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COMMERCIAL NEWS

In the Swiss machine industry.

The Swiss machine and apparatus industry continues to show an astounding vitality. An increase in orders is to be observed in almost all the various branches. As a result there is an appreciable increase in the reserve of work, varying from three to eight months according to the branch in question. Thus, in order to avoid delays in deliveries which might lead the customers to turn to other competitors, the plants have been obliged to have recourse to rationalisation. The most difficult problem to solve remains nevertheless — and this in spite of the employment of a great many foreign workers — the finding of sufficient labour, the penury of which, at all stages, has forced the firms to start training their personnel themselves. This situation also raises the question of the extension of existing technical schools and the creation of new colleges, all the more so as the development of technique constantly puts forward new requirements, especially in those two fields of the future, automation and nuclear energy.

A new ship for the Swiss fleet.

The "Général Guisan", which was built in Yugoslavia and is the largest ship at present flying the Swiss flag, has just been delivered to a maritime company which has its seat in Lausanne. This new ship, which possesses a carrying capacity of 13,000 tons and replaces the 9,000-ton ship of the same name which was recently sold abroad, is propelled by a 5,000 h.p. Diesel engine built under a Swiss licence in Trieste. Swiss industry has also furnished the auxiliary engines and the pumps.

Americans are visiting the Swiss vineyards.

During a voyage to Europe, organised by the Wine Institute of California, a group of American specialists in wine-growing questions devoted one of its days to the Swiss vineyards. These visitors, among whom were to be found some very important producers of wine in California, were received in the Canton of Valais and on the banks of the Lake of Geneva. They showed great appreciation for the quality of the Swiss wines and expressed the opinion that there might be a certain market for them in the United States.

Swiss embroidery much asked for.

During the second quarter of this year exports of embroidery, which represent 90 per cent of the production of this industry, attained a new record figure, with 33 million francs, as against 29 million for the same period of last year. Fashion is now more than ever favourable to embroidery. It is always Great Britain who heads the list of importers of this particular kind of goods, followed by Germany and the Netherlands.

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