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9th European Fashion Schools Contest in St. Gall

The St. Gall embroidery and fine cotton fabrics manufacturers have realised that to keep youthful, one has to mix with youth. And each year they give a practical demonstration of this theory by holding the European Fashion Schools Contest, a typically St. Gall event which is none the less international... The 9th Contest which was held in March this year, attracted over 50 newspaper, radio and TV reporters from Switzerland and abroad, including TV crews from the BBC in London, the Berlin TV and the German-speaking Swiss TV, as well as representatives from radio Südwestfunk of Stuttgart, Radio Vienna, the Swiss shortwave programme and the German-speaking Swiss radio, all gathered together in the main hall of the Congress Palace in St. Gall.

For those unfamiliar with the event, let us just explain that it is a fashion contest, organised each year by the Office for the Promotion of the Cotton and Embroidery Industries in St. Gall, among five fashion schools on set subjects. This means in practice that each school has to make ten models using St. Gall embroideries and fabrics—the same for each competitor—supplied by the Promotion Office in St. Gall. The models are presented to the public, by categories, by the students themselves. The international jury of 6, comprising 2 fashion designers, 2 fashion reporters and 2 representatives of the St. Gall textile industry, award marks during the fashion display and announce the results immediately afterwards. The models are judged not only according to the overall impression but also from the points of view of cut and the use made of the material. The ten set models were: nightdress, pyjamas or négligé; beach outfit; leisure outfit; car rally outfit; gay outfit for housework; two-piece outfit or dress and coat for town; one to three-piece outfit; short ball dress; short cocktail dress, bridal gown. There was a double ranking, that is to say per model in each category and according to the total number of points for each school. The ranking on points gave the following order: 1. Collège d'enseignement technique de haute couture, Paris (3 first prizes); 2. Kunstgewerbeschule der Stadt Zürich, Zurich (1 first prize); 3. Modeschule der Stadt Wien im Schloss Hetzendorf, Vienna (1 first prize); 4. Harrow School of Art, London (2 first prizes); 5. Staatliche Akademie für Werkkunst und Mode, Berlin (2 first prizes).

Better than words, the photographs published here will show that there is plenty of promising new blood in the fashion designing world and that the young are taking their work seriously, which does not exclude—far from it in fact—a spirit of fantasy, original ideas and even a touch of daring, all qualities indispensable to a career in fashion, and to which the textile trades owe their ever renewed youth and vitality. (See pages 43-45.)

A new Fisba process

Christian Fischbacher Co. of St. Gall is the first to present, in its new collections, an attractive range of non-iron plain, printed and embroidered fine cotton fabrics. This new line, put on the market under the name of FISBA Stayrite Plus, offers excellent resistance to wear and tear. Thorough trials in actual use gave completely positive results. These fabrics present no problems with regard to making up for the ready-to-wear industry. The collection is a very rich one; let us mention in particular, among the plain fabrics, a double-twist voile, with burlled effects and a burlled fabric with satin stripes. In the prints, we particularly noticed a cotton satin and a striped cotton satin, and in the embroideries a cotton batiste. This modern finishing process may be counted on to open up new markets for fine cotton fabrics.

Pratica-Orlon Club in Switzerland

On the initiative of Schappe Co. Ltd., in Basle, and with the backing of Du Pont de Nemours in Geneva, three Swiss sock manufacturers F. Bodmer Co. Ltd. at Niederwil-Gossau, Rime Co. Ltd. in Lausanne and Jacob Rohner Co. Ltd. at Balgach have formed a marketing association for the purpose of stepping up the use of Orlon Pratica in the field of socks. This association is intended not only for exchanging experience in the technical field, but also for drawing up and carrying out a common marketing programme, extending from manufacture to consumption. This marketing drive is based on an important motivation study, carried out by the office of the famous motivation expert, E. Dichter, in the branch that the latter, no doubt with tongue in cheek, terms "soxology" and which aims to revolutionise hosiery by completely modifying the outdated image of socks possessed by the man of today. In this connection, let us add that the Pratica-Orlon marketing scheme has been adopted by 62 sock and stocking manufacturers in EEC and EFTA.

