

Los Angeles letter

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Los Angeles Letter

“We had a very temperamental taxi-driver in Zurich. He would stop only when he saw a pretty girl. The number of stops depended on his sense of beauty. However, we saw two extremely chic and attractive girls walking down the street and of course he stopped. Imagine

our pleasure in seeing them wearing California casual clothes... our very own! And the added touch was this: the dresses were made of a lovely Swiss fabric we had purchased earlier in the year from Stoffel's.”

All models by “Sir James”, Los Angeles



JAKOB SCHLAEPFER, SAINT-GALL
Cotton ottoman.

Photo Rothschild

Thus ends a very happy anecdote by Mr. and Mrs. James Horowitz, owners of one of California's finest volume houses: "Sir James". This is only one of the pleasant stories they tell of their adventures in Switzerland and their very satisfying experiences with Swiss fabric firms in particular.

During their most recent stay they purchased fabrics and embroideries from the following: Jacob Schlaepfer and Sturzenegger & Tanner & Co. Ltd. St.Gall; H. and R. Gabathuler, Trübbach; Hausammann Textiles Ltd., Winterthur; Jacob Rohner Ltd., Rebstein; Wetter & Co., Herisau, Max Kirchheimer Sons & Co., Zurich and Winzeler, Ott & Co. Ltd., Weinfelden.

The use of delicate Swiss fabrics is a far cry from the firm's first operation some seventeen years ago. At that time Sir James began the manufacture of slacks. Then blouses were made to match the slacks. Soon blouses began to outsell slacks. The firm added an artistic monogramming department and their blouses became the rage in fine shops throughout the country.

One day a buyer remarked that she would like a whole dress like one of their bestselling blouses. The idea was converted into a reality and the shirt became dress length. Sir James sold \$150,000 worth of these to that *one* buyer. A New York store advertised it as "The Shirt That Grew and Grew and Grew."

This shirt-dress put Sir James in the dress business and today this house makes wonderfully comfortable and stylish clothes variously termed "casual" or "spectator sports". A new factory has been opened in Arizona where carefully trained workers sew in ultra-modern, air-conditioned and brightly cheerful surroundings. They receive top pay and in return turn out top quality work. This kind of work plus unusual and interesting choices of fabric have made Sir James, like so many Californian firms, successful in the highly competitive middle-price dress class. Mr. Horowitz says that this is why Swiss fabrics have been so successful with him for the past two years and will continue to play a larger part in his business. He points out that Swiss firms can weave and



**HAUSAMMANN TEXTILES LTD.,
WINTERTHUR**
Cotton broadcloth.

**HAUSAMMANN TEXTILES LTD.,
WINTERTHUR**

Cotton ottoman.



dye as little as 1000 yards to specific color and pattern, thus giving an American firm the same exclusivity enjoyed by the famous French couturiers.

It is at this point in the operation that Mrs. Horowitz' influence is greatly felt, for she is the firm's stylist. She sets the season's trends, selects colors, coordinates imported fabrics with domestic choices, often originates patterns as does Mr. H. himself, and oversees the work

of their designer, Mr. Jerry Grinel, to make sure that his work conforms to the personality of the firm which is very definitely set by the owners themselves, whose motto is "Women will buy anything that flatters". And since this enterprising couple feel that Swiss fabrics are the essence of flattery and they plan to use more and more of them, how can they go wrong?

Helene F. Miller