

Economic and technical items

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ECONOMIC AND TECHNICAL ITEMS

EXHIBITION OF TOURISM AND SPORT

Planned in a new, bright and lively style, the 13th Exhibition of Tourism and Sport will be open to the public at the Palais de Beaulieu in Lausanne (Switzerland) from 6th to 14th March 1971. The organisers have sought to create a climate of fun and vacations so that right from the start the visitor is plunged in a holiday mood. In the Exhibition itself, visitors will be able to see several performances of folk dancing and singing given by groups from all parts of the world. In addition, radio and TV personalities will organise games and contests on geography and travel. Thirteen official tourist organisations from foreign countries will have stands for informing the public, supplying brochures, etc. For the first time, most of the big Swiss travel agencies will also be taking part in this event. Let us mention that a special sector will be set aside for outdoor holiday equipment and that 55 makes of caravan and 17 makes of tent will be represented.

A SWISS GADGET: THE "MINI-PEDALO"

Although aquatic sports are all the rage, not everyone can afford his own yacht or sailing boat. Thanks, however, to the "mini-pedalo" produced by a Swiss metal goods factory at Morrens (canton de Vaud), "boating" on the sea or lake has been brought within the reach of all. This firm has invented a mechanical device for converting any inflatable mattress into a boat driven by a propeller and capable of being steered. For this, it is sufficient to fasten a tubular framework over the mattress, and to pedal. The tubes being coated with a highly resistant plastic varnish, the boat can very well be used on the sea. Apart from its very low weight—only 7½ lb.—the framework has other advantages; once dismantled it fits easily into the boot of a car, for example, since it takes up no more room than a folding camping chair. The "mini-pedalo" was presented at the last Inventor's Salon in Brussels where it won a silver-gilt medal.

NEW SALES POSSIBILITIES FOR LONGINES

The Longines Watch Company, Francillon Co. Ltd., of St. Imier (canton of Berne), and the German distribution chain Ordiam, recently signed an agreement under the terms of which Longines grants Ordiam the right to the representation and sale of its products. For its part, Ordiam, which possesses 45 watch and jewellery stores in

37 towns throughout Germany and which, with a turnover of DM 31 million (U.S. \$8,514 million) was the biggest commercial chain in this branch in 1970, undertakes to sell only Longines products in this firm's price and quality range. As a result of this agreement, which was signed on 31st December, 1970 and comes into force on 1st March, 1971, the position of high quality watches on the German market will be both strengthened and developed. It should be remembered that Longines, the famous Swiss watch factory of St. Imier and Geneva, plays a leading role especially in the field of electronic watches and sports timing. Longines will be the official timekeeper for the Olympic Games at Munich in 1972.

GUETTINGER IN GERMANY

In 1968 the Güttinger Electronic Calculating Machines Co. Ltd. of Nidersteufeln (Appenzell—Switzerland) set up a branch in Germany, at Bad Waldsee (Wurtemberg). The latter is expanding fast; this March, it will move into new premises offering at first some 100 work-points; the second stage of construction, which will be completed during the year, will make it possible to double the firm's production capacity. It will be remembered that the main Swiss firm, founded in 1957, built the first analogical computer in Europe and is therefore known as a pioneer in this field. Güttinger's manufacturing programme today comprises two main sectors: data processing for industry and appliances for the automation of typesetting. During the last few years, the firm's turnover has increased by 30 to 50% a year. In view of this success, it became necessary to rapidly increase the firm's output capacity, and this is one of the reasons that led to the foundation of the German branch; the latter goes in mainly for production, on the basis of the research and development work carried out in Switzerland.

AWARD FOR A SWISS FIRM

Sap-1 Automatic Folding Machine Co. Ltd. at Ecublens (Vaud, Switzerland) was recently awarded the "Gold Cup for French Good Taste", a prize awarded to firms devoting particular care to the elegant presentation of their products. Specialising in the manufacture of packaging machinery for chocolates, confectionery, bouillon cubes, soaps, etc., Sapal exports some 90% of its total output. Its machines, which are in operation all over the world, play an important part in industry, in particular the foodstuffs sec-

tor; they help many firms to present their products attractively to the consumer, while scrupulously respecting the rules of hygiene.

FAMILY EXPENDITURE ON TRANSPORT IN SWITZERLAND

The last report issued by the Federal Office for Industry, Arts and Crafts, and Works (OFIAMT) concerning the budgets of families of Swiss wage-earners shows that a fifteenth (6.5%) of the total expenditure of families goes on transport. In 1960, this proportion amounted to only one twenty-fifth, in 1955 to one thirtieth and in 1936/37 to as little as one fortieth. This big increase in the proportion of expenditure on transport in the total family budget is above all a reflection of the spread of motorisation. Today there are some 1,200,000 private cars in Switzerland, i.e. almost as many as there are bicycles. In 1970, the total value of automobiles imported into the country, which amounted to about S.Fr. 1,414 million (U.S. \$328.8 million), was 20% higher than that recorded the previous year. It is one of the highest rates of growth of all imported goods.

BEER CONSUMPTION

In 1970, Switzerland's fifty-nine breweries produced some 830 million pints of beer. The annual consumption per head of the population increased to about 135 pints, ordinary beer representing over 82% of the total consumption, 78% of it being sold in 6 decilitre (roughly 1 pint) bottles. Recently beer drinkers seem more and more to favour light and special beers. Sales of beer in cafes have fallen to 60% of the total, with a corresponding increase in the proportion of retail sales.

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