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SWITZERLAND ISSUES NEW STAMPS.

The Swiss postal authorities have issued the following stamps on February 15:

A 5 centimes stamp for the National Philatelic Exhibition which will take place from October 15th to 23rd, at Lausanne. Picture showing the Lausanne Cathedral and a post horn. Designer: André Rosselet, Auvernier.

A 10 centimes stamp for the Winegrowers' Festival to be held from August 1st to 14th, at Vevey. This Festival takes place four times in a century only; it glorifies the work of the winegrower with colourful pageants, music, dancing and various other manifestations. Picture showing costume hat of the canton of Vaud with bunch of grapes and gay-coloured ribbon. Designer: Maya Allenbach, Berne.

A 20 centimes stamp for the Swiss Alpine Herds-men and Costume Festival which will take place from September 5th to 7th, at Interlaken-Unspunnen. It is organized by the Swiss Costume Society in collaboration with the Federal Wrestling and Yodeling Societies. The 1955 Festival will be of special interest, because it is the first event of its kind having been held for 150 years. Picture showing a 19th century alphorn blower. Designer: Paul Boesch, Berne.

A 40 centimes stamp for the 25th International Automobile Show which will be held from March 10th to 20th, at Geneva. It will display the world's motor vehicles and perform an important function in Switzerland's economy. Picture showing the steering wheel of a car. Designer: Kurth Wirth, Berne.

Price of the complete set 75 centimes. The Philatelic Agency of the Direction General of PTT, in Berne provides collectors with mint stamps (singles, blocks, and sheets of 25), with collectors' sheets and leaflets (95 centimes each) and also with six different first day cancellations.

Also on February 15th a special stamp block consisting of a 10 and a 20 centimes stamp has been issued for the National Philatelic Exhibition to be held in the Comptoir Suisse Building at Lausanne in October. While the face value of this block amounts to 30 centimes only, collectors may order it at the official selling price of fr. 2.— (fr. 1.70 being an extra charge). First day cancellations are being provided in the usual way; in addition the organizing committee of the Exhibition will issue a special coloured envelope at the price of 20 centimes which may be obtained from the Philatelic Agency in Berne with or without the stamp block.

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ANGLO-SWISS TRADE AGREEMENT.

The trade agreement between Switzerland and the United Kingdom signed on January 24, 1954, expired on December 31st last. For technical reasons it was not possible to open new negotiations before that agreement ran out. Its period of validity was therefore provisionally extended for two months, through an exchange of letters between the Swiss Legation in London and the Board of Trade, so that there should be no gap without an agreement in force.

Negotiations took place in London from the 17th to the 28th January, 1955, between a Swiss delegation and representatives of Her Majesty's Government, which led to the conclusion of new arrangements for this year. Minister Schaffner, Director of the Division of Commerce, headed the Swiss delegation, but was able to attend the talks only in the second week. On the British side, the negotiations were conducted under the leadership of Mr. Christopher Jardine, of the Board of Trade, and later of Mr. H. O. Hooper, Under-Secretary at the Board of Trade.

The Swiss delegation secured certain improvements in the bilateral quotas, notably in the fields of precision instruments, dyestuffs and chocolate. At the same time some new quotas were obtained for Swiss goods not hitherto imported into the United Kingdom. A few concessions were also made on the Swiss side, but these are of little practical value at the moment, because British goods concerned are already liberalised within the framework of O.E.E.C.; the quotas in question would thus become operative only in case the Swiss Government were compelled to withdraw certain categories of goods from the O.E.E.C. liberalised list.

The lists of quotas for the importation of Swiss goods into the United Kingdom and of British goods into Switzerland may be seen at the Commercial Section of the Swiss Legation in London.

SWISS MERCANTILE SOCIETY.

A report of the Dinner and Dance of the Swiss Mercantile Society, which took place on Saturday, February 19th, at the Dorchester Hotel, will appear in our next issue.

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