

Los Angeles letter : swiss fabrics in the californian fashion

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place in the heart of true Americans. After all, cotton is the traditional and ancestral fibre of the southern States. It is cotton that made the wealth of numerous states in America in former times and still does even to-day. Cotton is like an eternal Cinderella, escaping miraculously from the kitchen where it is a dish-cloth to shine in the splendour of drawing rooms and ballrooms. It is personified by the « Cotton Queen », elected with great ceremony every year in the States of the *Cotton Belt*. « King Cotton », and

« Cotton Maid » are legendary figures symbolising America's affection for its vast cotton plantations. This cotton, spun and woven in Switzerland, has served to adorn successive generations of American women. It is not surprising therefore that this fibre has regained a place of importance in present-day fashions. America recognises merit when it sees it and consumes considerable quantities of fine cottons which are used for suits, dresses, blouses, lingerie and children's wear, which always remain fashionable.

Thérèse de Chambrier.

Los Angeles Letter

Swiss Fabrics in the Californian Fashion

From a land as full of the zest of living as California, there comes a certain spontaneity and derring-do that colors every aspect of its fashion industry. One of the most exciting additions to almost every top collection has been new and unusual uses of Swiss fabrics and laces.

Greatly in evidence, for the second season is a by-now-beloved Swiss moucheté as used in finely tailored suits by Athena, Edith Small, Malter and Frank & Imbach. Sometimes used in combination with linen collars and cuffs, surah ties or small insets of color contrasted moucheté.

Irene has deftly fashioned delicate screen-printed organdy... roses on white ... into a glowing after-five dress for southern climes. Howard Greer has used huge multi-colored dots in a redingote over a strapless short dance dress. Everywhere in his collection of strapless dresses with short suit jackets or cover-ups, he has used fine Swiss batistes and laces for his frankly stated « half-reveal, half-conceal » bodice effects.

Don Loper's custom collection used the widest variety of Swiss fabrics seen here ... in clothes that covered morning, noon and night activities. Natural moucheté was used in a tailored suit with lady-like touches of heavy lace. Tucked batiste was used as a gay peek-a-boo dickey and flirting petticoat in combination with blue silk toile. Natural cotolin was combined in a magnificent ensemble of simple sheath dress and full, flowing mandarin coat embroidered in white chinese flowers. There were also many numbers done in a boiling fast striped Swiss rayon... the

highlight of the show in black and white stripes... and in delicately used Swiss tweed.

Another designer, Lettie Lee, who has recently entered the market did so with almost complete use of Swiss fabrics. A preponderance of Swiss organdies, cottons and laces have been treated with this designer's French-like knowledge of inner construction that literally molds a dress onto a woman. Shirred organdy in large detachable sleeves gives a covered-up look to bouffant, strapless evening dresses... all short length.

Peggy Hunt, one of the larger and better established « downtown » houses displays many couturier touches in her careful use of lace bodices, combined with flowing chiffon, natural net, carefully placed waist, skirt or bodice insertion of fine Swiss lace. She has used a variety of batiste edgings, lovingly placed on a strapless bodice of both slimline narrow sheaths and full, flowing dresses.

More and more, as California's spring, summer and resort wear selling increases, it becomes the natural market for fine Swiss fabrics. Since Southern California is its own market for a large number of these clothes and for clothes that are purchased by over a million tourists a year, the demand and desire for all that is new and beautiful from Switzerland will grow and increase. These things suit our climate, our designs, our easy, blithe, cool-living, sport- and party-loving way of life... a way of life that has successfully made itself felt in all four corners of this vast country.

Helene F. Miller.