From TV to Ready-to-Wear

A certain Emma—no, not Emma Bovary, Flaubert's famous heroine!—is currently all the rage with TV fans. We mean that dynamic young woman, Mrs. Emma Peel, who regularly appears on TV as the heroine of the famous British serial "The Avengers". This series is so popular in fact that it is rebroadcast by over 40 TV channels in different countries all over the world. As nothing succeeds like success, a German maker of yarns, fabrics and Trevira®-"Polyfan" jerseys has acquired the right to use the name and picture of Emma Peel for advertising purposes in all countries on the continent of Europe. His aim is to promote the sale of clothing for the young, in the style of the fashions worn by Emma Peel—in private life Miss Diana Rigg—and made with the Trevira® fabrics produced by his firm. All these models, which will be backed by tremendous advertising campaigns up to retail sales level, will be marked with the initials E.P. or Emma Peel's famous silhouette and are bound to be extremely popular with young TV fans. In Switzerland three firms, Walter Bollag, maker of dresses, culottes and suits at Frauenfeld, Rudolf Braunschweig, manufacturer of blouses in Zurich, and Gabriel Feldinger "Gaby Fashion", manufacturer of suits and coats at Allschwil-Basle, manufacture and sell these Emma Peel models.

WEKO looks to the future

WEKO Co. Ltd. recently inaugurated a new factory at Diessenhofen, a prosperous little town, set in the greenery of a canton divided equally between the textile industry and orchards. This firm was founded exactly 70 years ago as a wholesale haberdasher's and maker of supplies for tailors and dress-makers. Subsequently the firm took up the manufacture of jabots, blouses, lace and embroidery, while an allied firm, in the same

district, went in for the machine production of aprons. After many ups and downs, the most important of which was the complete destruction of the apron factory by fire in 1926, two firms remained after the last war under the same management: Jakob Weil & Co. (JWD) at Diessenhofen, which makes medium quality dresses and dressing gowns, and WEKO in Zurich, specialising in elegant dresses in the higher price ranges. Today, both production lines are concentrated in the new Diessenhofen factory, while the designing and sales departments, as well as the two managements are centralised in the modernised Zurich offices, where certain special couture work is also carried out.

Needless to say the new Diessenhofen factory, designed on very attractive lines and organised in the most rational way, is equipped with all the latest means of production and is an extremely pleasant place to work in.

Speaking to the many guests at the official opening of the new factory, Ernest Weil, the present head of the firm, expressed his confidence in the future of the medium-sized ready-to-wear concern. According to certain specialists in the branch, within 15 to 20 years there will be a tremendous concentration of clothing production throughout the world in the hands of a few factories massproducing huge quantities of low-priced, more or less standardized garments, making a certain concession to fashion, alongside a very small individualized production of expensive high fashion articles. Not agreeing entirely with this forecast, the young manager thinks that between these two extremes a small but nevertheless worthwhile market will remain for a good medium quality production, at medium prices, for an intermediate type of clientele, admittedly comparatively small in numbers but not wishing to submit completely to the world pattern. This is the spirit in which WEKO and JWD will continue to work, their limited size enabling these firms to adapt easily and quickly to the fluctuations of fashion and to adopt the modern methods of rationalisation and management which will allow them to forge ahead in the future in accordance with the slogan "enough is better than too much".

In connection with the 37th International Wool Conference: a glance at the wool textile industry

The 37th International Wool Conference will be taking place at Montreux, in Switzerland, as these lines go to press. It is too late therefore to announce the event and too early to speak of the work accomplished and the results achieved. Let us just mention that an international wool conference—the 25th—had already been held in Switzerland, at Zurich, in 1956. It was the success met with by this earlier event that decided the committee of the International Wool Association once again to entrust the organisation of this meeting to the Swiss Wool Textile Association, which selected as the venue for this year's international meeting the charming resort of Montreux, on the shores of the Lake of Geneva, well known to foreign tourists.

