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TECHNICAL ITEMS

IN SWITZERLAND, GAINFULLY EMPLOYED PERSONS IN THE MINORITY

In Switzerland, there are more people without a lucrative activity than there are with. During the twenty years from 1950 to 1970, the growth in the working population was less than that of the total resident population. In 1970 47.9% of the whole of the population was gainfully employed, compared with 49.3% in 1960 and 49.8% in 1950. This means that there are 1,086 persons without a profession for every 1,000 persons with. The proportion of non-working inhabitants is higher still if only Swiss nationals are taken into consideration: for every 1,000 employed Swiss the number of Swiss without a professional activity increased from 1,040 in 1950 to 1,210 in 1970.

SWISS MEDICINES IN THE WESTERN WORLD

In 1972, Switzerland exported 1,342 billion francs' worth of pharmaceutical products, of which 299.5 million francs' worth was accounted for by vitamins, provitamins, hormones, antibiotics, etc., and 1,043 million francs' worth by medicines ready for use. A recent survey, based on OECD's customs statistics for 1971, shows the part played in international trade by Swiss pharmaceutical products. Switzerland is the biggest foreign supplier of

pharmaceutical products to the following countries: Germany (39% of all imports of pharmaceutical products), Portugal (28.6%), France (26.6%), Finland (18%). Switzerland comes second in the imports of the following countries: Greece (22%), Austria (21%), Norway (18%), Sweden (17.5%), Denmark (17.4%), Italy (13%) and Turkey (12.5%). Swiss pharmaceutical products are third in the imports of Great Britain (14%), Yugoslavia (14%), Iceland (13.6%), Holland (7.8%), Spain (7.1%), Canada (6%), Eire (4.5%). In Japan, Swiss medicines represent 9.6% of pharmaceutical imports and in the United States, with 3% of such imports, Switzerland comes fifth among the supplying countries.

REDUCED BALANCE SHEET GROWTH OF THE BIG SWISS BANKS

In 1972, most of the big Swiss banks showed a marked slowing up in the growth of their balance sheets. The Union Bank of Switzerland's balance sheet total rose by 7% (1971: 26%) to Fr. 40.7 billion, that of the Swiss Bank Corporation also by 7% (28%) to Fr. 38.6 billion and that of the Swiss Credit Bank by only 2% (11%) to 31.7 billion francs. On the other hand, the balance sheet total of the Swiss Volksbank increased 14% (14%) to 8.6 billion and that of the Leu Bank 15% (10%) to 1.8 billion. The average growth of the 45 cantonal, regional and savings banks whose results

for 1972 have already been published amounted to a little over 11%. The relatively weaker growth in total assets of the three big banks is mainly due to the international currency crises, which seriously affected the foreign business of these banks. The domestic credit operations of the cantonal, regional and savings banks have also increased at a much stronger rate than those of the three big banks.

THE SWISS ALMOST AS RICH AS THE AMERICANS

According to the gross national product per head of the population, the Swiss during the last three years have not only outdistanced Canada and Sweden and jumped from fourth to second place, but have also become as rich as the Americans. The German daily newspaper *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung* published a table showing that in 1960 Switzerland's gross national product per head of the population amounted to 62% of the United States' level and to 63.1% in 1970, making Switzerland fourth among all countries. But during the last three years, notable for their recurring currency crises, Switzerland has made a great leap forward: her gross national product per head of the population is almost equal to that of the Americans, now amounting to 98.8% of their figure. Switzerland now comes second. West Germany has risen from eighth place in 1960 (48% of the American gross

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national product) to third in 1973 (93.5%); Austria from 12th (34.2%) to tenth (62.3%); Japan from 14th (18.2%) to 12th (54.3%), while Great Britain has fallen from seventh place (51.3%) to 13th (42.8%) and Canada from third (65.3%) to sixth (75.1%). These figures should however be viewed with a certain caution, the calculations being somewhat distorted by variations in the rates of exchange.

A "EUROSTAR" FOR A SWISS FIRM

A Swiss firm, the Klausfelder Graphic Arts Co. at Vevey (Vaud, Switzerland) has just been awarded a "Eurostar" at the prizegiving ceremony of the European Packaging Competition. A "Eurostar" is the top award bestowed on packaging with characteristics that have been considered particularly effective by the jury composed of representatives of nine countries. It is more than nine years since a Swiss firm last won this distinction. The award-winning packaging is the Tobler chocolate factory's "Grisettes" chocolate box, which is printed in four colours with bronze-gold and embossed work on Cellchromo carton. The packaging is laminated and a sheet of polypropylene film is used for a window allowing the product inside to be seen. It should be mentioned that, particularly struck by this original production, the jury of the Swiss Packaging Competition had already awarded it an Oscar.

FOR WINE-LOVERS, THE "VINOMETER"

Connoisseurs are well aware that

wine should be drunk at a certain temperature; a few degrees over or under are enough to affect the bouquet of a great wine. Thanks to the "Vinometer" designed and made by a measuring instruments factory at Crissier (Vaud, Switzerland), it is now a simple matter to serve every wine at its optimum temperature. This bi-metallic wine thermometer is very easy to use; all one has to do, after removing the cork from the bottle, is to insert the end of the "Vinometer" into the neck until it comes in direct contact with the wine, and compare the temperature indicated on the dial with the optimum temperature suggested on the side of the instrument for the wine to be drunk. If the wine is too cool, the bottle must be placed in a warm room, and if it is too warm, in a bucket filled with ice or cold water until the temperature is exactly right. This instrument, which is presented in an attractive gift wrapping, will delight all wine-lovers.

