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BUSINESS NEWS

REGULATING DEVICE FOR SOLAR HEATING

A Swiss firm has produced a solar heating regulating device. By operating a pump for the circulation of the heating liquid, a valve and the distribution system, it makes it possible to control the temperature of the collector, the storage and the recuperation of the heat. The device comes in two versions: Solartherm I and II. They each consist of a case equipped with a sensor for the solar collector and another for the tank. Solartherm I makes it possible to set the temperature of the collector between 0 and 100°C as well as the difference (0 to 30°) to be maintained between the latter and the tank. In the same way "alarm" temperatures can be set. As soon as they are reached, working contacts open or close. Solartherm II has the additional advantage of making it possible to set the temperature of the storage tank.

WATCH FOR COLLECTORS

In the purest tradition of Geneva watchmaker-jewellers, a Swiss stylist, Gérald Genta, has just completed, after over 2 years' work, a gold watch decorated with diamonds. More a work of art than a mere object for measuring the time, it is valued at one and a half million Swiss francs.

AGRO-INDUSTRIAL SCHEME FOR THE CAMEROONS

The Swiss company, Universal Engineering and Finance Corporation (affiliated to the Swiss Bank Corporation) has just signed a basic agreement with the government of the United Republic of the Cameroons for the Bertoua Batouri agro-industrial scheme. Concerning the Province of the East, it comprises several stages. In a first stage, plantations of peanuts, other oleaginous seeds and rotation crops will be developed, both at plantation level and as regards the agro-industry as a whole. Later it will build an oil complex for peanuts and oleaginous seeds, as well as plant for the processing of by-products. The output capacity will be dependent upon agricultural conditions and market requirements.

ROLEX AWARDS FOR ENTERPRISE

The Swiss firm Rolex Watches Co. Ltd. has announced the launching of the second "Rolex Awards for Enterprise". In 1981, an international jury will select five prizewinners who have succeeded in proving the value of their research, its feasibility and likelihood of completion, in the three following sectors: applied sciences and inventions, exploration and discovery, the environment. For the first "Awards", entries were received from several thousand scientists on the five continents.

NEW: THE CART THAT CLIMBS STEPS

An ingenious new cart can climb steps with a load of 200 kg without any effort at all. Based on the lever principle, the "Cabo-Stairway-Boy", of Swiss invention, is used for example for transporting pieces of furniture even if the latter are bigger than the actual area of the cart. It is small and can be folded up after use for easy storage. It is available in two versions: lightweight for handling weights of up to 100 kg and a heavier model which can transport 200 kg. In addition, various accessories make it possible to widen the range of applications of the cart.

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BRIEF SURVEY OF THE SWISS CHEMICAL INDUSTRY IN 1978

For the number of its employees and the volume of its exports, the chemical industry is one of the most important sectors in the Swiss economy. Representing 3.9 per cent of industrial companies in 1978, this branch numbered 358 firms; nine of them had over 1,000 employees. The total number of employees amounted to 61,502 (9 per cent of all industrial personnel), 26 per cent of whom were employed in research. As the home market is quite small, the chemical industry exports 80 per cent of its output, which represented 8,444 million francs in 1978 (20.2 per cent of Switzerland's exports); 64.5 per cent was destined for Europe. As Switzerland's soil is poor in raw materials, they have to be imported. Thus imports of chemical products (2.6 million tonnes) weighed almost four times as much as exports (0.7 million tonnes), even though the value of exports was greater than that of imports (4,321 million francs, i.e. 10.2 per cent of Switzerland's imports). In 1978, the average cost per kilo imported was Sw.Fr. 1.65, while the average price per kilo exported amounted to Sw.Fr. 12.22. Fifty-five per cent of the chemical products imported are raw materials

and base products, while all the chemical products exported are finished products and intermediary substances for processing abroad. The breakdown of the main products was as follows: pharmaceutical products 41.1 per cent, organic products 17.9 per cent, dyestuffs 14.6 per cent.

IFM AND POWTECH

The International Handling Fair (IHF) will be held in the halls of the Swiss Industries Fair in Basle for the fifth time from 4th to 12th March, 1980. The Fair covers twelve specialised fields: cranes and heavy lifting equipment, continuous handling devices, aerial cableways, handling carts, mobile cranes, vehicles for rails, lifts and elevators, series lifting appliances, accessories, storage techniques, specialised literature and, for the first time, service equipment and ski-lifts. In addition, demonstrations will be given of the use of the different appliances and equipment. The emphasis will be placed on rationalisation.

In the same premises, from 4th to 7th March, in conjunction with IHF, the 6th International Exhibition devoted to the Technology of Powder and Solids in Bulk will be held.

INTERNATIONAL TOURISM AND VACATIONS EXHIBITION

For the twenty-second time, the International Tourism and Vacations Exhibition will be opening its gates at the Palais de Beaulieu in Lausanne (Switzerland) from 15th to 23rd March 1980. Among the various sectors, which will occupy an area of some 250,000 sq. ft., mention should be made in particular of the following: boating, swimming pools, camping and caravanning, tourism by countries and regions. In addition, as every other year, there will be an exhibition featuring both movie-cameras and still-cameras sold on the Swiss market as well as a display of bicycles and motor cycles.

INTERIDEX 80 IN BASLE

The International Exhibition on the Location Development of Industry and Service Organizations, Industrial Cooperation and the Exchange of New Technologies, INTERIDEX, will take place for the third time next year. This time, it is to be held as part of the Swiss Industries Fair in Basle, which will open its gates from 19th to 28th April 1980. The exhibitors are local, regional or national institutions for the promotion of economic development together with private companies.



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