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The Swiss Observer

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THE ART OF MAKING MILLIONS

To-day the Swiss Observer takes pride in congratulating one of its most faithful friends, Mr. William de Vigier, who this year celebrates the 25th birthday of Acrow, the world-renowned engineering company of which he is founder and managing director.

In these times when one stresses here and there the necessity of rejuvenating the Swiss colony in Great Britain, here is a man who, having not yet attained the fifty-year

total value the Stock Exchange puts on its shares is more than £7,000,000”.

Mr. de Vigier hails from the historical town of Solothurn. He started his engineering career in the early twenties with the well-known Scintilla Company of Solothurn. When he landed in this country in 1936, he had very little money — As a matter of fact his total belongings amounted to about £50.

I suspect Mr. de Vigier must have some American blood. That dynamic blood which circulated in the veins of such men as Henry Ford and William Rockefeller.

His keen business mind quickly perceived that by employing the costly and wasteful methods of using timber for scaffolding, this country was still building in the manner of medieval times. He started to make adjustable steel props for builders to use instead of the normal timber kind. “It took me six months to sell the first 24,” he recalls. “There are 5,000,000 in use to-day.”

* * *

When business started to expand, twenty years ago, Mr. de Vigier founded a company registered under the name of Acrow. From that day onward, he extended it with renewed energy and determination and the concern soon became large and profitable. Acrow to-day is a huge international concern with branches all over the world.

But Mr. de Vigier has his pride and he is annoyed when Acrow is called a scaffolding business. “This now accounts for only two per cent of our turnover,” he says. The company is the world’s biggest maker of steel shuttering used in putting up concrete structures and has other activities ranging from steel storage cabinets and shelving to industrial refrigeration equipment and, of course, Bailey Bridges.

This shows abundantly that Mr. de Vigier’s is an extraordinary story of a most successful business career. To him we may well say: “Well done, Sir!”

S.O.



mark, makes a million just as easily as others put three-pence on a football pool in the fallacious hope of winning a fortune.

Alexander Thomson writes in the Evening Standard: “He started the company (Acrow) when he was 24. I estimate he made his first £1,000,000 by the time he was 36. And now he can calculate, if he wants to, that the