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News

A Double Century in the Textile Industry

Two big firms in the textile field were founded a century ago, i.e. « United Weavers of Sernftal » at Engi in the Canton of Glaris in 1864 and « Azmoos Weavers » in the Canton of Saint-Gall in 1866. The two companies amalgamated in 1922 and then separated 20 years later, the capital stock of the second, however, remaining with the first-named. This spring, they celebrated their first century of existence. It was a young man of 19 who founded the Engi enterprise. He was far-seeing and ambitious, for right from the start manufacture was planned on the basis of 180 looms. The Azmoos enterprise, on the other hand, was created by expert technicians skilled in the field of textile machinery as well as in weaving. From the very first it was a highly modern factory. It was one of the first buildings in Switzerland

to have a shed roof and it possessed its own gas factory with gas illumination by 300 flames and a power plant with a 109 hp. turbine.

When the two groups merged, the combined firm owned 820 looms and employed 100 workers. The Engi weaving mills, which to-day possess 300 looms, are among the most important for the manufacture of terry cloth. A ready-to-wear department permits them to deliver all current finished articles of this type. In addition, they also manufacture bed linen, quilting and technical fabrics for shoe-making and for the chemical industries, for tires and plastics. The Azmoos company works on 260 looms and produces Jacquard fabrics, especially damask, decorative fabrics and fabrics for household use. The two companies to-day work mainly for the Swiss market.

An Important Anniversary in the Textile World

In October 1965, the Old Pupils Association of the Textile Vocational Training School in Zurich celebrated its 75th anniversary. In view of the importance of this Association, this is an important date. In fact, this association publishes an excellent trade journal « Mitteilungen über Textilindustrie » and at the same time organizes big trade congresses and vocational training courses; its members are to be found all over the world, where they hold prominent positions in the textile industry. That is why the celebration of this anniversary at the Congress Palace in Zurich, in the presence of some 600 people, constituted an outstanding event attended by the Zurich Association of the Silk Industry and numerous other trade organizations of the cotton, wool, hosiery and ready-to-wear industries as well as Swiss textile machinery manufacturers. We cannot enter into details here concerning the many speeches of congratulation made by representatives of the canton and town of Zurich and numerous associations, but we wish simply to call attention to the interesting parallel drawn by Mr. Hans Keller, Head of the Textile Vocational Training School, who compared the cycle « school — industry — old pupils' association » to that of « vocational training — practice — further training ».

This big reunion, accompanied by a banquet, to which a large number of former students had come from all over the world, even overseas, ended with a first-rate variety show followed by a ball.

In its turn, « Textiles Suisses » wishes to add its congratulations and best wishes to this Old Pupils Association.

A number of prominent figures from the silk industry: from left to right, Mr. P. Strasser, secretary of the Zurich Association of the Silk Industry, and his wife; Mr. R. Brauchbar, industrialist, Zurich; Mrs. Honegger, Winterthur; Manager W. Bosshardt, Dunfermline (Scotland); Manager M. Honegger, Winterthur.
Photo Beyeler, Zurich

Mr. F. Honegger, Head of the Zurich Chamber of Commerce and President of the Grand Council of Zurich, congratulates Mr. Paul Strebel, President of the Old Pupils Association.
Photo Beyeler, Zurich



Twelfth Modeurop Congress

The 12th Modeurop Congress was held at Copenhagen on October 8th and 9th 1965 to select the colours for leather accessories for the autumn/winter 1966/67. It was attended by delegates from the following countries: Austria, Belgium, Denmark, Eire (for the first time), Finland, France, Germany, Great Britain, Italy, the Netherlands, Norway, Portugal, Spain, Sweden and Switzerland, as well as delegates from Intershoe. After a comparative study of the colour programmes of the European textile industry, the Congress, at the suggestion of its committee of experts, decided on the colours for leather accessories for the autumn/winter 1966/67 season: they are as follows: for women's accessories (wide diffusion): Granata, a dark, slightly

purplish red; Sudan, a deep, fairly neutral brown without any orange tinge; (promotion colours): Tivoli, a deep bright green with a bluish tendency; Bedouin, a light beige resembling the colour of pale oats. For men's shoes: Etrusco, a medium brown with a reddish ground; Sudan.

