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Autor: [s.n.]
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THE MAIN SWISS FIRMS IN 1977

From a report recently published by the Union Bank of Switzerland, it appears that twenty-five firms in Switzerland recorded a turnover of more than 1 billion francs in 1977. Fifteen of them are industrial firms, four commercial firms, three transport firms and three forwarding houses. The turnover of the hundred main industrial firms totalled 94 billion francs.

It is Nestlé that recorded the

highest consolidated turnover (20.1 billion francs) followed by Ciba-Geigy (9.9 billion), Brown, Boveri & Co (8.2 billion), Hoffmann-La Roche (5.5 billion) and Alusuisse (5.4 billion). As for Switzerland's fifty biggest commercial firms, their total turnover amounted to 31 billion francs in 1977.

Two retain concerns, Migros (7.2 billion) and Coop (5.1 billion), came first in this sector, third place being occupied by the UTC Interna-

tional Import- Export Company (1.5 billion).

With regard to transport and services companies, a state concern, the Swiss General Post Office, came first (with total receipts of 5.5 billion), followed by the forwarding firm Danzas (3.6 billion).

In the classification of the biggest banks, the UNION Bank of Switzerland comes first with a total balance sheet of 56.1 billion francs, followed by the Swiss Bank Corporation (55.7 billion) and the Swiss Credit Bank (44 billion). With regard to insurance companies, the Zürich Insurance Company and the Swiss Reinsurance Company both share first place, each with 2.4 billion francs' worth of premiums kept for their own account.

New Hotel Guide

The Swiss Hotel Association has just published its new hotel guide for 1979. 34% of the hotels in Switzerland (2,688) are members, and between them they have a total of 170,000 beds available which amounts to 62% of all hotel beds in the country.

The new guide provides a precise picture of what Swiss hotels offer and how much it will cost. For the first time, it classifies hotels into five categories. There are 86 5-star and 357 4-star hotels, 885 which carry

three stars and 816 which have two to their credit. 407 have one star to their name and 137 are not classified. There are 100,000 hotel beds available at under 30 francs per night, including breakfast, tips and taxes. But one can go up to the top class hotels which are amongst the most famous luxury hotels in the world. In short, Switzerland caters for all tastes and purses.

The guide also includes restaurants affiliated to the SHA and lists sports facilities in various towns and resorts, and includes useful travel

and tourist information in four languages. It is available from the Swiss National Tourist Office. There is also a new list of wintersports season tickets which gives every detail of means of transport (ski-lifts, chairlifts, multicabin cableways, aerial cableways and funiculars).

The Swiss National Tourist Office will always be pleased to help you in your choice of a holiday in Switzerland. It also has information of special package schemes including flights by Swissair and British Airways.

•From page 15 — TURNER —FOR OUR DELIGHT

A unique opportunity arose for Turner to visit Switzerland and also see the work of his European contemporaries.

During the lull in the war between France and England in 1802, Napoleon showed in the Louvre collections he had looted during his conquest of Europe. Thus Turner was able to see with his own eyes works he had only previously known through copies or engravings.

He promptly left for Paris on July 15, 1802 and fulfilled a lifelong ambition by continuing his journey to the mountains and valleys of Switzerland.

Following this first visit, he was to return to Switzerland during the last years of his life. Always attentive to detail, he recognised immediately that in Switzerland there was something he could find nowhere else. This is amply evidenced by the notebooks on Swiss life and landscapes which he bequeathed to the people of Great Britain. The drawings are all crammed on top of one another, as if there was never enough space or time for him to set them down at leisure. Many countries fired his imagination throughout his life, but there is a special eagerness in his Swiss work.

Although possessing a gruff exterior, Turner had a kindly disposition, particularly with young people.

Of all the many books written about his art, none really give a true insight into his character and private life. It is known that he enjoyed a few long and lasting friendships throughout his life which he treasured. He was a wealthy man, but frugal, often using his sketch books for jotting down any monies owed to him.

One such revealing item shows that Turner purchased ten £5 shares in the Atlas Fire Office (later merged with the Royal Exchange). Although extensive research has been carried out, and it is known he had insurance, no link can be found with the CU.

During 1807 he had the honour to be appointed Professor of Perspective at the RA. He still managed to continue his travels until late middle age, which would indicate he was blessed with good health as, in those days, travelling was difficult, to say the least.

A lifelong bachelor, Turner died peacefully on December 19, 1851, at his cottage in Cheyne Walk, Chelsea, watching the lights on the water he had loved for so long. He was buried in St. Paul's Cathedral, and lies next to that other famous British painter, Joshua Reynolds.

He left some 20,000 watercolour, and 350 paintings, which he bequeathed to the British nation. The bulk of his watercolours are housed in the British Museum whilst his

major paintings are kept in the Tate and National galleries.

A stipulation by him that a special gallery be built to display his treasures was never carried out.

Barbara Loukes

'TURNER IN SWITZERLAND' THE AUTHORS

John Russell, former art critic of *The Sunday Times* and now art critic of *The New York Times*, is the author of a book on Switzerland and of several important works concerned with the arts.

Andrew Wilton, who has helped continuously throughout the making of the book, was until recently Assistant Keeper in the Print Room of the British Museum. He is now Curator of Prints and Drawings at the Yale Centre for British Art.

★ ★ ★

The book is being published simultaneously in English and in a German/French edition. It is obtainable in Britain from Hatchards, 187, Picadilly, London W1V 9DA or St. George's Gallery Books, 8, Duke St., St. James's, London SW1 price £30.00, or direct from the publishers De Clivo Press, P.O. Box, 8600 Duebendorf, Switzerland, price including postage £31.00.