play a very important part in this branch. It would be impossible for the Swiss knitwear industry to maintain the position it has recently acquired on foreign markets if it were not sure of being able to train for the future a sufficient number of qualified professional associates in the country itself. For this reason, it attaches particular importance to the vocational training of local manpower.

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The Swiss knitwear industry lays great importance on the vocational training of future generations
Photo Ernst Koehli



Modèle « HERISA », HERISA S. A., HÉRISAU
Attractive pure wool knitted outfit with embroidered top

As we have already said, the style of Swiss models in the knitwear and hosiery industry is both classical and fashionable. In its trends, it follows the international dictates of fashion but at the same time manages to preserve an individual cachet. The firms in this branch are continually experimenting and creating novelties in the way of mixtures of fibres, finish, details of cut, etc. The colours are carefully adapted to the tastes of different markets; the range includes a large variety of shades that are purposely bright and contrasted for its overseas clientele. The details of trim too are specially adapted to suit the tastes of foreign markets, while Swiss buyers remain faithful to the classical designs that have proved their worth. The fine workmanship put into each model is appreciated not only at home but also abroad and contributes not a little to the popularity enjoyed by Swiss knitwear articles.

Modèle « BELFA », OUMANSKY & CO., GENÈVE
Sporty three-piece outfits in wool and rayon. Skirt with pin-tuck pleats

Modèle « YALA », JAKOB LAIB & CO.,
AMRISWIL
Classical style jersey suit

