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The «Swiss Week» in Stockholm

After a marked falling off some years ago, trade between Sweden and Switzerland has recently begun to develop favourably.

Nevertheless Switzerland's exports to Sweden do not increase automatically of their own accord and Swiss exporters have come up against certain difficulties on Scandinavian markets, partly as a result of foreign competition. In order to bring Swiss products to the attention of Swedish consumers — importers and the general public — and above all to stress the factor of quality, which should be considered before that of price, Swiss industry organised a «Swiss Week», which took place in Stockholm from October 15th to 23rd, 1955.

This important trade event was held under the patronage of H. R. H. Prince Bertil and Mr. Max Petitpierre, President of the Swiss Confederation. The main feature of this «Week» was an exhibition held in the «Oestermans Marmorhallen» exhibition halls and divided into four sections: watchmaking, *textiles*, foodstuffs and publications. The textile section presented silk and cotton fabrics, a special display by the Swiss wool textile industry, embroideries of St. Gall, women's lingerie and men's underwear, knitted garments, sportswear, etc. In addition, some five hundred shops in different parts of Stockholm (specialised retail shops and big stores)

featured window displays of Swiss products and in this way constituted a huge decentralised exhibition.

One of the events arranged during this «Swiss Week» was a talk given by Mr. W. R. Brupbacher, Manager of a big Zurich silk firm, at the Grand Hotel, outlining the history of the Swiss silk industry and some of the problems with which it is faced. As he pointed out during the course of his talk, Switzerland has had several important markets closed to her owing to political events. Some countries have become serious competitors by producing large quantities of goods at low prices, the biggest demand today being for low-priced goods rather than for those of good quality. In order to be able to continue to export, the Swiss silk industry has had to specialise in the manufacture of fabrics for ties and novelty fabrics for women's fashions — articles in fact that are unsuitable for large scale mass-production and capable of withstanding comparatively high customs duties. Annual exports total approximately 100 million Swiss francs and Sweden is among Switzerland's best clients for these specialities. Although production is organised according to the latest methods and margins are calculated as closely as possible, Switzerland is unable to lower her prices owing to the heavy costs involved in silk production. It must be hoped therefore that the Swedish customer will come to realise

A section of the exhibition of the silk industry.





The display of the wool industry.

more and more that the factor of quality takes precedence over that of price.

In order to back up and carry on the good work accomplished by the exhibition, the *Swiss Office for the Development of Trade* published an interesting booklet, «Schweiz - ett Industriland» (Switzerland, Land of Industry), part of which was devoted to the textile and clothing industries.

The «Swiss Week» in Stockholm was a great success. Let us hope that it will have achieved its purpose by bringing about a lasting improvement in the trade relations between Sweden and Switzerland.



St. Gall embroideries and fine cotton fabrics.



Sport's wear.