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BUSINESS IN SWITZERLAND

A Swiss invention in the field of technical instruction

To-day, when the development of technical instruction and the training of managerial staff and skilled labour are so important it is worth while calling attention to the Swiss invention, "Automat", which cannot help but meet with the greatest success in vocational training circles, in industry, and among all handymen who go in for engineering as a hobby. The "Automat" is a construction set consisting of all the parts required for assembling mechanical automatic machines from the simplest train of gears to the most complicated automatic lathe. The basic assortment can be added to as required to form a complete set containing, among other things, plates and angle-irons for building the frames and bodies of machines, toothed wheels, worm-screws, shafts of all kinds, tie- and push-rods, planet gears, bearings, racks and pinions, toothed arcs, catches, parts for the construction of driving belts, couplings and clutches, everything necessary for the assembly of cams of various types, all the accessories required for construction and many other parts besides. The "Automat" has been designed mainly with a view to technical instruction in vocational training schools and machine works; it is also useful in consumer goods factories, for the training of staff as well as for research into new mechanical combinations, and it may also render invaluable service to design departments, engineers and inventors as well as enthusiastic amateurs. However, it is not by any means a toy, with hastily manufactured parts of only relative precision; far from it, every single part is made of top-quality materials and carefully finished to satisfy very strict margins, so that all the constructions that can be made with this set work as perfectly and accurately as the most precise machine tools. This new aid to technical instruction has already been acquired by a number of vocational training institutes, not only in Switzerland but also in other countries.

Swiss cotton on tour

Switzerland possesses highly developed cotton and embroidery industries, but there is an unfortunate tendency in that country to believe that they manufacture only luxury products. To make the products of these industries better known to the Swiss public, and to show that these articles, although of very high quality, are nevertheless intended for normal everyday use, the Office for the Promotion of the Swiss Cotton and Embroidery Industries has organised an itinerant exhibition, which will be presented in 26 of the biggest towns in Switzerland. It should perhaps be pointed out that the branches in question cover the stages of spinning, twisting, weaving, yarn and fabric finishing, including printing, embroidery, and even the export of yarns, fabrics and embroideries.

Competition through presentation

To-day, the presentation of merchandise, especially in the field of foodstuffs, is very often the decisive factor swaying the customer in favour of one commodity rather

than another. The quality of goods is such, in fact, that there is often little room left for improvement, and consequently in order to try and win over that very important person, the consumer, enterprising producers are always on the look-out for new, more appetising, more hygienic, more practical and more attractive ways of presenting and packaging their products. Realising this, a well-known Swiss cheese manufacturer and exporter decided to devote special attention to the question of packaging. In the processed type cheeses, he supplies not only the classical triangular portions but also thin 1 oz. slices individually wrapped in metal foil and folded accordion-wise in groups of five. The traditional rounds of Gruyère and Emmenthal cheese have had their rind removed and are sold in 6½ to 11 lb. sections, vacuum wrapped in plastic foil to ensure perfect freshness. The same firm also features, in a special aluminium container, a compact, ready-prepared mixture for making "fondue", the famous Swiss cheese dish, simply and without any risk of failure. And the very height of thoughtfulness: the same manufacturer has also made provision for delivering on request with his packets of ready-made "fondue", the special earthenware vessel known as a "caquelon" in which this tasty cheese dish is prepared over the flame of a heater, as well as the special forks required for dipping into the communal pot.

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