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NEWS FROM THE TRADE

The International Silk Congress, New York

The youthful International Silk Association held its second Congress in New York this autumn. Fifteen countries participated in the event, sending in all some 132 delegates. Switzerland was represented by Mr. R.-H. Stehli, President of the Association of Swiss Silk Manufacturers and Vice-President of the International Association, and by Mr. P. Ostertag.

The agenda included, amongst other important items, discussion of the improvement in quality of silk fabrics by scientific research, stabilization of prices, the increase of production in Japan and the expansion of the trade on markets partially lost as a result of the war.

In this regard, delegates proved optimistic: silk consumption is on the increase throughout the world. In the United States, for example, August 1950 figures show a 350 % increase over consumption for the

same month last year. As for silk stocking production, again in the United States, it is still far from being able to satisfy the demand. These indications are certainly encouraging; nevertheless, duties and taxes levied on silk goods in all countries except the United States, France and Switzerland, should be considerably lowered or abolished.

Other questions also were dealt with at the Convention; for example, the stabilization of the world silk trade and, particularly, of the prices of raw silk.

Silk is no longer to be considered as a rival of rayon and nylon, both of which have their own characteristics and cannot be used as substitutes for silk. The opinion voiced at the Convention was that the price of silk should be slightly higher than that of synthetic fibres.

Import more swiss textiles !

The recent lifting of restrictions on imports

Switzerland's recent adherence to the European Payments Union has automatically enabled this country's products to benefit by the freeing measures undertaken by the other contracting parties within the framework of the Organisation for European Economic Cooperation. This freeing consists in principle of the removal of quantitative restrictions on imports and restrictions on the granting of currency to pay for these imports.

Importers of several European countries can therefore once again import various Swiss textile products in greater quantities. It is not possible for us to reproduce here the details of the lists of products on which restrictions have been lifted, but nevertheless we give below the main products affected in the textile and clothing industries.

Germany. — Yarns (silk twists, schappe, staple-fibre, cotton, mohair, worsted and woollen); furnishing fabrics (silk, rayon, cotton, staple-fibre); silk tulle; silk fabrics with taffeta weave; other fabrics (rayon, rayon and silk, staple-fibre); ribbons (rayon, cotton, staple-fibre); lace (silk, cotton); stockings and socks (silk, or part silk); cotton hosiery; dresses and coats for women and girls, blouses, aprons, skirts (silk or part silk); overcoats and clothes for men and boys (wool or wool mixed); etc.

Austria. — Cotton thread (écreu, simple, above No 80); condenser yarn; tulle, embroidery, guipure, braid, passementerie, velvet, lace curtains and lace curtaining fabrics (cotton); worsted tops and worsted yarns (écreu); etc.

Ireland. — Threads (cotton, linen, wool, rayon, silk); fabrics (linen, wool); knitted piece goods (cotton, linen, wool, silk); lace, embroidery, bed sheets (cotton); linen towels; silk embroidery; etc.

Great Britain and Northern Ireland. — Yarns (cotton, rayon, linen, worsted, woollen); cotton fabrics; handkerchiefs, manufactured articles (cotton, rayon, linen); clothing*; swimsuits; footwear, gloves, haberdashery; hats, caps, felt hoods; knitted wear*; stockings and socks (cotton, wool, rayon); braids for the hat trade; etc.

* = except if made mainly of silk or containing cashmere, lace or tulle.

Greece. — Various cotton or artificial yarn cloths, printed and yarn dyed.

Italy. — Yarns (cotton, rayon, staple-fibre, woollen and worsted); fabrics (silk, schappe, rayon, staple-fibre, cotton, linen, wool); blankets (wool, cotton).

The Netherlands. — Yarns (silk, worsted, woollen, cotton, linen, ramie, jute); ribbons, velvet, plush, fabrics, tulle, lace, passementerie, embroidery (silk, wool, cotton); blankets, bouclé fabrics, marquisette (cotton); felt; men's clothes and underwear, women's clothes; table-linen, bed-linen, towels; handkerchiefs; footwear; hoods of felt and braid for hats; women's hats except in felt, etc.

Sweden. — Yarns (rayon, wool, cotton); fabrics (wool, staple-fibre, cotton); linoleum; braid, hoods of felt and braid for hats; clothing, etc.

Turkey. — Cotton threads and fabrics.

These are only very brief indications, without any guarantee on the part of the editors of *Swiss Textiles*, which are intended to encourage foreign importers desirous of buying Swiss textile products to make further enquiries as to the possibilities at present open to them.

The *Swiss Office for the Development of Trade*, publishers of this periodical, are entirely at the disposal of all those interested, to answer any enquiries on the subject.

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