The official Modeurop colour card issued for the autumn/winter 1966/67 season will be available from the month of November 1965 from the General Secretariat of Modeurop in Berne (55, Eigerstrasse, 3000 Berne 23) at s.Fr. 5.— per copy.

The 13th Modeurop Congress will be held in Lisbon on March 31st and April 1st, 1966; it will select the new colours for leather apparel.

Textile Recorder Annual 1965/66

We have just received the latest number of the «Textile Recorder Annual and Machinery Review», a mine of information for everyone interested in the British textile industry. After reviewing the situation in the British textile industries (cotton, wool, chemical fibres, jute and linen) and the technical progress recently achieved in the industry, it

devotes some sixty pages to an examination of the novelties appearing in the textile machinery sector. Finally, it publishes reports on the main textile fibre markets in 1964 and statistics regarding the United Kingdom's imports and exports of textiles during the last year as well as figures concerning British exports of textile machinery.

International Colour Congress in Lucerne

This congress, which took place from June 1st to 4th, 1965, was attended by some 450 delegates from 25 different countries, wishing to communicate and exchange the latest information and experience gained in the field of colour, on both the practical and the scientific levels. Some 110 reports were submitted to the congress and were considered in 3 parallel sessions. Simultaneously an exhibition was held of colour measuring instruments and their practical applications as well as of technical litera-

ture on the subject. The reports ranged from investigations into the theory of cognition and aesthetic research through all the phenomenal aspects of colour to its practical effects and applications in commerce and industry. The comprehensive proceedings of this congress are to be published by Musterschmidt Verlag (Göttingen-Zürich) by March 1966 at the latest. Let us finally add that the next International Colour Congress will be held in 1969.

The Swiss Cotton and Embroidery Industry

The Swiss Cotton and Embroidery Industry is concentrated mainly in Eastern Switzerland.

If the figures for the manpower employed in these branches (both workers and office staff) are examined, it can be seen that with regard to cotton, the cantons of St. Gall and Zurich each account for 26 % of the total number; while for embroidery, 69 % of the manpower is employed in the canton of St. Gall alone. It is also interesting to note that the textile industry in the narrow sense of the word (i.e. without the clothing branches) employs 67,344 workers and office staff, 33 % of whom are employed in the cotton industry and 6 % in embroidery. Exports are of great importance in both these branches, the first selling about 60 % of its production abroad, and the second as much as 95 %. Last year Switzerland exported 54 million Swiss francs' worth (\$ 12.5 million) of cotton yarns and twists, 152.6 million Swiss francs' worth (\$ 35.4 million) of cotton fabrics and 162.4 million Swiss francs' worth (\$ 37.65 million) of embroideries, making a total of S.Fr. 369 million (\$ 85.55 million) or approximately 2.5 % of Switzerland's total exports.

By far the biggest foreign buyer is the Federal Republic of Germany, followed by Italy, France and Austria. The United Kingdom is another big European client, while overseas the United States of America and Australia come first and second respectively.

As Switzerland is not in a position to supply international markets with massproduced articles at competi-

tive prices, she has to concentrate on the production of fashionable textile products, produced in small series. That is why she has no giant textile firms; the majority of the factories in the cotton industry (nearly 47 %) fall into the category of firms employing from 11 to 50 people, while 57 % of the embroidery manufacturers employ fewer than 11 people. No false conclusions should however be drawn from these figures; in this connection it is interesting to read the following statements from a recent report issued by the Cotton Exchange in Bremen: «Taking into consideration the size of the population of the country, the Swiss textile industry and more particularly the cotton industry are among the biggest and most modern on the European continent. This is obvious from a number of figures, such as for example the ratio of the number of spindles to that of the population, which is 1 to 5 in Switzerland, as well as the figure for the investments per person employed, during the last few years. Whereas in 1962, according to a report issued by OECD, these investments in western Europe and North America averaged between 160 and 525 dollars per person employed, in Switzerland they amounted to nearly 600 dollars. Consequently it is obvious that Switzerland invests much more each year for modernization and rationalization than other OECD countries ».

(These figures are taken from an article on the Swiss cotton industry by Miss E. Kocher, Manageress of the Office for the Promotion of the Swiss Cotton and Embroidery Industry in St. Gall).