

London letter

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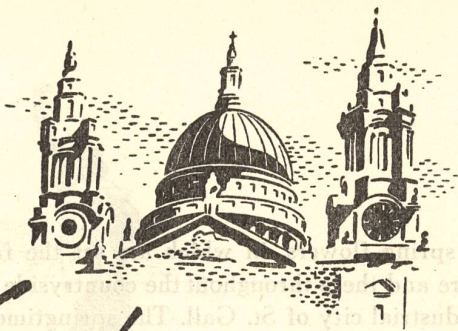
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London

LONDON DESIGNS IN SWISS FABRIC

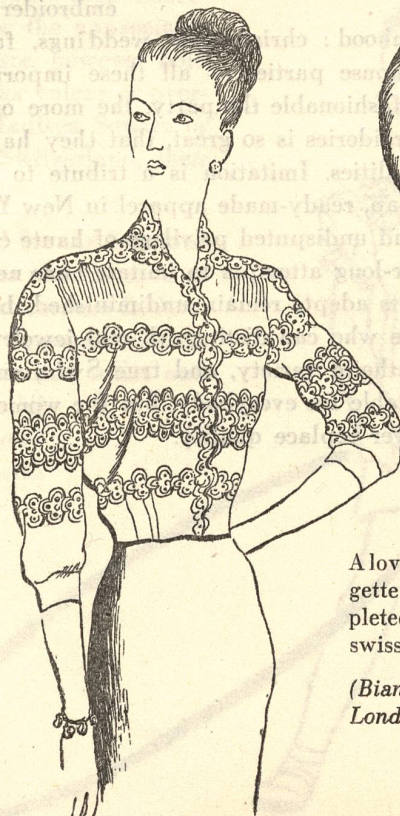
The press, the critics and society always come together when London's greatest dressmakers present their collections. I recently had the opportunity of visiting two members of the Incorporated Society of London Fashion Designer which comprises the ten leading dress houses. Not only did I see the most charming of recent models, new colours bearing suggestive and mysterious names — «toffee Beige», «ground Almond Yellow», «Infra-Red» — but, for the first time since the war, I was delighted to see Swiss organdies, embroideries and guipures reappear on British gowns and costumes. What a crisp charm they have!

One young designer, who has presented three most successful collections since his return to civilian life, was particularly enthusiastic about Swiss fabrics which he has adopted for several models. «Their prospects are excellent», he said, «because fashion is tending more and more towards elegance and femininity.» One of his most remarkable models is a plain serge suit faced with black silk worn with a white, embroidered organdie blouse, crisp and vaporous, imported direct from Switzerland.

One of the most successful women designers of the day also expressed her appreciation of Swiss guipures which she employed very liberally in her recent collection. One of her afternoon gowns, very admired for its style and draped effects, is of deep blue georgette trimmed with white Swiss guipure. This designer is patiently awaiting further imports of these delightful Swiss materials; they offer so many possibilities to the designer.

