

A modern cyclops

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His rendering of Schubert's Impromptu in A. flat was beautifully played, and was most impressive, a sure proof that he is a fine and talented musician. No less enjoyable were the renderings of Cançò I Dansa (No. 1) by F. Mompon and Le petit âne blanc by Ibert, the latter played with great delicacy.

This fine performance by the youthful artiste was loudly cheered, and as a *beau geste* Mr. Streit gave an encore. All in all a remarkable *début* by a remarkable and gifted artiste.

Frau Vreni Kneubühl, the Swiss Male Choir and Swiss Accordeon Club again appeared and earned great applause. Frau Kneubühl was presented with a lovely bouquet of flowers at the end of her performance.

The musical programme then came to a close with the singing of the National Anthem, and Mr. F. G. Sommer, President of the 1st of August Committee, in a little speech thanked his colleagues on the committee for their collaboration not forgetting the artistes who took part in the programme, nor the generous donors, who by their support had made it possible to hold again this traditional 1st of August celebration.

Thus another memorable patriotic demonstration came to an end, and on behalf of all those who were present, I wish to extend hearty and sincere thanks to the committee for this most enjoyable afternoon, singling out the President, Mr. F. G. Sommer and the Secretary, Mr. A. Gandon who had so untiringly worked to make this celebration a success.

ST.



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A MODERN CYCLOPS.

In our issues No. 1163 (July 27th, 1951) and No. 1172 (Dec. 21st, 1951) we commented on the diaries of Johann Conrad Fischer. The actual MSS. were on exhibition last year at the South Kensington Museum. These diaries, written (probably with quill) in German, are, as will be remembered, the personal records of Fischer's repeated travels through France, Germany, the Scandinavian countries and England. They reveal an interesting personality, cultured, shrewd, purposeful and endowed with an immense capacity for constructive effort. He was an outstanding type of the industrial pioneer of the early 19th century to whose ability and spirit of enterprise the economic development of Switzerland is so largely due.

A hundred-and-fifty years ago this remarkable man founded in Schaffhausen the iron steel works which to this day flourish under the name of GEORG FISCHER WERKE. From small beginnings the undertaking gradually became one of the most important of its kind, not only in Switzerland but in Europe. It enjoys a world-wide reputation and its products are known everywhere.

The original works in Schaffhausen have, in the course of the years, been considerably enlarged. Branches and affiliated Companies in Switzerland, Germany and England added to the importance of the Firm, which, moreover, established its own sales-organisations in Paris and Milan. The English branch is situated in Bedford and bears the name of BRITANNIA IRON AND STEEL WORKS LTD.

In these establishments altogether 9,000 people are employed, half of them in the Schaffhausen works. Large sums of money have been spent on social welfare, on housing, the care of the children and apprentices, pension schemes, medical service and so forth.

Financially the Company possesses considerable strength. At the end of 1950 the total assets (Gesamt-Vermögen) are shown to be 96½ million Swiss francs and the average dividends since the formation of the Company 7.53% of the share capital. These are remarkable figures considering the difficulties connected with the supply of fuel and raw materials in times of war and the fact that Swiss industry did not escape the effects of the recurring periods of trade-slumps.

Much of the Company's success may be attributed to the continuity of the management. It had the rare fortune of being directed for more than fifty years by the founder himself, and to have at its head a man, Mr. E. Homberger, who has been in charge uninterruptedly since 1902.

The foregoing data is taken from a commemorative publication issued by the Company under the title "HUNDERTFÜNFZIG JAHRE GEORG FISCHER WERKE 1802/1952", a handsome volume, beautifully illustrated, in which the story of the Company from its inception to the present day is told. The non-technical section of the book has been written by Dr. F. Aschinger, the commercial editor of the "Neue Zuercher Zeitung", the technical and commercial material has been contributed by the staff.

All those who are connected with the Georg Fischer Company can take a justifiable pride in its traditions and achievements and we, the readers of the Swiss Observer, wish them continued success and prosperity.

J.J.F.S.