

Zeitschrift: The Swiss observer : the journal of the Federation of Swiss Societies in the UK

Herausgeber: Federation of Swiss Societies in the United Kingdom

Band: - (1960)

Heft: 1375

Rubrik: Commercial news

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COMMERCIAL NEWS

50th anniversary of Dubendorf-Zurich aerodrome

The fiftieth anniversary of the establishment of the Dubendorf aerodrome has just been celebrated in Zurich. It was on 22nd October 1910 that the airfield was inaugurated by a first flying meeting, which marked the beginning of aeronautics in Zurich. The aerodrome at Dubendorf contributed towards the development of Swiss civil and military aviation, until the day arrived when it was too small for the requirements of commercial air traffic, when it was replaced, in 1948, by the Kloten-Zurich airport. Dubendorf has, nevertheless, continued to function as a military airfield.

Film studio in Zurich

For the past quarter of a century the Swiss film production industry, although still modest in size, has felt the need for a studio for the shooting of films, and although various projects have been elaborated, these have not been realised up to now. It is probable that this deficiency will be remedied very shortly, as a company has just been formed in Zurich for the purpose of building such a studio. This is to comprise two large halls, of 65 by 98 feet, and all the necessary ancillary buildings. The building of this studio is estimated at 3.5 million Swiss francs. The requisite share-capital of 2 millions, contributed by various groups which partly represent film producers, is in Swiss hands to the extent of 70 per cent.

Success of the Woodwork Fair at Basle

The Second International Woodwork Fair, which was held on the premises of the Swiss Industries Fair in Basle, from 1st to 9th October 1960, was visited by nearly 24,000 persons interested in woodworking. The 154 exhibitors who showed something like two thousand machines, as well as a large variety of tools, accessories and equipment, in six large rooms, with a superficial area of 15,600 square yards, stated that, on the whole, they were satisfied with the business done and the contacts established. The Third International Woodwork Fair is to take place again in Basle in the Spring of 1962.

Royal Patronage for a little-known Swiss industry

A Swiss firm which manufactures fancy paper for the wrapping of presents recently received an order from the Royal Court in Great Britain. This order, coming as it does from a sphere which by tradition is

known to appreciate good taste and quality, is a great compliment paid to the excellence of the products. Since it first started to export its products, ten years ago, this firm has succeeded in introducing its specialities in 48 countries, on all the continents of the globe. This is really quite a remarkable achievement, considering that the articles are subject to heavy customs duties. It was in 1930 that this firm began to produce this paper for wrapping Christmas and other presents, goffered and printed in as many as six colours, with gold or silver decoration. Such paper is bought chiefly by big department stores, retail shops, and manufacturers of packaging articles. The collection is renewed every year and certain designs are reserved exclusively for specific customers. This same firm also specialises in the manufacture of rolls of paper for lining drawers and cupboard shelves; these are made either in plain colours or else are decorated with original designs. They can be washed with warm water and soap, and the colours do not fade as a result of exposure to light. These articles are also greatly appreciated, both in Switzerland and in other countries, as making excellent covers for schoolchildren's copy-books and text-books.

New methods for the electrical machining of metals

During the last few years, the electrical machining of metals has taken on considerable dimensions. The machining by means of electro-erosion, i.e., the wearing away of matter through the action of electric sparks, without any contact, was already well known. Electro-erosion is used more particularly in the manufacture of parts of tools made of hard or extra hard alloys. The Ateliers des Charmilles, in Geneva, have participated to a great extent in the development of this method by putting on to the market their "Eieroda" machines, of which there now exists a model possessing a great capacity. This same firm has also perfected, subsequently, a process of electrolytical machining, which can be applied to various planing, rectifying and sharpening machines. This process calls for a completely new technique, based on a localised and controlled dissolution of the metals by electrolytical means; the operation of this process is closely allied to the various classical sharpening and rectifying techniques performed by means of grindstones.

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Popularisation of the Swiss cheese "fondue"

All foreigners who appreciate good food, and who have stayed from time to time in Switzerland, are acquainted with the "fondue", that delicious savoury cream which is composed mainly of melted cheese, and which is eaten, very democratically, out of a common pot, called a "caquelon", into which everyone dips a bit of bread affixed to the end of his or her fork. In order to popularize the "fondue" in Switzerland — for this delectable dish is not known in all the various parts of the country — whilst at the same time advancing the sale of cheese, the Swiss Union for Trade in Cheese recently placed at the disposal of the Swiss Army 1,000 "caquelons", 1,000 small spirit cookers for preparing the dish on the table, and 6,000 special forks. Thanks to this initiative, more than 100,000 "fondues" have already been served, within a very short space of time, to the Swiss troops.

Fashion knows no frontiers

The Second "Euro-Mode" Congress took place in Zurich at the end of October. Delegates from thirteen nations were gathered together in order to establish, by common consent, the colours to be used on a large scale and diffused for the co-ordination of fashion in leather articles in Europe. After taking into account all the factors which influence the trend of fashion, and after having considered the programmes of the textile industry and listened to the advice of the specialists, the experts decided on two shades, which will be used in all the countries of the "Euro-Mode" for the leather accessories to be worn in the Autumn/Winter season of 1961/62. It is interesting to note that it was owing to a Swiss initiative that this group was first

founded. It now comprises 24 national organisations belonging to the leather branch of industry in Germany, Austria, Belgium, Denmark, Spain, Finland, France, Great Britain, Ireland, Norway, Holland, Sweden and Switzerland.

