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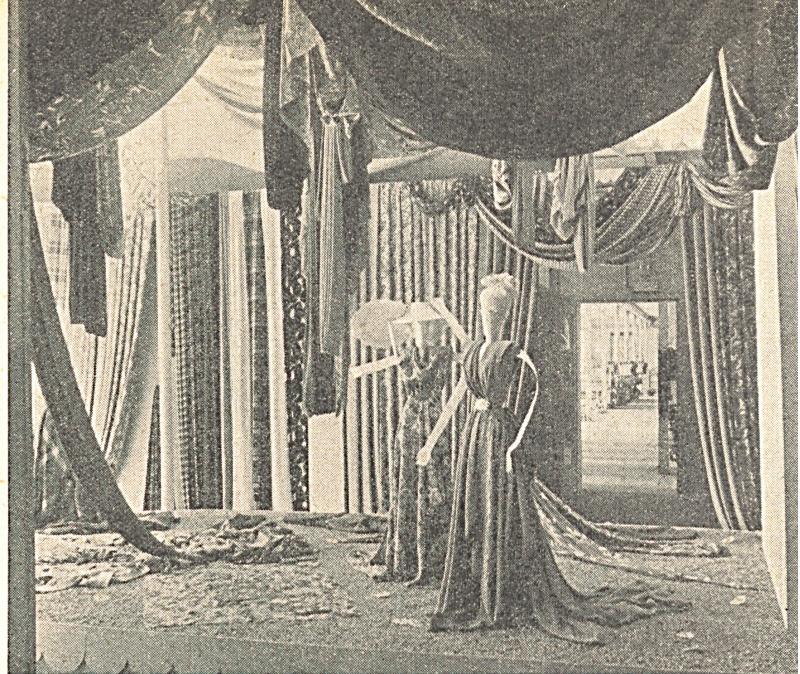
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Two Jubilees in the Silk Industry

LAST summer, two of Switzerland's leading silk manufacturers celebrated their centenary anniversary : *Seidenwarenfabrik vorm. Edwin Naef A.-G.* and *Seidenstoffwebereien vorm. Gebrüder Naef A.-G.*, both of Zurich. The similarity in the names of these two firms is not due to mere chance ; both have sprung from the same origin, the silk weaving mills founded by Johann Rudolf Naef in 1846. About 40 years later, the founder's two sons decided to run the firm's mills as separate concerns.

Both firms celebrated their centenary in which they invited their staff to take part. Seidenstoffwebereien organized an interesting retrospective exhibition to which about 100 guests were invited and taken also on a tour of the Affoltern mills near Zurich ; the visit was followed by a dinner offered by the Management. Our illustration shows a corner of the exhibition. In our next number, we shall have occasion to deal at greater length with the important part these hundred-year old firms have played in the development of the Swiss textile industry.



The Zurich Silk Conditioning House

has celebrated its 100th anniversary this year. In a very fine centenary publication, Mr. Hans Jenny has not only evoked those 100 years in the story of the Zurich silk industry, a story with which the House is closely connected, but he takes us back to yet earlier times and gives a most complete picture of the industry as a whole, the origins of which can be traced to the year 1237, when the first deal in raw silk was concluded between Zurich and Como.

After a complete decline in the early years of the XVth century, the silk trade and industry revived and flourished in Zurich, developing in most extraordinary fashion, particularly during the latter half of the XIXth century. It was at this period that Zurich manufacturers and merchants founded the « Conditioning House », a step they were obliged to take as a result of the expansion of their trade ; previously, conditioning had been operated by foreign establishments (the first to be founded being that of Turin in 1724).

Silk is, in effect, very hygroscopic and its weight varies quite a lot according to the humidity contained in the air. This fact must be taken into consideration when any deal is made, if later claims are to be avoided. The only method which can give every guarantee in this respect is the process known as « conditioning ». The operation consists in reducing samples to absolute dryness in order to determine the proportion of water present ; the theoretical weight of the silk can thus be calculated on the

basis of a water content of 11 %, an international standard.

The Zurich Conditioning House grew very rapidly and was occupied chiefly with local and transit custom — the certificates it delivers are recognized internationally — but the first World War, the economic depression of some 15 years ago, the recent years of war and, too, the great vogue for new synthetic fabrics, all proved extremely prejudicial to this enterprise. The Zurich silk industry has nevertheless partly regained its importance and with it, it is permissible to expect, the Conditioning House — an institution so essential to the industry — will continue its profitable activity. In the space of one hundred years, about 75 million kilos of silk have been conditioned by this House which also handles discharging operations, various standard tests (resistance, torsion, and so forth) and transport of the goods. Admitting that the loss of weight has averaged 0.7 %, theoretically the weight of the goods handled has been diminished by 525,000 kilos, which at an average price of S. fr. 60.— per kilo means a saving of 31.5 million S. fr. for the buyers, at a cost of 7 million francs.

The space at our disposal obliges us to close this brief survey of the interesting centenary publication mentioned above, with its wealth of details, remarkable clarity and excellent presentation. We nevertheless hope to have occasion to refer again later to the activity of the Zurich Conditioning House.