SULZER TAKES PART IN THE CONVERSION OF A CANADIAN HEAVY WATER PLANT

The Atomic Energy of Canada Limited (AECL) heavy water plant at Glace Bay (Nova Scotia, Canada), at present undergoing transformation, will shortly be put into service again. The Swiss firm of Sulzer Bros. Co. Ltd. (Winterthur, Zurich) has been commissioned by Canatom Mon-Max, Montreal, to supply the jackets with sets of Sulzer linings for the final stages of the heavy water distillation columns, which are to be installed in towers about 6½ ft.

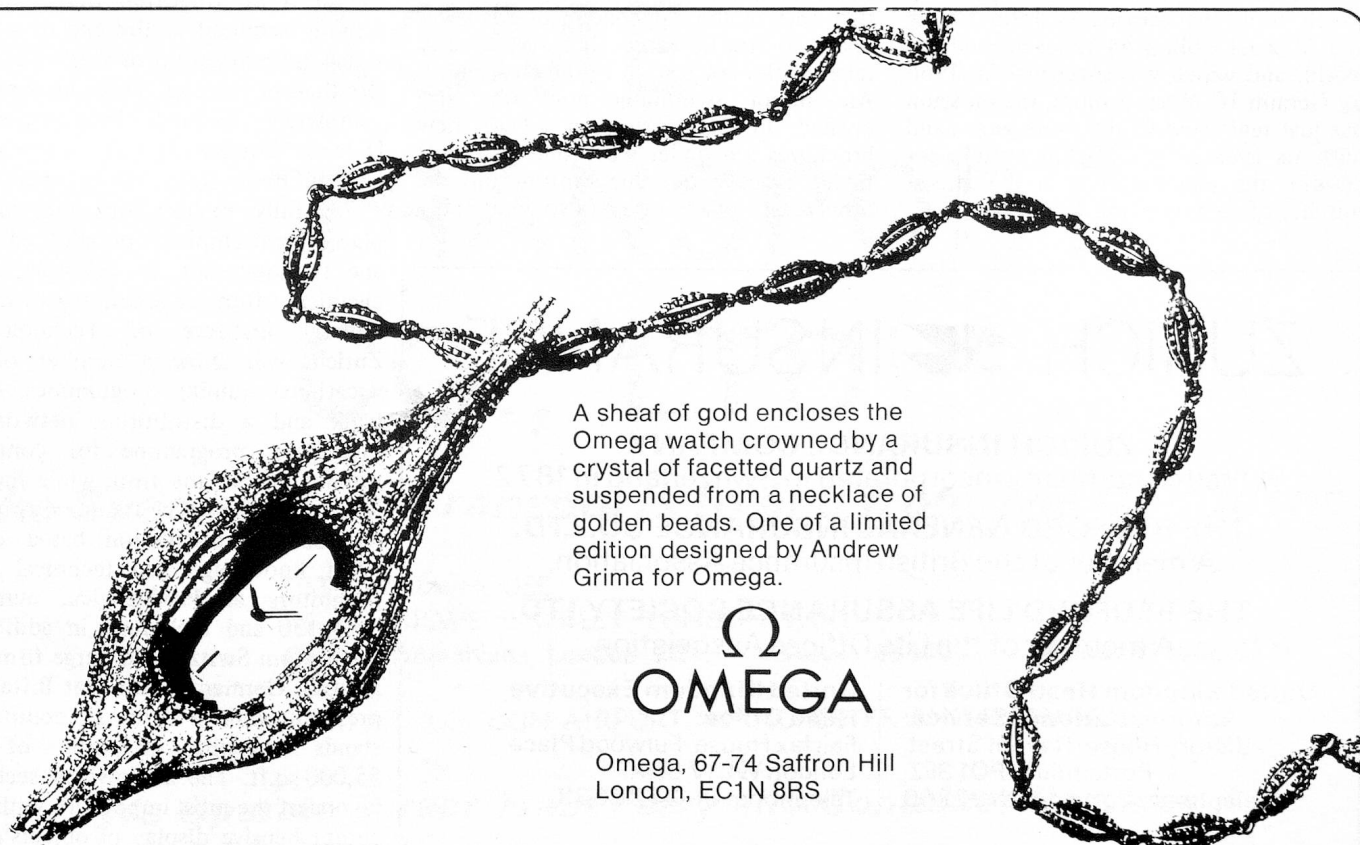
in diameter and 180 ft. high. The annual output is about 400 tons of heavy water, which will be used for various nuclear power stations. After searching trials, AECL reached the conclusion that the Sulzer lining makes it possible to reduce the number of distillation columns from five to two. As the towers contain large quantities of heavy water, costing about 60,000 dollars a ton, this reduction in the number of columns required will result in large savings.

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