New needs, new techniques

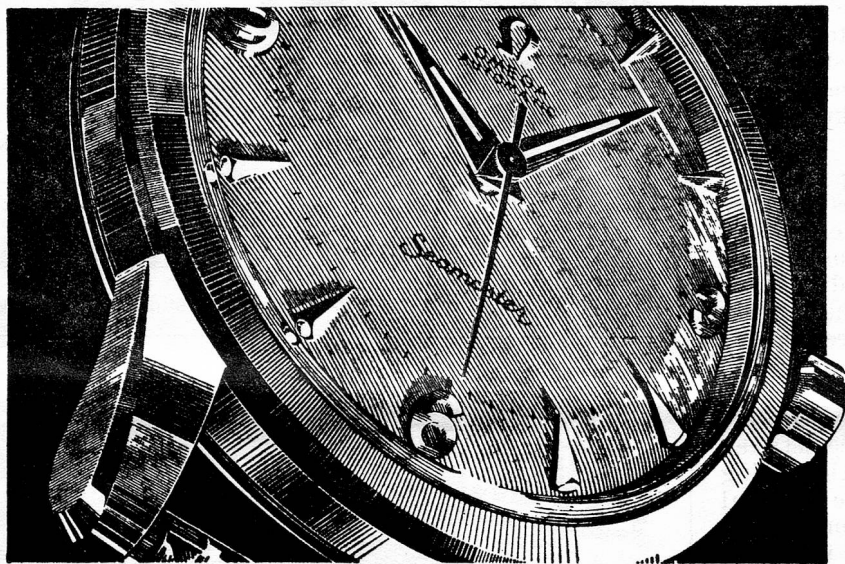
The increasing development taking place in road traffic has brought about the development of new techniques, especially in the matter of road signals. A Swiss firm in Brugg (Aargau) has achieved considerable renown both in its own country and on foreign markets for its motorized machines for the application of paint for the marking of roads. This same firm has now begun to manufacture tiny glass beads which, when mixed with paint or strewn on still fresh paint, produce a reflecting effect which renders the demarcation lines and the road signalling much more visible during the night, when they are illuminated by the headlights of motor vehicles. These glass beads for road marking are made in various sizes, in accordance with the use to which they are going to be put, and their diameter varies from $1\frac{1}{2}$ mm. to one six-hundredth of a mm. This is the first time that this product has been manufactured in Switzerland; formerly it had to be imported.

THE SWISS WATCHMAKING INDUSTRY

An important step

On 26th April 1960 the Swiss Federation of Watch Manufacturers' Associations (F.H.) introduced the *testing of the quality of watches*. The tests are held in eight centres, located at Le Sentier, Le Locle, La Chaux-de-Fonds, Geneva, Bienne, Solothurn, St. Imier, and at Neuchâtel, where the head office is also situated.

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The Watch the World has Learned to Trust

The introduction of the new scheme aroused great interest both within watchmaking circles and outside. Many people have wondered in particular why a general check on the quality of watches had become necessary. We give the answers to this question below.

Many and varied reasons

The reasons for which a general scheme for testing the quality of watches was introduced are many and varied; however, it should be remembered that other schemes already existed on a smaller, less general scale. In fact, even as long ago as the 18th century contests were regularly held for watches — and, it is interesting to note, for watches of medium quality. Everyone is familiar with the leading role the observatories have played in the development of timekeeping as well as the tests they organise annually; furthermore, the seven official Swiss watch testing stations fulfil the important task of awarding the title of chronometers to the timepieces that have successfully passed the tests to which they have been submitted; finally, and above all, it is thanks to the countless efforts made along the same lines by individual concerns, generation after generation, that Swiss watchmaking production has acquired its well-earned reputation for quality throughout the world.

Independently of the value of these schemes and methods, the volume of watches produced increases by leaps and bounds each year; and, of course, a watch is no longer a luxury article reserved for a favoured minority, but has become almost a necessity with increasingly wide sections of the population. The time has therefore come to take steps to standardise the tests previously carried out individually and, at the same time, to prevent the more popularly priced Swiss watch from being lost in the welter of a world production which is bigger than it has ever been. In the new Federal Watchmaking Statutes, which are nearing completion, the testing of the quality of watches may constitute one of the means enabling the industry, with even more success than in the past, to raise its traditional efficiency and high standard of workmanship.

Description of the tests

Let us now say a few words concerning the tests themselves. Not only the timing of watches is to be tested. The tests are designed in fact to check the ability of a watch to keep regular time for a long period; consequently standards have been drawn up laying down the degree of quality to be reached by the parts used in manufacture, in order to ensure reliable timing over a long period of time.

The timing of a watch is defined by an index. Three factors enter into the calculation of this index: the isochronism error (that is to say the difference between the timing with the spring fully wound and the timing after 24 hours), the position error and the thermal coefficient. As the isochronism error is the one giving the best idea of the future behaviour of the watch, it has been given the most important coefficient. In addition to the index, limits have been laid down for each of the above factors, as well as for the daily rate, within which the results must fall for the watch to be certified as up to standard.

In view of the material impossibility of observing all the watches submitted for testing, a method of sampling has been adopted, which is carried out in such a way as to give the most accurate picture possible of the value of the batches of watches sent in.

A long-awaited step

By instituting a scheme for testing the quality of watches, the F.H. is answering a need that has long been felt by the Swiss watchmaking industry, further confirmation of which is given by the continually increasing number of watches submitted by manufacturers for testing. A new and particularly important stage in the history of Swiss watchmaking has been reached.

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