CH.

Index des annonceurs et des maisons mentionnées dans la partie rédactionnelle

Index of Advertisers and Firms contributing to the Editorial Features of this Number

Indice de los anunciantes y de las casas mencionadas en las páginas de texto

Verzeichnis der Inserenten und der im redaktionellen Teil erwähnten Firmen

BAS ÉLASTIQUES, SOUTIEN-GORGE, GAINES — RUBBER STOCKINGS, BRASSIERES, GIRDLES — MEDIAS ELÁSTICAS, SOSTENES, FAJAS — GUMMISTRÜMPFE, BÜSTEN-HALTER, SCHLÜPFER	
M. Biedermann & Cie S. A., Zurich	75, 90
Walter Kundt, Elgg	24
Paul Virchaux, St-Blaise	87
BOUTONS — BUTTONS — BOTONES — KNÖPFE	
Grämiger Frères S. A., Bazenheid	107
Kaspar Humbel, Uetikon a. See	80
Rix S. A., Zurich	107
BRODERIES ET DENTELLES — EMBROIDERIES AND LACES — BORDADOS Y ENCAJES — STICKEREIEN UND SPITZEN	
Altoco S. A., St-Gall	94
Emile Anderegg S. A., Weinfelden	52, 89
Bischoff & Muller S. A., St-Gall	49, 97
Eisenhut & Cie, Gais	52, 98
Forster Willi & Cie, St-Gall	96
Robert Halter S. A., St-Gall	91
Theodor Locher, St-Gall	96
E. Mettler-Muller S. A., Rorschach	52, 91
L. B. Meyer & Cie, St-Gall	50
Jul. Michel & Cie, Zurich	95
A. Naef & Cie, Flawil	10, 50
Reichenbach & Cie, St-Gall	53
Jacob Rohner S. A., Rebstein	54
Saller & Schoensleben, St-Gall	91
B. Schoenenberger & Cie, St-Gall	32
Walter Schrank & Cie, St-Gall	94
Ed. Sturzenegger S. A., St-Gall	94
S. A. ci-devant Tobler Frères & Cie, Teufen	101
Hugo Wachs & Cie, St-Gall	
COLORANTS — DYESTUFFS — COLORANTES — FARBSTOFFE	
Ciba, Société Anonyme, Bâle	IV
CONFECTION — READY-MADE CLOTHES — CONFECCION — KONFEKTION	
CHEMISES — SHIRTS — CAMISAS — HEMDEN	
Adler S. A., Genève	92
Emile Anderegg S. A., Weinfelden	89
Karl Bruderlin, Gelterkinden	90
Arthur Guex S. A., Zurich	88
Franz Heusser, Zurich	28, 74
Kleinberger & Cie, St-Gall	28
E. Kneubühler, Zofingen	108
Walter Kriesemer & Cie, St-Gall	88
F. Kurt S. A., Olten	86
Hermann Nettelstroth, Olten	21
Respolco S. A., Zurich	108
Sanco S. A., Zurich	105
Schaub & Cie, Zofingen	103
Schellenberg, Sax & Cie S. A., Trubbach	105
S. A. Jacob Scherrer, Romanshorn	87
Société des Ateliers Modernes S. A., Lausanne	103
CRAVATES — NECKTIES — CORBATAS — KRAWATTEN	
Ametco S. A., Zurich	30
Ferrin, Valon & Cie, Genève	67, 99
Hans Kägi & Cie, Zurich	92
S. Kirschner, Zurich	67, 108
Charles Malignon, Genève	67, 84
Anthime Mouley S. A., Genève	99
Ernest Reinhard, Zurich	108
E. Vonwiller, Zurich	105
A. & H. Zivi S. A., Genève	32, 67
ÉCHARPES ET CARRÉS — SQUARES AND SCARVES — CUADRADOS Y ECHARPES — SCHÄRPNEN UND VIERECKTÜCHER	
Ametco S. A., Zurich	30
F. Blumer & Cie, Schwanden	15
Albin Breitenmoser S. A., Appenzell	98
Rud. Eichenberger, Bâle	68
Ferrin, Valon & Cie, Genève	99
Filtex S. A., St-Gall	8
Christian Fischbacher Co., St-Gall	14
J. Kreier-Baenziger's Erben, St-Gall	55
Anthime Mouley S. A., Genève	99
Sager & Cie, Dürrenäsch	103
OUATE ET OUATINE — WADDING AND COTTON-WOOL LINING — HUATA Y HUATINA — WATTE UND WATTELINE	
Edouard Grossmann-Appert, Thalwil	106
RUBANS — RIBBONS — CINTAS — BÄNDER	
De Bary & Cie S. A., Bâle	
Sager & Cie, Dürrenäsch	17
W. Sarasin & Cie S. A., Bâle	103
Senn & Cie S. A., Bâle	102
Vischer & Cie, Bâle	24
TAPISSERIES DE STYLE	
Striga S. A., Bâle	100
	24