The International Wool Association is composed of the national associations of the wool trade and industry of 25 countries on all continents. It was founded in 1928, mainly with a view to drawing up arbitration procedure in the case of disputes between affiliated members. The very complete set of agreements and recommendations developed on this basis has already proved its worth in hundreds of cases.

This group is not to be confused with the International Wool Secretariat (IWS), which was created in 1937 and groups the 200,000 wool growers of Australia, New Zealand and South Africa. The IWS, which has branches in 24 countries, is exclusively at the service of raw wool producers and aims to promote the use of wool and protect its quality (Woolmark).

The number of sheep in the world has risen from 740 million in 1950 to 970 million. Today the world output of wool is equivalent to 2.6 million tons of wool in the yolk or 1.5 million tons of washed wool. 80 % of the world exports come from the 5 biggest producing countries, i.e. Australia, New Zealand, South Africa, Argentina and Uruguay. Wool exports represent 35 % of New Zealand's total exports and over 30 % of Australia's.

The Swiss wool textile industry, which is using more and more chemical fibres, is a dynamic branch which, from 1966 to 1967, raised its production from 29,484 tons to 30,198 tons and achieved a total turnover estimated at S.Fr. 650 million (\$151 million). Although wool covers only 60 to 70 % of the Swiss wool textile industry's consumption of textile fibres (30 % only in the carpet industry), Switzerland's annual imports of wool, which vary between 14,000 to 15,000 tons valued at S.Fr. 130 to 150 million (\$30.17 to 34.8 million), have not decreased, Swiss-bred sheep (250,000 head) producing only 300 tons of wool annually, i.e. barely 2 % of the quantity required by Swiss industry.

The production of the 70 or so firms in the Swiss wool textile industry extends mainly to the following articles: worsted and carded yarns for industrial use (fabrics and knits), hand-knitting yarns, carded and worsted fabrics for clothing, uniforms and furnishings, blankets, carpets and felt goods. In 1967, output amounted to 2,611 tons of worsted tops, 13,131 tons of yarns, 6,068 tons of fabrics, 986 tons of blankets, 5,961 tons of carpets and 651 tons of felt goods.

The Swiss wool textile industry is a typical example of the structural transformation taking place in the textile industry. With less staff and fewer machines, it has nevertheless greatly increased output. During the last ten years, the number of workers has been reduced by 12 %, the number of spindles has dropped from 350,000 to 128,000 and that of weaving looms from 3,300 to 1,600. Although the wage rate has increased by about 80 to 90 % during the same ten-year period, it has been possible to decrease selling prices in a number of cases, thanks to large investments in the technical side of production. Today, the Swiss wool textile industry, which only 10 or 20 years ago was still considered a branch mainly geared to meeting home demand, exports about 20 % of its production. Certain firms even sell over half their output on foreign markets.

Presentation of « Terylene » Fabrics 68

The exhibition of fabrics organised in Zurich each year by I.C.I. (Switzerland) Co. Ltd. always meets with great success among Swiss ready-to-wear manufacturers. For the spring and summer of 1969, there were 1,600 samples of fabrics presented for the inspection of 130 Swiss and foreign firms. In this huge assortment, let us particularly note the many qualities of Terylene® for men's and women's clothing, the different variants of Crimplene®, in particular a large number of embroidered fabrics, Crimplene® for men's clothing, as well as BRI-Nylon® for swimsuits and men's shirts.

Among the novelties, let us mention a printed dress fabric in pure Terylene®, to which a new type of fibre gives the properties of silk. A pure Terylene® fabric woven with a structured yarn answers the present demand for shantung. Thanks to the creation of new fibres designed to mix with wool, the mixed Terylene®/worsted fabrics are now included in the range of high novelty worsteds.