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COMMERCIAL NEWS

Switzerland's foreign trade in May.

In comparison with the corresponding month in 1955, Swiss foreign trade, in May, increased to a very considerable extent. Imports exceeded, in value, 600 million francs and advanced by almost 25 per cent. As for exports, they attained nearly 500 million francs, i.e. ten per cent more. It should be noted that it is, above all, the Swiss machine industry, as well as the watchmaking industry, that have developed their sales abroad to the greatest extent. In regard to Swiss imports, it is also the purchases of machines, more especially motor cars, that is particularly noticeable.

Switzerland at the 1958 Belgian Universal Exhibition.

The Fourth Universal Exhibition to be organised by Belgium during the last seventy years, will open its doors in April, 1958. Most of the European countries have accepted the Belgian invitation, and Switzerland, in particular, will have a pavilion which is very well situated and which extends over a superficial area of more than 5,500 square metres.

A Swiss "Floating University".

At the University of Berne, there exists an Institute for Touristic Research, which is attached to the Faculty of Law. This Institute provides practical and theoretical instruction for the future directors of the Swiss Tourist Trade. Every year, it organises a scientific excursion, which helps the students to complete their practical training. This year, the young students from this Institute took part in a cruise, on the Swiss ship "Arosa Sun", thus making themselves familiar with the problems attached to the carrying of passengers across the High Seas, whilst at the same time attending lectures and visiting various European towns.

Swiss watch exports to the U.S.A. in front of new difficulties.

The protectionist circles in the United States are conducting a campaign against Swiss watchmaking, and trying to obtain from the Government new measures restricting the importation of Swiss watchmaking products. The representatives of the American watchmaking industry have once more put forward the argument of an American watchmaking industry

being indispensable for national security, before the Senatorial Inquiry Commission, although this thesis has already been refuted by the American specialists themselves. Not satisfied with the increase in Customs duties decreed two years ago, these same American protectionists circles are now clamouring for a new increase in Customs duties and a special tax of eight dollars to be imposed on watch movements of more than seventeen jewels. The Swiss watchmakers are earnestly hoping that the United States Government will not consent to these claims, which might seriously compromise the sale of Swiss watches on their most important market.

Egypt calls for Swiss Industry.

The Cairo authorities have decided to replace the trams by a network of trolley-busses. The transformation of the aerial network of electric cables of this town, which possesses more than two million inhabitants, has been entrusted to the Swiss firm of Kummler & Matter S.A., of Zurich, and this in spite of very strong foreign competition. As a matter of fact, this firm is the only one which, up to the present, has perfected a system for the suspension of the cables, which is entirely elastic. This transformation job will be started upon very shortly and the trolley-busses will be put into service in the autumn of 1957.

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