

An original solution to the labour shortage

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100,000 H.P. PUMP-TURBINES FOR THE FEDERAL REPUBLIC OF GERMANY

An electrical work at Hagen, Westphalia, is building in Rönkhausen the first pumped-storage plant in the Federal Republic of Germany. It is to be equipped with two pump-turbines with speed governors. One of these was ordered from Sulzer Brothers Limited at Winterthur, Switzerland, and the second from the German branch at Ravensburg of a large Swiss firm, Escher Wyss BmbH. These machines are of the reversing type with a rating of some 70 MW each with a mean head of 266 metres and a speed of 500 r.p.m. The maximum power absorbed during pumping is about 66 MW.

For some years now, Sulzer Brothers have been working jointly with the English Electric Co. Ltd. on the development and manufacture of reversible hydraulic machines of this type.

Hydraulic development work for pump-turbines for Escher Wyss was carried out in their Zurich laboratories. This work is based on many decades of experience in the manufacture of large-scale storage pumps — an activity which has earned the Zurich and Ravensburg plants a world-wide reputation.

[O.S.E.C.]

POSTAL ROUTING NUMBERS: A SOLUTION FOR THE FUTURE

A "postal number" system was recently introduced by the General Post Office of Switzerland. The Swiss public has been requested to include on addresses "zip code" numbers, each of which corresponds to a particular destination. Thanks to these numbers, which can be read by an electronic machine, letters can be sorted faster and routed with unprecedented accuracy. This is not only a measure of rationalization dictated by increasing postal traffic but one designed to speed up postal service. It will therefore be of benefit to everyone who uses this service.

In order to put this system into operation, Switzerland has been divided into nine postal areas and a four-figure number has been assigned to each main post office.

It would, however, be desirable for this system to be extended to most European countries, and in this respect a first step has just been made. In order to prevent any possible misrouting between Switzerland and West Germany, the postal services of the two countries have agreed that in addressing mail to West Germany the distinguishing letter D (Deutschland) should be included before the postal number and separated from it by a dash (e.g. D — 46 Dortmund). Likewise, the German postal authorities are recommending that correspondents should, when addressing mail to Switzerland, place the letters CH (Confoederatio Helveticae) before the postal number in the same way (e.g. CH — 1000 Lausanne).

This obviously is only an initial stage in mechanizing and automatizing postal operations. Future traffic no doubt will entail the standardization of letters, not only with respect to their dimensions but also as regards the quality and colour of the paper used and the position of the address on the envelope.

[O.S.E.C.]

AN ORIGINAL SOLUTION TO THE LABOUR SHORTAGE

For some time now there has been a rather acute shortage of labour in Switzerland. Three large firms in Basle appear to have found a solution worthy of notice: they have formed a pool which ensures their customers prompt and careful service for relatively small orders. At present this pool makes available to its clientele a painter, two electricians, a carpenter, two sanitary installation fitters and an experienced all-round worker. Fast service is ensured thanks to five telephone lines and five cars carrying fully equipped workshops on wheels. In operation since last spring, this is a service which might profitably be imitated in other towns in Switzerland, especially as, it may be added, no patent has yet been taken out on it . . .

[O.S.E.C.]

ADVERTISEMENTS ON SWISS TELEVISION

In order to keep viewers and boost numbers, a TV company has to offer a high quality of entertaining and well-produced programmes. Now quality and diversity are not to be had for nothing, they cost a lot of money in fact. In Switzerland, the number of subscribers has increased fairly rapidly and the most optimistic forecasts have all been exceeded, but those in charge of Swiss TV were reluctantly forced to admit that only advertising could provide the extra funds required by the present high cost of programmes. In addition, there was the risk that a number of big Swiss firms might start advertising on certain foreign channels which adopted sponsored programmes some time ago.

Advertising will therefore be permitted on Swiss TV from 1st January 1965, subject to a number of restrictions. Advertising interludes may not last longer than twelve minutes a day. They will have to be broadcast between 7 p.m. and 8.30 p.m. and will be prohibited on Sundays and holidays. No permits will be granted for advertising alcoholic drinks, tobacco or medicines. The same applies to "indirect advertising". This means that at sports meetings, for example, the camera must not remain aimed for a long time at the name of the firm that provides refreshments for the competitors, even though free, and that the announcer may not rhapsodize at length about the kindness shown him by certain local tradesmen. Nor will any advertising of a religious or political nature be allowed.

These new broadcasts will be under the control of a limited company, 40% of whose shares will be allotted to the Swiss Radio and Television Broadcasting Company, and another 40% to the Company for the Promotion of Television. These two companies will each have four of the twelve seats on the board of directors, the remaining 20% of the shares and the last four seats to be divided among various big economic associations.

TV advertising will perhaps provide the most effective means of reducing the number of brochures and leaflets which daily fill our letter boxes to overflowing.

[O.S.E.C.]