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Economic News

A centenary: Sirnach Weaving Mills

Although somewhat belatedly, we wish to call attention to the centenary, which was celebrated last year, of the Sirnach Weaving Mills, an important Swiss cotton concern. After working for 17 years as a loom mechanic in a weaving establishment, J.-H. Zweifel-Schmid founded an independent concern of his own in 1857, with the assistance of two associates. The firm bought the old mill belonging to a secularised monastery, along with the water rights, in order to undertake the manufacture of cotton fabrics. The new company had its share of ups and downs, which are described in the interesting history of the firm written by Dr. Leo Weiss of Zurich at the request of the board of directors. This finely illustrated work tells the story of the first century of this Thurgau firm, from its modest beginning down to the present. Today, the Sirnach Weaving Mills Co. Ltd. (Weberei Sirnach A.-G.) is a modern firm of average size, with a completely rationalised production carried out on automatic machines of recent construction.

Rabbits for hat-making

The firm of Le Garenne Co. Ltd., formerly of Basle, has moved to Monthei (canton of the Valais), where it has built a new factory, with the assistance of the Valaisan Office for Economic and Industrial Research. This concern, which employs a hundred workers and office staff, manufactures felt hoods for hats from rabbit and hare fur. These products are supplied to hat manufacturers and milliners, 80 % of the firm's output being exported, particularly to the Scandinavian countries.

The inauguration of Le Garenne Co. Ltd.'s new factory was the occasion for a reception which was attended by representatives of the local authorities, clients of the firm, business friends, etc. We take pleasure in extending our best wishes to this concern for a successful continuation of its activity in its new premises.

Charme, the pocket diary for the discerning woman

This attractive little diary comes to us each year in the autumn as the leaves begin to fall, as if to prepare us for the mixed feelings of nostalgia and joy that always mark the passing of the year. Beautifully presented, in its cloth or leather cover with a real St. Gall embroidery galloon as a bookmarker, it offers in addition to all the useful features of a good diary (calendar, pages for addresses, important information, etc.), the charm of amusing texts, whose theme this year is music, and more particularly opera. *Charme* is available in English, French and German versions.

(Charme Publications, Zollikon/Zurich.)

Smart underwear

This autumn, for the first time, the firm of *Spiesshofer & Braun* of Zurzach presented a collection of corsets, belts, girdles, panti-girdles (called « corsi-dress »), pants, brassières, beachwear, etc., to its clients and the press at a fashion show in Zurich. Without going into details concerning this very rich and varied collection, we should like to call attention to the success of the « Triumph » range which is specially designed with a view to giving women a silhouette in keeping with the latest fashion. Let us also mention that the firm of Spiesshofer & Braun, which uses many St. Gall fabrics and embroideries in the manufacture of its products, also makes its own towelling fabrics in sun-bleached cotton, under the trade mark « Solfina ».

Swiss wollens.

We wish once more to call the attention of our readers to the interesting periodical « *Lainages Suisses* », number 14 of which has just come out. As usual, this publication contains a large number of illustrations (in black and white and in colour) of Swiss-made woollen fabrics, as well as several pages devoted to making the industry better known and a number of articles describing different phases of this branch of Swiss textiles, which is still not widely enough known although its products are equal in quality to those of its foreign competitors. This well-documented and well-presented review is published by the press department of the Swiss Association of the Wool Textile Industry on behalf of the Worsted Weaving Mills, Cloth Mills and Blanket Manufacturers belonging to the afore-mentioned association.

Ed. Sturzenegger Co. Ltd. 1883-1958

Three quarters of a century ago, Edward Sturzenegger, an embroidery designer by trade who ran his own designing shop, founded a concern for the manufacture and export of embroidery and lingerie at St. Gall. The year of its foundation, the firm exhibited its products at the Swiss National Exhibition in Zurich; this was in 1883. Since then, the firm has developed continuously. At first it specialised in the manufacture of embroidered dresses, which were the fashion at the time, and the embroideries and handicrafts of Appenzell for which it soon won great fame.

Alongside manufacture, the firm of Sturzenegger developed its sales and created retail stores selling embroidery and lingerie not only in the bigger towns and tourist centres of Switzerland but also abroad. Today it still has its own shops in Zurich, Basle, Berne, St. Gall, Lucerne, Interlaken, Montreux, St. Moritz and Zermatt. An export department handles relations with foreign markets, in which the fame of St. Gall embroideries is well established.

Ed. Sturzenegger, the founder of the firm, can be considered as a pioneer of the Swiss embroidery industry. Today, seventy-five years after its foundation, the firm employs some 160 office staff, women workers and sales women as well as a large number of persons doing piece work of different kinds in the home, such as making embroidery, ready-to-wear clothing, etc. The manufacturing programme, which is quite wide, comprises only first quality articles, which maintain and spread the good name and prestige of the firm.