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COMMERCIAL NEWS

Switzerland's foreign trade in February.

Swiss foreign trade, in February, was satisfactory, in spite of the fact that it showed a slight decline in comparison with the preceding month. But, this was merely a seasonal decrease, for, compared with the corresponding period in 1956, imports pursued their upward trend and advance by about 40 per cent. Switzerland's unfavourable trade balance tends to become more accentuated, in view of the fact that exports, in February, only totalled some 550 million francs, as against more than 700 million francs' worth of imports.

New Air Agreement between Switzerland and Holland.

An Agreement has just been signed at the Hague concerning the modification of the Air Agreement existing between Switzerland and Holland. According to this new additional Protocol, "Swissair", the Swiss national air navigation company, will not only be able to continue to utilise the European air lines leading to the Netherlands, but will also be able to work the lines having for their destination, Canada, the United States, Central America and Chili, with the right to make use of Dutch territory as stopping places on their flights. By way of reciprocity, the Dutch company will also be able to open up new lines and make use of the Swiss inter-Continental airports as stopping places.

Important realisation of Swiss industry.

Genevese industry has just delivered to Spain, a synchronous compensator, which constitutes a machine of very considerable volume. The machine in question is a generator of reactive energy, which will make it possible to resolve, in an economic fashion, problems connected with the transport of electric power over great distances. It ensures moreover, the regulation and the stabilisation of tension. This machine weighs 175 tons and its maximum capacity amounts to 70,000 kVA, which is the highest

capacity attained, up to the present, in Switzerland, and the second highest on the world plane. The Swiss firm proved successful in carrying off this order, in the face of some twenty competitors.

Swiss medals are appreciated all over the world.

During the course of 1956, Iraq put into commission two hydro-electric dams, built in the vicinity of Bagdad, one on the Euphrates and the other on the Tigris. Swiss industry was called upon to collaborate in the realisation of this project, in various ways. Mention must also be made of the fact that it is a Swiss factory in Le Locle which has been entrusted by the Government of the Iraq Kingdom to strike the medals which are intended as a recompense for the executive staff and the workers who collaborated in the building of the two important works. The same Swiss firm has also received similar orders, connected with the inauguration of other construction jobs carried out not only in Iraq, but also in other countries. The Swiss firm in question has won great renown, throughout the world, for striking medals of all kinds, commemorating sporting and other events.

Switzerland's foodstuff industry has won a battle.

A very difficult problem has been solved, for the first time, owing to the efforts and research work carried out jointly by five important Swiss firms

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belonging to the foodstuff branch. They have succeeded in perfecting an entire scale of saltless foodstuffs, which will now make it possible to follow a strict diet, under medical control, but, henceforth, with the help of varied dishes possessing an agreeable taste. This new success on the part of Swiss industry, places the country in the van, in the domain of dietetics products.

Important international exhibition to be held this Spring in Lausanne.

The most important international show that has ever been organised in Switzerland, within the framework of fairs and exhibitions, will be held in the vast buildings of the Swiss National Autumn Fair in Lausanne, from the 1st to the 16th June, 1957. This will be the "GRAPHIC 57", which will gather together more than 200 participants, both Swiss and foreign. This show will present to the specialists and the laymen, a view of the whole picture of what has been realised and invented in the graphical sphere of the entire world. In one section will be found the various machines and equipment required for printing on paper, on cardboard, and on plastic materials, and also for their transformation into articles of every kind. Visitors will be able to see the application of electronics in the domain of spotting and measuring colours. The section devoted to paper and ink, will also exhibit some novelties paper, which is the classical basis for printing, and is replaced in certain cases, by plastic materials, or by mixed bases, which combine paper with plastic material. The section specialising in finished products will group together a number of very diverse creations: printed matter of all kinds, packing material, books, magazines and bindings. Several sections, possessing a thematic character and, more especially, being of a general interest, will be devoted to the best productions of the art of publicity, to the preparation of and the printing of a daily newspaper and to the different kinds of work executed in a printing establishment. The Pavilion of scientific research will be important and most educative. Finally, one section of the exhibition will be dedicated to technical training and will strive to draw the attention of the young people to the interesting aspects of the graphical trades.

Development of telephone in Switzerland.

Calculations have made it possible to establish the fact that, on an average, every Swiss telephones

seventeen times per year to a foreign country, which certainly constitutes a world record; the Belgian, for instance, telephones outside the borders of his country ten times a year, the Dutchman nine times, and the Frenchman seven times. At the present time, only six of the nine hundred or so central stations on the Swiss telephone network, do not, as yet, function automatically. Today, automatic functioning extends also to international communications. In certain Swiss border regions, it is already possible to dial a number directly beyond the frontier. Telephone subscribers in Switzerland are now able to call Paris, London, Amsterdam, Stockholm and other important European cities, by means of semi-automatic system.

Important new Institution founded on Switzerland.

The growing complexity to be observed in economic life, as well as the necessity which exists, to strive for a constant improvement in the methods employed for the management of big business undertakings, render more and more acute the problem of the proper training of the executive staff. It would therefore seem only proper to mention the initiative taken by one of the principal Swiss firms belonging to the foodstuffs branch, possessing business relations in every part of the world. This firm recently established a Foundation, which is to run a school, in Lausanne, having a post-university character, for the training of executive staffs in business undertakings. To start with, the organisers have succeeded in ensuring for themselves the co-operation of some professors from the American Harvard University, which has a "School for Business Administration", possessing a world-wide reputation. The courses of this new Institute for the study of methods of business administration are placed under the patronage of the University of Lausanne, and are to begin next September.

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