

Notes and news

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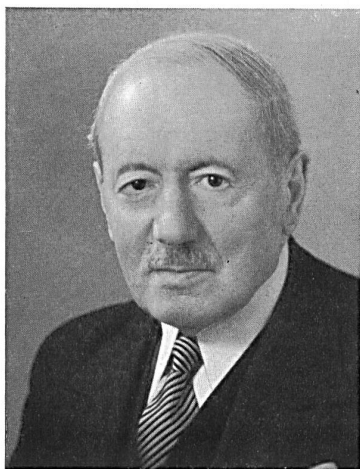
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Notes and News

A notable anniversary



Th. Niggli

This spring, Mr. Th. Niggli celebrated his eightieth birthday. Let us remind readers that after obtaining his degree of Doctor of Law he was, in 1899, appointed head of the secretariat of the Zurich Association of the Silk Industry, a post in which he remained for more than fifty years, only retiring in 1950. In recognition of his services, he was then appointed an honorary member of this association, in which he still holds the office of vice-president and treasurer. His excellent health moreover enables him to carry out various special tasks connected with this association.

As we said five years ago, Mr Niggli's long and successful career has been marked by his very agreeable personal qualities and professional conscience, as well as the clarity of his ideas and his concern to get to the root of matters. On retiring, he continued to devote a large amount of his time and energy to the silk industry, in particular by writing a very interesting book — which represents an important contribution to Swiss economic and industrial history — recounting the first century of the existence of the Zurich Association of the Silk Industry, a work we reviewed in our number 3/1954 (page 141).

In our capacity as editors of this periodical we have often had occasion to deal with Mr Niggli, whose efficiency, affability and kindness we have always appreciated. We are therefore happy to be able to present him with our most sincere congratulations and best wishes for many years of good health and activity to come.

The Editors

The pure silk of our dreams

Natural silk has never abdicated and it will always remain the pre-eminently noble fibre, of a nobility conferred on it by its very antiquity (it was made in China as long ago as 3,000 B. C !), by the almost miraculous adventure of its creation and the prestige of its presence — by which we mean to say all that silk conjures up to our minds by its touch, appearance and even sound.

That is why, in spite of the success of other textile materials and the miracles we are promised of them, silk has kept its position, not, it must be admitted, in the columns of statistics, but always where good taste matters most ; that is why the top couturiers continue to use it with such success ; that is why the Zurich silk manufacturers, who are pastmasters in the art of its manufacture, continue to create novelties in silks.

There is a remarkable variety in the new creations. We still see a predominance of yarn-dyed fabrics, a Zurich speciality which has

not however by any means ousted the piece-dyed articles. Among the silks in greatest demand this season are duchesse satin — of which we have seen a remarkable example in a heavy reversible fabric with a gabardine back — chiffon taffeta, striped and printed organza, satin organza, a very popular new fabric, many prints on taffeta, satin, organza, surah, shantung, etc., as well as warp printed shadowed fabrics whose patterns have softly subdued outlines as if reflected in water.

We were recently able to admire a particularly brilliant selection of these high novelty creations on the occasion of a small showing organised for the press by the *Zurich Association of the Silk Industry*. Its purpose was to emphasize, at the beginning of this spring season, the perennial quality of the role played by pure silk in the ephemeral world of fashion.

A Swiss Hosiery and Knitwear School

The Swiss knitwear industry will very shortly have its own vocational training school. This was previously the only important branch of the textile and clothing industries, in Switzerland, not to have its own school for training its technical staff. The new institute, whose foundation was announced this spring at the general meeting of the Swiss Association of Hosiery and Knitwear Manufacturers, will shortly be inaugurated and will be incorporated, for purposes of administration, finance and instruction, in the textile training schools of St. Gall. Courses will last two semesters and include among other things the following subjects : the study of fibres, study of raw materials and yarns, introduction to the technology of knitting, formation of stitches, science of colours, finishing of textiles, a grounding in chemistry, economics, etc. For the practical training the school

will have a machine section consisting of knitting looms of different types, as well as laboratories and other installations.

The growth of competition in the field of textiles and clothing forces Swiss manufacturers to specialise in the production of high-quality articles. Furthermore, the use of new synthetic fibres and other novelties as well as the need to rationalise manufacture more and more compels manufacturers to give up trying to train their new generations of technical workers themselves in their own workshops. The new school therefore answers a very real need, for it will enable the Swiss hosiery and knitwear industry in the future to draw on a continual supply of well-trained workers, thus simplifying its task of producing high-quality articles.