TISSUS DE COTON, LAINE, SOIE, RAYONNE ET FIBRANNE			
— COTTON, WOOL, SILK, RAYON AND STAPLE-FIBRE FA-BRICS — TEJIDOS DE ALGODON, LANA, SEDA, RAYON Y FIBRANA — STOFFE AUS BAUMWOLLE, WOLLE, SEIDE, KUNSTSEIDE, ZELLWOLLE			
Albrecht & Morgen, St-Gall	6	Paul Schafheitle & Cie, Zurich	32
Ametco S. A., Zurich	30	R. Scheller & Cie, Zurich	8
Emile Anderegg S. A., Weinfelden	89	Schlegel & Cie, Bâle	59
Appenzeller-Herzog & Cie, Staefa-Zurich	12	Schneidinger Frères, Zurich	26
Weberlei Azmoos	66	Robt Schwarzenbach & Cie, Zurich	3
Jacob Baenziger S. A., St-Gall	12	Schwob & Cie S. A., Berne	28
S.-J. Bloch Fils & Cie S. A., Zurich	59, 81	Tissages Réunis Sernftal, Engl	66
Burgauer & Cie S. A., St-Gall	25	Siber & Wehrli S. A., Zurich	2
Emar S. A., Zurich	81	Tissage Sirnach, Sirnach	22
Les Fils de Adolf Fenner, Zurich	26	Stehli & Cie, Zurich	9
Filtex S. A., St-Gall	8, 64	Stoffel & Cie, St-Gall	30, 56
Christian Fischbacher Co., St-Gall	14	S. A. Stunzi fils, Horgen	79
Gattiker & Steinmann, Richterswil	4	Taco S. A., Zurich	7
Charles Gorini, St-Gall	98	Hugo Wachs & Cie, St-Gall	101
Grieder & Cie, Zurich	29	Wagner & Cie, Gelterkinden	17
Berthold Guggenheim, Zurich	22, 59	Weisbrod-Zürcher Söhne, Hausen a. A.	12
Les Fils de Guggenheim-Einstein, Zurich	26	M. Weiss & Cie S. A., Zurich	30
H. Gut & Cie S. A., Zurich	27	Baumwollspinnerei & -Weberei, Wettingen	21
Hugo Gutmann, Zurich	84		
J. U. Gygli, Zug	25		
Haas & Cie, Zurich	29		
Hausammann & Cie, Winterthour	61		
Heer & Cie S. A., Thalwil	62		
Hirzel & Cie S. A., Zurich	65		
Honegger & Cie S. A., St-Gall	57, II		
Max Kirchheimer, Zurich	99		
J. Kreier-Baenziger's Erben, St-Gall	55		
Erwin Landolt S. A., Zurich	84		
Mettler & Cie S. A., St-Gall	1, 60		
S.A. A. & R. Moos, Weisslingen	16, 63		
Fabrique de soieries ci-devant Edwin Naef S. A., Zurich	58		
Tissages de Soieries ci-devant Näf Frères S. A., Zurich	18, 100		
Osteretag, Hausamann & Cie, Zurich	100		
Palma & Cie, Zurich	31		
Rayonseta S. A., Zurich	31, 61		
Reichenbach & Cie, St-Gall	10		
Sager & Cie, Dürrenäsch	103		
Gottfried Schaerer, Zurich	10		
		TRESSES DE PAILLE — STRAW BRAIDS —	
		TRENZAS DE PAJA — STROHGEFLECHTE	
		Association argovienne des fabricants de tresses de paille, Wohlen	82
		M. Bruggisser & Cie S. A., Wohlen	70
		Georges Meyer & Cie S. A., Wohlen	71, 83
		Staeger & Cie S. A., Villmergen	72
		Otto Steinmann & Cie S. A., Wohlen	69, 77
		TRICOTS ET JERSEYS — KNITWEAR AND JERSEYS —	
		PRENDAS DE PUNTO Y JERSEYS — TRICOTS UND JERSEYS	
		Ametco S. A., Zurich	30
		Calida S. A., Sursee	89
		Egger, Eisenhut & Cie, Aarwangen	101
		Hochuli & Cie, Safenwil	90
		H. Kiene, Kreuzlingen	85
		Tricotage Suisse Lehmann S. A., Langenthal	86
		Lion & Cie, Kreuzlingen	89
		Manufactures du Bas Réunies S. A., Flawil-St-Gall	80
		Johann Müller S. A., Strengelbach	100
		Ruegger & Cie, Zofingue	88
		Ruepp & Cie S. A., Sarmenstorf	73
		Schaub & Cie, Zofingue	103
		Yvel S. A., Zurich	87

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The film « The Rise of a World Industry » illustrates strawbraid manufacturing processes employed in the Wohlen industry. « La fibranne, produit suisse » is a film illustrating the manufacture of synthetic textile fibres, namely, rayon and staple fibre, and their possibilities of utilisation. The film « Modern Magic » gives a survey of the dressing and finishing of textiles in an important factory. Ask for booking conditions.

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