With the appearance of the second issue of the FORUM this month, we are in a better position, on the basis of experience, to be specific about the type of articles we should like for it.

This depends, naturally, on the source, e.g. government or private trade association, and whether it is from a developing or a developed country.

From developed countries we should like in particular two kinds of articles:

(i) indications of import opportunities for products of less-developed countries;

(ii) counsel for exporters from less-developed countries on what is needed in the way of production and promotion to sell in the developed countries.

From the developing countries we should like, in particular, indications of their products that they think might be of import interest to both developed and other developing countries.

This brings us to the question of style, which is an important one for a quarterly magazine received at over 12,000 key points, both in governments and private international trade associations. A mere list of products is counter-productive, in the sense that busy people faced with alternatives in the way of bright economic magazines may not be sufficiently interested unless there is more to an article than a list. The big international economic magazines and newspapers can get their basic material worked up by an economist and/or statistician.
and then turned over to an economic journalist for re-writing in a form that can hold the interest of a busy, cosmopolitan public. Examples are: the British ECONOMIST and STATIST; the French magazine ENTREPRISE; the American BUSINESS WEEK and the occasional business supplements to the NEW YORK TIMES and NEW YORK HERALD TRIBUNE; and perhaps best of all, the brief articles on different country's commodities and general export markets that appear in the FINANCIAL TIMES of London. Such a team technique is not always possible to a foreign trade ministry or institute or a trade association however large they may be and seldom to an individual company. The editors of the FORUM would, however, be happy to assist in such teamwork if they could be provided with the essential facts of any export situation of potential interest to the type of reader the magazine has.

The pages of the FORUM hold about 1,000 words each, but including space needed for illustrative photographs. For discussion of a single product, one page, i.e. 750 words with a photograph or 1,000 words without, is sufficient. For general surveys two such pages; and for a thorough discussion of technical matters, such as market research or packaging, a maximum of three pages, i.e. 2,250 to 3,000 words depending on illustrations. An article without good dynamic photographs showing products and people on the move is much less interesting to the reader than one with them; and such photographs should be most carefully packed in cardboard, so as not to arrive in a useless condition.

News about raw materials, for which markets and channels are comparatively well known, would be less interesting than news of processed or semi-processed products. Lists of several products would also be less interesting than a story of how it is hoped that a single one, perhaps new for the country's economy, might increase its export income. For example, we recently researched the story of an increase of almost 4 per cent in a country's export income as a result of the establishing of a soluble coffee plant, where previously coffee beans were exported as such.

There is much more that could be said on this subject and, indeed, we would welcome correspondence with potential contributors before they even send articles. Such correspondence might, for example, contain an enquiry as to whether an article on a certain subject in a certain form would be welcome.

It would be greatly appreciated if the recipients of this circular letter would do their best, within their respective countries, to secure the kind of article described above, in more or less the form detailed. Only thus will the FORUM continue to be, as it has proved itself in its first few numbers, a vehicle of both utility to the developing nations and of commercial interest to their potential customers.

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