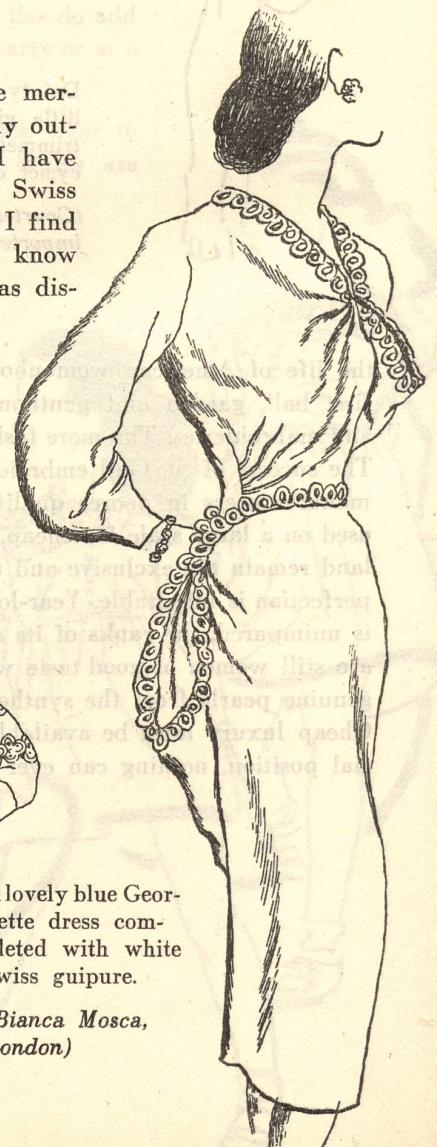
FASHIONS IN FURNISHINGS

Little by little British women are finding more variety and quantity in the merchandise in the shops. And very soon those who are seeking something really outstanding with which to decorate their homes will have a pleasant surprise. I have just had the privilege of seeing some of the lovely designs of the first Swiss furnishing fabrics to be imported into Britain since the war. To my delight I find that they have a *permanent crisp glaze finish* — something we did not know before the war. I was told how the secret of «Everglaze» finished fabrics was discovered in St. Gallen, and that they are impregnated in such a way that the finish is part of the fabric itself. These lovely crisp Swiss fabrics are obviously perfect for women's fashions as well as furnishings. I forecast that when my British sisters see the designs and realise that here at long last are beautiful fabrics which not only looks good, but will retain for ever their lustre and freshness, they will rise early and willingly join a long queue in order to secure a share of this bounty from Switzerland.



Swiss embroidered organdi blouse.

(Hardy Amies, London)



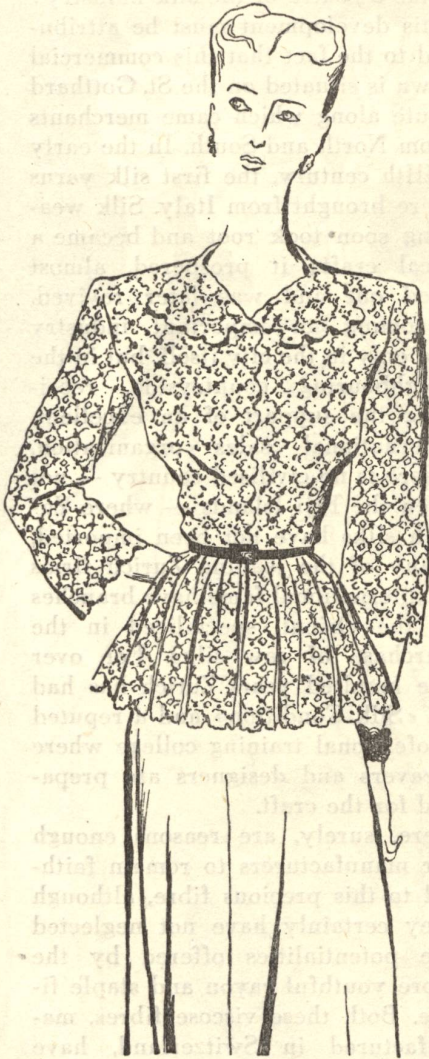
A lovely blue Georgette dress completed with white Swiss guipure.

(Bianca Mosca, London)

WATCHES OF SWITZERLAND

Dresses and fabrics do not, of course, comprise the whole fashion story. There are many accessories which must also be taken into account where the well-dressed woman of today is concerned. Not the least of these is her watch which, be it the platinum and diamond jewel on the wrist of the rich girl, or the stainless-steel time-keeper strapped with leather to the arm of her less fortunate sister — be it one or the other — it *must* be Swiss.

Recently I was greeted by a small Swiss flag hanging over the window of a shop in London's fashionable Bond Street. The familiar white cross on red ground, which to us is a symbol of enduring friendship, drew my attention, and I crossed over to look in the shop window. It was full of something we have not seen for several years, although we have dreamed of them many times — Watches of Switzerland! Yes, there they were, all our old familiar and trusted friends. I went inside and talked to the manager of the shop. He told me that such is the hungry demand for Swiss watches in London that his firm has opened several more shops devoted exclusively to the products of Swiss watch and clock manufacturers. Incidentally he also told me that the present restrictions allow him to import four men's watches for each woman's watch. So this time the fashion story is on the side of man!



A swiss guipure worn
with a black rayon
jersey skirt.

(Hardy Amies, London)

TREASURE HUNTING

Shopping in Britain today is very like the old game of treasure hunting and many women have developed a sixth sense in seeking out just the shop that happens to have in stock a quota of the particular thing they are looking for. We get up early and prepare to queue because someone has whispered that a certain shop will open in the morning with a few hundred pairs of silk stockings on the counter, or a few dozen pairs of our favourite shoes, or whatever it is we need most.

When the shop is a shoe shop, and the shoes are imported from Switzerland the queue is extra long, and lucky treasure hunters eventually return home jubilant with their prize. We treasure these shoes especially nowadays for their chic, their light suppleness, and the comfort they bring to our overworked feet.

The shoes made by the Swiss firms have long been popular over here, and it is interesting to notice how quickly the light, graceful continental Louis heels on some of the best known models have met with a welcome. Many women in Britain are tired of walking on low heels, and they seek eagerly the new high heeled court and suede sandle shoes from Switzerland.

Enid Grand.