

Business in Switzerland

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BUSINESS IN SWITZERLAND

The First Electric Tramcar in Switzerland

The first electric tramcar in Switzerland was put into service in 1888 on the Vevey-Montreux-Chillon line in a district well known to tourists from all over the world. Thirteen trams of the same type, with top-deck, were used to maintain a regular service on this line. They were built by the Swiss Industrial Company at Neuhausen, while their electrical equipment was produced in a local workshop. Their traction power was 15 h.p., making it possible to reach the speed of 10 m.p.h. The only model of these trams to survive until today was recently placed in the collection of the Swiss Transport Museum in Lucerne. (OSEC).

Swiss Snow-Blower Conquers the World

A Swiss engineering works at Liestal has specialized for the last thirty years in the problem of snow removal; in this field it has accomplished real pioneer work, putting on the market a whole series of snow-ploughs, snow-blowers, and snow-removal machines of all kinds, which can be seen hard at work during the winter and the spring, on mountain roads and passes throughout Switzerland.

The big Peter snow-blower, which is capable of overcoming even the most difficult snow removal problems, has just found new scope for its activities in a very interesting new field. The United States is at present building special posts for scientific and military purposes at strategic points in the Arctic and Antarctic, and Peter snow-blowers have come in particularly useful on these sites for the excavation of shelters for the staff manning these posts.

The manufacturing programme of Peter Ltd. also includes smaller machines like the Junior blower fitted on caterpillar tracks and equipped with a small motor-car engine for clearing snow from the streets and paths of winter-sports resorts. (OSEC).

Swiss Poultry-raising

One of the outstanding features of Swiss poultry-raising is its decentralization. In fact, some 6,000,000 birds are distributed among 220,000 owners, less than two per cent of whom possess more than 100 birds. The number of actual poultry-farm owners as opposed to part-time breeders is even less, the proportion being only three per thousand.

As a result of foreign competition, Swiss poultry-raising is tending to be put on a more rational basis by the adoption of the latest methods of breeding. In spite of these efforts, it is still unable to meet the increase in consumption, so that Switzerland is obliged to import fairly large quantities of poultry — imports rose from 4,500 tons in 1954 to 16,700 tons in 1960. (OSEC).

Speedy Delivery of a Swiss Turbine

At the end of 1961, a 6,100 kW gas turbine, built by the Swiss firm of Sulzer Bros. at Winterthur, was put into operation in Venezuela. This machine, which runs on natural gas, generates power for a paper mill. A 400 kW Sulzer diesel engine, installed in the same power station, supplies the energy needed for starting, and at the same time serves for emergency power generation. The turbine drives a turbo-generator rated at 7,625 kVA, 2,400 V, and built by the Sécheron Engineering Works in Geneva. The quick construction, delivery and erection of this plant is worthy of note. The last components reached the site

at the beginning of September, and by mid-October the combustion chambers were ready for the first ignition, so that the whole plant could be officially handed over to the purchasers on 1st December 1961. (OSEC).

Switzerland's Purchases of Cereals Abroad

Switzerland, which supplies to all parts of the world manufactured products — watches, chocolate, embroideries and silks, machinery and instruments, etc. — is obliged to import the raw materials her industry requires as well as considerable quantities of foodstuffs. For example, she has to import all the hard wheat needed for the manufacture of macaroni products, while she produces about 60% of the soft wheat she requires for the manufacture of flour for bread. In 1961 she imported a total of 316,500 metric tons of wheat (1960 = 344,500 tons) from Canada (72.3%), the United States (14.3%), Argentina (2.9%), U.S.S.R. (2.9%) and Western Europe — France, Italy, German Fed. Rep. — (7.1%), as well as, in 1961 for the first time, Australia (0.5%). (OSEC).

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