

Zeitschrift: The Swiss observer : the journal of the Federation of Swiss Societies in the UK
Herausgeber: Federation of Swiss Societies in the United Kingdom
Band: - (1953)
Heft: 1201

Rubrik: Commercial news

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COMMERCIAL NEWS

Our Delegation to the European Coal and Steel Community.

As announced in the Swiss Observer some time ago the Swiss Federal Council decided in February to propose the appointment of an official Swiss delegation to the European Coal and Steel Community. As the High Authority accepted this proposal, the Federal Council nominated as its representatives in its session of March 9th, Mr. Gerard Bauer, who is its present delegate to the Organisation of European Economic Co-operation, and Dr. Hermann Hauswirth, Vice-Director of the Division du Commerce of the Federal Department of Public Economy.

At the same time the Federal Council conferred the title of Minister upon Mr. Gerard Bauer, who remains official delegate of the Federal Council to the O.E.E.C., and will in principle represent Switzerland within similar organisations.

Ratification of a Unesco Convention.

On 13th March the Federal Council decided to ratify the arrangement of November 22nd, 1950, concerning the import of objects with an educational, scientific or cultural character. This arrangement worked out by Unesco was approved by the Swiss Parliament on 25th September, 1952.

It provides for the duty-free entry, under certain conditions, of objects of educational, scientific or cultural character imported from other countries that are parties to the agreement (books, publications, works of art, collectors pieces, films and lantern slides, scientific instruments and apparatus, as well as equipment for advanced education of the blind). The arrangement comes into force three months after the instrument of ratification has been deposited.

Switzerland's External Trade in February, 1953.

Switzerland's exports in February, 1953, were valued at 391.1 million francs, 9 million more than in February of last year. Imports decreased in value from 458 million in 1952 to 362.4 million francs this year. The balance of visible trade thus shows a surplus of 28.7 million francs in Switzerland's favour.

Switzerland, France's Principal Customer.

Switzerland was France's main customer in 1952, importing 512.5 million francs' worth of goods from that country. Although Switzerland has only five million inhabitants, her French imports are considerably higher in value than are those of countries with a 10 to 30 times larger population. In particular, Switzerland heads the list of French customers for foodstuffs, wood, and rolling mill products.

Ravioli from Switzerland.

It was possible to arrange recently with the Board of Trade a bilateral quota for the import from Switzerland of ravioli with cheese and vegetable filling. Although the amount is not very considerable, it is hoped that one or the other of the readers of the "Swiss Observer" will have an opportunity to taste a sample of this Swiss delicacy.

An Indo-Swiss Machine-Tool Company.

At the beginning of March Mr. K. O. Reddy, the Minister of Production, announced to the Indian Parliament that a joint Indo-Swiss company had been formed for the construction of a machine tool factory at Jalalahali, near Bangalore.

The capital, amounting to 120m. rousees, will be subscribed to 90% by the Indian Government and 10% by Swiss firms.

Building costs are estimated at 83.7m. rousees, and the annual production, when full capacity is reached (i.e. in 1955-56), at 40m. rousees.

Swiss Silk Ribbons for this Season's Fashion.

The Swiss silk ribbon industry is well-known in every fashion center of the old and the new world. In 1952, almost 60 million francs' worth of silk ribbons was exported to approximately 60 different countries. Present business is good, and 1953 is expected to be a very successful year. The newest ideas of designers are being helped by new technical developments and colours.

A new Development in Synthetic Textiles: Helanca.

Nylon, which was invented in America, has become very popular in Switzerland; the Swiss textile industry, however, has now succeeded in developing a new synthetic fibre of even superior quality. It is



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produced by Heberlein & Co. in Wattwil and marketed under the trade mark "Helanca", a highly elastic, soft, and wool-like material which cannot be torn. Helanca yarn can be produced from nylon, or from other synthetic fibres such as perlon or grilon. The new fibre has already been used successfully not only for knitting, but also for weaving.

Swiss Straw Braids for the Millinery.

Retailers of the ladies's hats industry and the press recently were guests at a hat show presented by the Association of Swiss Straw Braids Manufacturers. The show took place in Wohlen, most important center of the Swiss straw braids industry, which exports 97 to 99% of its products. In 1952, Switzerland exported almost 32 million francs' worth of straw braids for millinery. Exports to the United States alone amounted to 19 million francs, while the rest either went to other overseas markets or to European countries. Since the end of the war, the Swiss straw braids industry has increasingly developed braids for other articles of fashion like handbags, collars, and gowns.

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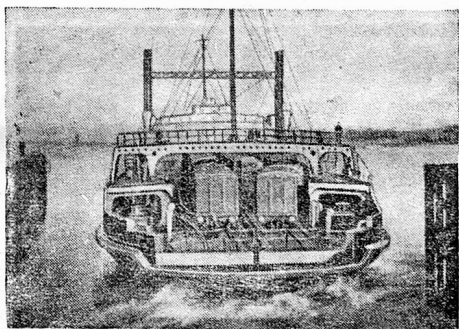
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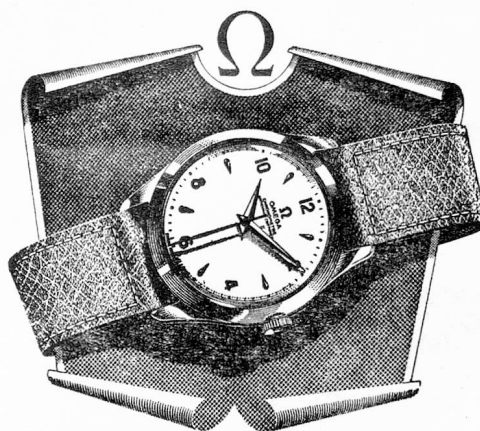


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IF you win five first prizes in seven successive contests, you have a right to be proud!

That is exactly what the world-famous Omega 30 mm has done. As production starts into the second million, the Omega 30 mm has won its fifth victory out of seven consecutive annual precision contests held at Geneva Observatory. Scoring 870.3 points, it bettered its own *precision record* for 1950 in the wrist watch category.

And all the world *does* love a winner! Already over a million men have chosen the Omega 30 mm, recognising that this timepiece fulfils all requirements for highest wrist watch accuracy.

Swiss Observatories have found that in watches made to be worn on the wrist, the 30 mm diameter allows the most precise adjustment. At Geneva each watch is tested for 45 days in five standard positions, at temperatures ranging from freezing cold to tropical heat.

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