

Swiss representation of foreign interests

Autor(en): **[s.n.]**

Objekttyp: **Article**

Zeitschrift: **The Swiss observer : the journal of the Federation of Swiss Societies in the UK**

Band (Jahr): **- (1964)**

Heft 1462

PDF erstellt am: **29.04.2024**

Persistenter Link: <https://doi.org/10.5169/seals-695800>

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SWISS INDUSTRIAL EXPANSION THROUGHOUT THE WORLD

At the end of 1960, the investments of big Swiss firms in their foreign subsidiaries totalled approximately thirteen billion Swiss francs. Calculated per head of the population, these investments amounted therefore to Fr.2,050.— for Switzerland, and Fr.790.— for Great Britain (excluding the oil industry), Fr.760.— for the U.S.A., Fr.360.— for Canada, Fr.100.— for Western Germany, Fr.80.— for Denmark and Fr.20.— for Japan.

The setting up of Swiss industries abroad is accounted for mainly by the fact that the home market is too small to offer Swiss industry adequate scope. Furthermore, this system makes it possible to avoid the difficulties standing in the way of exports — customs barriers, import restrictions and transport costs. Finally, it enables raw materials to be obtained locally in sufficient quantities and at competitive prices, as well as avoiding the difficulties inherent in the manpower shortage prevailing in Switzerland.

While the work of Swiss firms in different parts of the world is a necessity for the Swiss economy, it also benefits the foreign countries concerned, not only by creating opportunities for work but also by training local labour, providing various services, and enriching the market.

Swiss industrial activity is not limited to the industrialized countries. At the end of 1962, the investments of big Swiss firms in countries in the process of development amounted to approximately two billion Swiss francs, representing a figure per capita equivalent to that recorded by the United States. [O.S.E.C.]

SWISS REPRESENTATION OF FOREIGN INTERESTS

With the latest mandates of the Swiss Confederation to represent the interests of Chile, Brazil and Ecuador in Cuba, the total number of representations has reached thirteen. The oldest dates back to 10th May 1946 and concerns the Rumanian Archives in Spain. Since February 1950, Switzerland represents the interests of the Philippines in Bulgaria and since February 1958 those of Iran in Israel. In Havana, Switzerland acts on behalf of seven countries: U.S.A., Argentina, Guatemala, Honduras plus the three latest countries mentioned above. In October 1961, the Confederation was asked to represent Togo in Nigeria, and since August last year, Switzerland acts for Portugal in Senegal and for Great Britain in Guatemala. [A.T.S.]

PRO JUVENTUTE STAMP SALE RECORD

A sale of stamps and postcards in aid of various schemes to benefit young people takes place every year. The stamps with their surcharge for charity are well-known to all philatelists. Last winter, the sale reached a new record, and for the first time the four-million-franc mark has been surpassed. This includes the sale of greetings cards and donations.

The average sum spent on stamps and cards (not on counting the actual postage value) went up to 62.7 cts. per inhabitant. The highest average was reached in the Canton of Baselland with 92.1 cts. per person, the lowest was registered in the Valais with 28.4 cts. Grisons came second with 87.2 cts.

The Pro Juventute Foundation spent 4½ million francs in the year ending 31st March, distributed to mothers and babies, school children, school leavers, sick and invalid children and on leisure time activities. [A.T.S.]

A GREAT SWISS PUBLISHER UNDER CZARS ALEXANDER III AND NICHOLAS II OF RUSSIA

The activities of the Swiss living abroad would fill a large book. They have left their mark in every continent: here a road or bridge builder, there a scholar, a doctor, an industrialist or colonist. Everywhere they have brought the qualities of their race and native country. Such a book would make inspiring reading and pay a splendid tribute to their work and enterprising spirit.

Alfred Devrient, scion of a family of educationalists, is a case in point. It was his father, Théodore Devrient, who founded the "La Villa" Institute which later won a world-wide reputation under his relative Max Auckenthaler, a doctor of philosophy. It was at Lausanne that Alfred Devrient was born in 1842. After teaching for some years, this young book-lover went as a trainee to Hachette in Paris. In 1867 he moved to St. Petersburg as the representative of the great Paris firm. In this way he secured a footing in Russia, where at that time eyes were turned towards the West and more particularly towards Paris. Alfred Devrient formed a number of connections in intellectual and social circles and acquired an admirable fluency in Russian. To be brief, he married the daughter of the banker Junker and in 1872 founded the publishing house of Devrient. Success came quickly. He conceived the brilliant idea of bringing out the *Encyclopædia of Rural Economy and Allied Sciences*. This book met a real need of the times. Millions of peasants had just been emancipated and restored to the land. The small farm came into its own and the great estates were split up. It was a real revolution! But such a rural revolution needed a guide, and for this purpose Alfred Devrient's *Agricultural Encyclopædia* was of inestimable value. It proved so valuable in fact that the Ministry of Agriculture rewarded the Swiss publisher by conferring upon him a gold medal for "exceptional services".

Open-minded and eclectic in his interests, Alfred Devrient followed up his encyclopædia with literature for young people. He started a *Collection of books for children*. Each book was attractively presented in a fine make-up and binding. Beneath their illustrated covers were to be found the best stories of Russian folklore. As the title of his collection, Devrient had chosen "Babushka Tatiana", which means "Grandma Tatiana". Notable features of this children's collection were the fine printing and the illustrations and illuminations which were done by the best artists living in the Russia of Alexander III and Nicholas II.

The encyclopædia of agriculture and the children's books were enough in themselves to earn the Devrient publishing house a fame that extended to the farthest frontiers of the great Russian empire. To these the Swiss publisher added publications dealing with natural history, zoology and mineralogy. Finally he published in twenty-two volumes a *Popular Russian Geography*, which met with a great success. Unhappily this ambitious publishing programme covering more than 1,200 volumes was interrupted by the Bolshevik revolution.

Devrient was forced to flee with his family and leave everything behind. Apart from his publishing career, he had been president of the Swiss Welfare Society and a member of the council of the Swiss Reformed Church in Russia. Truly, he was a great personality with new and