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FASHION HOLIDAY IN SWITZERLAND.

(A soirée given by the Textile Industry of St. Gall at Castle "Altenklingen").

Under the above heading an interesting article in the St. GALLER TAGBLATT of July 30th reported a unique event that took place towards the end of last month.

It appears that the textile industry of St. Gall thought it would be a good idea to show their friends and customers of the U.S.A. the latest developments and creations in Swiss cottons. In fact the chief of the publicity department went so far as to coin the phrase: "It is rumoured that Zurich now produces silks which fairly imitate the best cotton of St. Gall".

Some of the leading journalists writing for American fashion papers were on a journey through Europe in order to view the various new collections. The St. Gall industrialists took the opportunity to invite them on a tour through Switzerland, which they gladly accepted.

During their sojourn at St. Gall they spent the first evening at a garden party, given by Dr. A. Wiegner, President of the Publicity Department of the Cotton and Embroidery Industries. Having been favoured with a really beautiful and warm summer evening (not a foregone conclusion during this fickle season) the arrangements proved a complete success.

The next day was spent visiting in groups typical branches of the Industry in various parts of the Appenzellerland and the Rheintal. The evening was to provide the pièce de résistance: the soirée at Schloss "Altenklingen" in the Thurgau. This was indeed a happy inspiration which greatly appealed to our American friends, who are at all times susceptible to a touch of romance.

When the party arrived the castle presented itself in its full beauty in the evening light. The moat was crossed and the visitors found themselves scrutinised by two warriors in Swiss uniforms of olden times, presenting their halberds. On the far side of the courtyard stands the impressive main building of the castle. The party mounted two staircases which lead to a long corridor in which a wonderful collection of the latest creations in Swiss cotton textiles was exhibited: cloths and embroideries which went surprisingly well with the tapestries and antique furniture — and with the portraits of the old Zollikofers looking down from their frames upon the walls. The castle still remains the property of their descendants.

The inspection of all that was to be seen was only slightly and agreeably interrupted by a welcome icy cocktail, the serving of which also facilitated introductions between guests and hosts. There were Eugenia Shephard, who writes for the New York Herald Tribune, Betty Blackwell, of Mademoiselle, Mr. Dana O'Clare, two gentlemen of McCall's, and other important people from the world of fashion "over there". The topics of discussion ranged from travel to yodelling and from currencies to what can be had for the money. Appropriately enough everyone was in evening dress to suit the surroundings of "Altenklingen", which can look back into history over a period of nearly 500 years.

When by-and-by the last stragglers had arrived

the company were bidden to enter the Great Hall, with its chandeliers, its tapestries, lovely old furniture and exquisite pictures. In the centre stood the gleaming white table, decked for some 50 diners and embellished with the choicest flowers and the soft glow of candle-light. In the bay window, adorned with coats of arms, sat Fred Boehler with his "Hammond", who was to supply the finishing touch by the charm of his music.

At the head of the table sat Mr. Victor Zollikofer, in a white smoking jacket, and he rose to bid the guests welcome in a few well-chosen phrases. He briefly mentioned some facts about the castle and its architect (with his dog) and finally asserted that "Altenklingen" was not devoid of the proverbial castle "Ghost". He then invited all to proceed without further ado with the task in hand. The dinner proved indeed a happy and animated affair during which each participant in turn was asked to rise, to be introduced, through the toastmaster, by name and profession.

Amongst the hosts were such well-known personalities as Max Stoffel, Arnold Mettler, Willy Forster, Victor Widmer, Dr. Wiegner, and many others. The photographer had a busy time in all directions, whilst some of the proceedings were being televised. This applied in particular to the Mannequin Parade which followed and during which anything and everything was being shown that might excite the fluttering feminine heart: — Ski outfits, summer dresses, cocktail suits, evening gowns and even bathing costumes.



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Although this show lasted only half an hour, in order not to tire the guests, every item displayed was "it" and produced a sense of general admiration. Was it possible to produce all these fantastic creations from cotton? The models from the ateliers Marty & Co. and Gafader & Co., both of Zurich, evoked particular enthusiasm.

As the evening wore on it was only natural that such a happy atmosphere could not come to its proper close without "an invitation to the valse" — and to steps more brisk and modern. Champagne started to flow and was served to those who needed refreshment after exercise, as well as to the others who preferred spending their time chatting in one of the many cosy corners. The height of the dance, however, was reached in a Polonaise through the whole castle, even across the moat to a hunting lodge and back again. In this nearly everyone not only took part, but thoroughly enjoyed doing so.

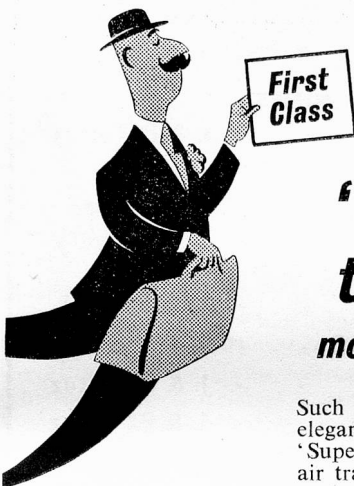
Meanwhile, the old castle stood out floodlit (with the equipment previously used for television) leaving on all an indelible impression of its serene dignity and beauty, even of grandeur.

"Altenklingen" (and its ghost) had witnessed a unique gathering within its precincts and a fashion display for which a finer and more romantic background it would have been impossible to conceive.

When the St. Gall industrialists undertake to do a thing they can be relied upon to do it sumptuously and well.

W.D.

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The number of passengers carried on all sectors of the network rose by 30 per cent to 451,031 from 346,362.

The mileage flown increased to 8,057,690 from 6,269,290.

The volume of freight carried totalled 5,545 metric tons, compared with 4,813 metric tons, an increase of 15 per cent. Air mail carried rose by 17 per cent to 1,999 tons from 1,715 tons.

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