

Economic news

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Zurich, an International Textile Centre

Joseph Bancroft & Sons Co. of Wilmington (Del.) recently opened a European branch in Zurich, in the form of a Swiss limited liability company. The purpose of this firm is to undertake licensing operations and to help promote on the continent of Europe certain well known processes such as Ban-Lon, Everglaze and Minicare. For the inauguration of the Zurich office, presided over by Mr. A. L. Lippert, vice-president of the American company, a cocktail party followed by dinner was attended by a large number of the firm's clients and business friends, in particular representatives of several large Swiss firms, together with members of the textile press.

A new Swiss textile fibre

The Swiss Viscose Company has announced the launching, in the very near future, of a new artificial textile fibre. The fibre in question has cellulose for its basic component and has been invented and perfected in Switzerland. It will be used in the form of staple, that is to say, it will be spun like cotton and wool, and not as a continuous fibre, as in the case of silk. This new fibre — which has not yet been given a name — possesses some interesting characteristics, in particular that of being very strong and, also, of not shrinking in the wash. It can be used just as it is or mixed with other natural or artificial fibres.

A «Leather Council» in Switzerland

The manufacture of novelties in the domain of clothing and accessories demands the expenditure of considerable sums, and the fluctuations of fashion expose the capital invested in this trade to some big risks; just imagine, for example, the losses that might result from a manufacturer choosing a colour which does not sell well. It is for this reason that, in a number of countries, co-ordination committees have been established for the purpose of choosing shades and tendencies for the various branches which create fashions. In Switzerland, too, this form of insurance against the risks involved in changes in taste is now developing. A «Leather Council» has been founded, in this country, for the purpose of co-ordinating the manufacture and sale of leather accessories, more particularly footwear and handbags for ladies. The members of this Council include the Swiss Association of Tanners and manufacturers and retailers in the footwear, Morocco-leather goods and travelling requisites branches. This co-ordination committee remains in close touch with the most important centres of fashion abroad. As a result of being kept precisely informed regarding international fashion trends, the Swiss leather accessories industry will have greater chances of success.

The 75th anniversary of Ciba Ltd., Basle

This spring Ciba Ltd. of Basle celebrated the 75th anniversary of its existence as a limited liability company. This great occasion was marked by a ceremony attended by members of the government and representatives of university, scientific, economic, industrial and medical circles, etc. Those taking part were given a demonstration of the new «Eidophore» process (see below), repeated several days later for the press. To commemorate the three-quarters of a century of its existence, Ciba presented the Basle Museum of Fine Arts with a collection of fifteen valuable original drawings by eight famous masters of the 16th century.

Mention should also be made of the fine book published by this leading Basle company on «The Origin and Aspects of the Chemical Industry in Basle» (in German). This excellently presented and richly illustrated book is no dry list of dates and facts concerning the history of the firm; it goes back to the end of the Middle Ages to explain the intellectual and social climate of Basle and from then on, down through the years, comments upon the evolution and development of the Basle chemical industry right up till the present period, treating the subject from the points of view of the four main fields of today: dyestuffs, pharmaceutical products, synthetic products and ancillary textile products.

Finally, let us add that number 143 of the Ciba notebooks (in German) is a special anniversary number with an even greater wealth of illustrations (in colour) than usual.

Ciba-Eidophore

Television might seem at first sight to be a little outside the scope of *Textiles Suisses*, but we must just call attention to the important contribution to the technique of TV made by the new «Eidophore» process, since it is the result of work sponsored by the firm of Ciba Co. Ltd. of Basle, which is very well known in textile circles for its activity in the field of dyes. This firm recently acquired the patents of the Eidophore process and entrusted the job of developing and perfecting them to an auxiliary company. This process, which was invented some twenty years ago by the late Professor Fischer of the Federal Institute of Technology in Zurich, enables TV images to be projected on a big cinema screen by means of an independent light source. Eidophore apparatuses have now been perfected and can even be used with colour TV. Ciba plans to use Eidophore itself for scientific purposes: operations, demonstrations, congresses, etc. It presented the new process publicly in Washington at the end of last year and again this spring at Basle, for the first time in Europe.