

A synthetic textile fibre made entirely in Switzerland : grilon

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A synthetic textile fibre made entirely in Switzerland:

Grilon

The first artificial fibre, of which we possess several varieties today under the names of "rayon" and "staple fibre", was made about the end of the 19th century. These fibres however are made from cellulose, a natural raw material, and are consequently only semisynthetic. Since their invention however attempts have constantly been made to manufacture wholly synthetic or man-made textile products by chemical means.

Nylon, the first wholly synthetic fibre was first made about the year 1930 in the United States, and its invention was rapidly followed in Germany by that of Perlon. Both of these synthetic fibres have properties that meet all requirements made of textile yarns for apparel purposes, but in many respects greatly surpass natural fibres. Demand therefore rapidly increased and for a long time even exceeded supply. In order to relieve this shortage, Fibron S.A. decided in 1947 to produce in Switzerland a wholly synthetic textile fibre. Production of this new fibre was finally started by the middle of 1951. Caprolactam, a salt derived from phenol, is polymerized into a spinning solution and processed into Grilon.

The Grilon process was not an easy one to develop as it was necessary to work out entirely new chemical and mechanical means of production that did not infringe any existing international patents. The results obtained were so satisfactory that Grilon met with success right from the very start, both at home and abroad. Grilon is made either in the form of continuous filaments or as spinning yarns like staple fibre. In the first case, each

separate yarn is stretched to several times its original length (in the final stages of manufacture), whereas in the second, the yarns are combined into a tow before stretching, then given crimp and finally cut to the required length for spinning, depending on the purpose for which the fibre is to be used.

The finest continuous filaments are used mainly for women's stockings, lingerie and blouse and dress fabrics. Crêpe yarns are extremely popular for the manufacture of very elastic woven and knitted materials for stockings, socks and lingerie which are strong, light in weight, snug and possess excellent insulating properties.

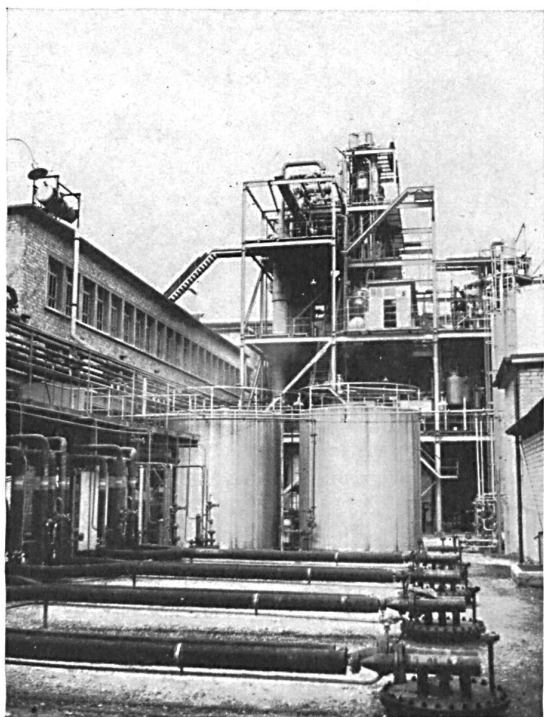
Coarser filament yarns are used in the manufacture of filter cloth, fishing nets, cables for whale fishing, ropes for mountain climbing, tow ropes, etc. The great tensile strength of Grilon, as well as its resistance to abrasion, decay and the action of water or chemicals makes it an ideal material for a large number of industrial products.

Grilon wool-type staple fibre is found on the market either as pure Grilon knitting yarns in all the popular shades, or mixed with wool whose strength it greatly increases. The textile industry uses these mixed yarns for the manufacture of woven and knitted goods of every kind which are remarkable for their wearing qualities and their resistance to abrasion.

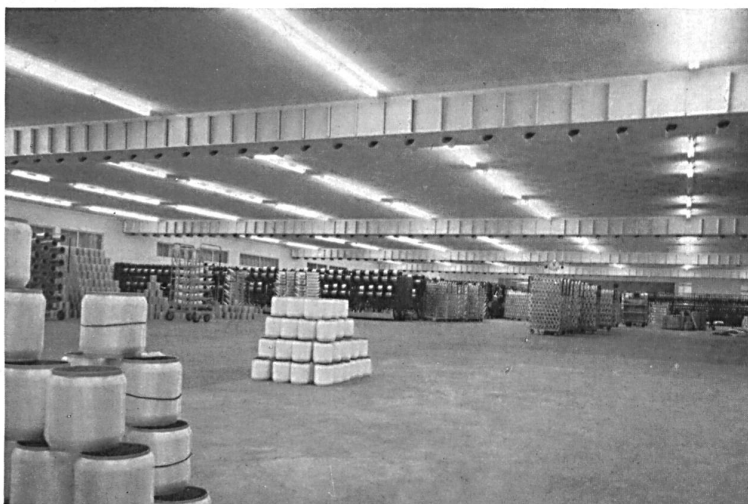
Grilon cotton-type staple fibre is spun pure or added to cotton or rayon in order greatly to increase the strength and durability of these yarns.

Grilon filament yarn and fibre are therefore two textile materials that compare most favourably with other wholly synthetic textiles of the same class, namely the superpolyamids. Grilon, which is entirely made in Switzerland, already plays an important role not only in supplying the home market but also in the field of exports.

GRILON S.A., Domat/Ems.



Synthesis of lactam



Textile hall

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