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COMMERCIAL NEWS

Swiss Foreign Trade in November.

Swiss imports, in November, 1954, attained the value of nearly 500 million francs, showing an increase of 12 per cent in comparison with the corresponding month last year. Exports, on the other hand, while maintaining a very high level, only increased by 4 per cent. Thus, Switzerland's trade balance for this month is unfavourable, by 9 million francs, whereas last year there was a favourable balance of 25 millions.

The increase in imports, as compared with 1953, is to be found chiefly in respect of vegetables, of liquid and solid fuels, and of manufactured products, more particularly instruments and apparatus. As regards exports, the most marked increase is in respect of footwear and chemical and pharmaceutical products, whereas a decline is to be observed in Swiss sales abroad of foodstuffs, especially of chocolate.

Switzerland's Economic Evolution during the last 50 years.

The figures for the last census taken of the Swiss population are interesting in that they give an idea of Switzerland's economic evolution during the last fifty years. The figures for the Canton of Zurich, which is the most industrialised of all Swiss Cantons, are particularly eloquent. During the course of this half century the number of persons occupied in industry and trade has increased from 110,000 to 180,000. The increase, therefore, amounts to nearly 70 per cent. It is especially marked in certain branches, namely, in the machine and apparatus making industry in which the number of workers employed has almost quadrupled, in the building trade, where there are more than double the number of workers employed, and in the mechanical and metallurgical industries in general, as well as in the chemical industry and in that of the graphical arts. On the other hand, certain branches, as for instance the wood-working industry, remain stationary or have even declined, as in the case of the textile industry, in which the number of workers has been reduced by half.

In spite of this increase in the number of persons employed in industry and trade the proportion of this branch in ratio of the total, has declined slightly in favour of commerce, of banking, of insurance, of

tourism, of the educative professions, etc. The agricultural branch has also suffered a reduction, to a far more notable extent than in the case of industry.

Swiss Chemical Industry in the 3rd Quarter.

The activity in the Swiss chemical industry, which specialises to a very large degree in products for export, was very intense during the 3rd Quarter of 1954. Exports during this Quarter attained the sum of 219 million francs, which represents an increase of approximately 30 per cent, as compared with the corresponding period in 1953.

This increase was to be observed in respect of most of the various branches, although its rhythm slowed down in respect of dyes, whilst at the same time increasing in that of pharmaceutical products. The increase in respect of the latter amounted to as much as 40 per cent, when compared with November, 1953, whilst it was only 13 per cent in the case of dyes.

Swiss Production of Cigars and Cigarettes.

Last year, Swiss tobacco manufacturers produced almost 500 million cigars, i.e. 14 million more than in 1952, and nearly eight thousand million cigarettes, thus establishing a new record in that particular field, also. Only pipe tobacco is on the decline, and that only slightly.

Motor Show in Geneva in 1955.

The Committee of the "Salon international de l'automobile" held a meeting recently, when it approved the project for building a new exhibition hall, which will make it possible to place a superficial area of 4,000 m² at the disposal of the exhibitors. By the way, the next motor show in Geneva is to be held in March, 1955.

OUR NEXT ISSUE.

Our next issue will be published on Friday, January 28th, 1955. We take this opportunity of thanking the following subscribers for their kind and helpful donations over and above their subscriptions: J. W. Bonjour, E. Berner, Ch. Strubin, J. J. Huber, E. Gallizia, W. B. Sigerist, J. Graf, J. H. Buchi, Paul Walser, W. Fischer, W. Tschuy.

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