

Firm's New Venture Helps to Increase Exports

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PLASTIC TILES FIND READY MARKET

FILM stars in Hollywood may soon be wearing attractive horn brooches made in Aberdeen.

The makers, Aberdeen Combworks Co., Ltd., displayed the brooches—a new venture on their part—at the British Industries Fair this year.

They took the eye and fancy of a Hollywood traveller, who immediately placed a substantial order, which has recently been dispatched.

There are thirty-six different designs for the brooches. Most of them depict articles identified with Scotland, such as thistles and sets of bagpipes.

The remainder are of animals and items native to other parts of the world with which the firm trades.

The past year has been a notable one for Aberdeen Combworks Company. It has marked not only an increase in their export trade and their entry into brooch-making, but also an expansion of their manufacturing activities in the field of plastics.

Gay Colours

Along with the plastic tiles which they started turning out last year, they now make plastic egg cups, egg spoons, egg containers, children's tea sets, and shoe horns—all in a wide range of gay colours.

Because of Government restrictions, the manufacture of the tiles had to be limited last year, but now that the restrictions have been relaxed, they are being turned out in large quantities and finding a ready market.

"The other articles are all new ventures on our part and they are proving successful," Mr W. E. Ferrier, managing director, told a reporter of "The Press and Journal."

"Plastic work has improved considerably since the war."

We intend to widen our activities in plastics even further—there are many unexplored possibilities in this field—and have already plans in hand for a new plastic article which will be shown at the British Industries Fair next year.

The article will, however, remain a secret to the general public until it appears on the stands at the B.I.F.

Raw Materials Scarce

There is, however, one drawback to the firm's new activities—the shortage and uncertain price of raw materials.

Cotton linters which are used in the make-up of plastic material are extremely scarce—due to the poor cotton crop in America this year.

The shortage has worsened within the last few months.

"Prices of raw materials will almost certainly go up in the new year," Mr Ferrier forecast. "Although we are in the happy position of having large stocks at the moment they cannot last."

"Combs which are still our principal industry will be the first items to be affected."

"Nevertheless," he added, "despite this and all the difficulties of purchase tax and Government restrictions with which we have to cope we are not too perturbed about the future and are confident that we can carry out our plans during the coming year."

NEW COMB PERFUMES HAIR

Aberdeen Product Meets Good Demand

ABERDEEN Combworks Company, Ltd., have put on the market an entirely new type of comb which is a potential dollar-earner.

A sizeable order has already been received for the comb from Canada—a hard currency area—and inquiries have come in from the West Indies, Australia and the East.

The comb oils or perfumes the hair while it combs, and is an invention of the Combworks' staff.

The top of the comb is hollowed out where the teeth are wide apart, and holes are cut between each tooth. Into the cavity is slipped an absorbent pad which is kept in by an end-piece.

The idea is to dip the pad into whatever perfume or lotion you require. The action of combing then brings the hair into contact with the saturated pad.

Plans for mass-producing this article were held up for six months by a decision of the Customs and Excise to place 100 per cent. purchase tax on the comb.

Aberdeen Combworks, however, took the matter to arbitration and won their case, with the result that only a tax of 33½ per cent. is added to the normal price of the comb, which is already in good demand.

Mixed Fortunes

This has been a year of mixed fortunes for Aberdeen's comb industry. Foreign import restriction and devaluation are having their effect on the trade of the Combworks.

While it is difficult to export to European countries, exports to the United States are increasing, largely due to devaluation. But devaluation has also caused the price of raw materials from the dollar countries to rise. The result will be that, in the near future, certain types of combs will cost more.

Officials of the company told a reporter of "The Press and Journal" that although they had orders from abroad, they could not fulfil them until they received the licences.

They considered that the home industry was not receiving a fair deal, as the Government had given free import licences to all foreign combs. This was going to be detrimental to the home industry, and it savoured of the days of Japanese competition.

Main Grievance

The main grievance, however, was that the British Government granted these licences on the understanding that the foreign countries would reciprocate, but this had not been done so far.

So the position was that combs from France, Belgium, and other European countries could pour freely into this country, while British manufacturers were hamstrung by foreign import restrictions.

The demand for horn combs has been increasing, especially for export, and more inquiries for them are coming in from the United States.

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