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Fiftieth Anniversary Luncheon

BRITISH BROWN-BOVERI LIMITED

on FRIDAY, JUNE 29, 1956 at the DORCHESTER HOTEL, PARK LANE, W.I.

In the Chair :

H. OSWALD, Esq., Managing Director, British Brown-Boveri Limited.

The year 1956, is a year of anniversaries concerning, either directly or indirectly, the Swiss Colony.

"Swissair" has recently celebrated its Silver Jubilee, on which occasion the London General Manager, Mr. W. Wyler, had written a message, which was reproduced in this paper. The Swiss Credit Bank — which has a London Office — has just attained their Centenary, the Nouvelle Société Helvétique a few days ago asked its members and friends to her 40th birthday party, the City Swiss Club, will in November next put 100 candles on their birthday cake, and finally the British Brown-Boveri Limited, London, gave a luncheon at the Dorchester Hotel, to celebrate its 50th anniversary.

* * *

The luncheon was preceded by a reception, and cocktails, during which Mr. R. Vodoz, Chairman, and Mr. H. Oswald, Managing-Director of British Brown Boveri Limited received the numerous guests, amongst them: H.E. The Swiss Minister, Monsieur A. Daeniker, Dr. E. M. Bircher, and Dr. R. Faessler, Counsellors of Legation, the Earl of Verulam, Mr. John Wedgwood, officers of the Ministries of Works and Supply and Post Office, Mr. Warder the chief electrical engineer of British railways, Mr. Pick, chief electrical engineer of London Transport, several consulting engineers, the heads, chief executives, managers and chief engineers of industrial and commercial undertaking and of nationalised industries, Group-captain Watt of Rolls Royce, Mr. Ferguson of Lloyd's Register of Shipping, Mr. E. G. Suter, President of the Swiss Economic Council, Mr. H. Knoll, Manager of the Swiss Bank Corporation, Mr. C. Voegeli, Manager of Volkart Bros., the Managing-Directors of the company's licensees, Messrs. Mackay & Everett of Richardsons, Westgarth & Co. Ltd., Wallend and Hartlepool, Mr. Rodger of Bruce Peebles Ltd., Edinburgh, Mr. Henderson, representatives and editors of the Technical Press, Dr. H. W. Egli of the "Neuen Zürcher Zeitung", A. Stauffer, "Swiss Observer", and Colonel Reading, retired Deputy Engineer-in-chief of the Post Office, etc. etc.

The reception being over, the company adjourned to the richly decorated Orchid Suite, where an excellent luncheon was served for which the Management and the Head Chef of the Dorchester deserve great credit. Towards the end of the luncheon, Mr. H. Oswald, who was in the Chair, proposed the Toast to H.M. the Queen; immediately after the red-coated Toast-Master announced that Mr. Oswald would give an address, the latter received a cordial reception on rising from his *fauteuil présidentiel*.

He began by giving a historical survey of the

company, saying that 50 years ago, Mr. A. C. Eborall concluded that it would be better for his firm, Messrs. Witting, Eborall & Co. Ltd., Engineers and Contractors for electrical power equipments, to wind up, and in closest collaboration with the S.A. Brown-Boveri & Cie, Baden, to start a new firm. Articles of Association were drafted in due course, and the new company was registered under the name of Brown, Boveri & Co. Ltd., Mr. A. C. Eborall becoming its first Managing-Director. "Under his inspiring leadership", the speaker said, "the firm quickly grew up, and made itself known everywhere."

Mr. Oswald continued by saying: "Thirty-one years later the management was entrusted to me, whilst Mr. Eborall carried on as Chairman for another ten years until he retired from the Board in 1947. I know that he wishes me to express to you his great regret that he cannot be with us at to-day's luncheon, and he wants you to know that his thoughts are very much with us. In a few days he will be celebrating his eightieth birthday."

The speaker then said that the objects for which the company was established were laid down in the Memorandum of Association, and in reading same lately he came to the conclusion that they are frightening, and if to be implemented, he would have to resign as he was neither a copper smelter, an iron and steel founder, a tramway or railway operator. "I would even hesitate", he continued, "to control and work central power stations, or for that matter any other trade or business which in the opinion of the Board would be profitable for the company. Indeed the company might compete with almost anything you here represent or do by way of profession. What a marvel of ingenuity, or should I say, complexity, solicitors can be made responsible. (Laughter).

The Chairman mentioned that the company in practice confines itself to the profession of electrical and thermal engineers and contractors for the supply and installation of machinery and plant associated therewith, and that initially the territorial jurisdiction extended to many overseas countries, such as Canada, Australia, New Zealand, and Southern Ireland. He said that with the emancipation of overseas countries, and their desire for political independence, etc., the firm had handed these branches over to local Brown-Boveri organisations, and has concentrated on work offered for installation in the U.K., and overseas only if engineered by consultants established in this country.

Mr. Oswald said that research work and the design and development of electrical and thermal machinery and apparatus was exclusively done at the

headquarter of the Brown-Boveri organisation in Switzerland, where manufacture is either done in the organisation's own works or under license elsewhere. "But the company," he continued "whose 50th anniversary we celebrate to-day, is proud of having engineered many installations and/or found willing customers for the use of such goods."

The speaker then referred to a great number of installations and work undertaken and accomplished by his company in this country, indeed a remarkable list of splendid achievements. Unfortunately space does not allow us to mention them here.

Mr. Oswald concluded his address with the following words:

"And so after a period of fifty years British Brown-Boveri Limited — the new name it adopted in 1924 to avoid confusion with the English version of the Swiss Brown-Boveri Company's registered name — can claim an established position as one of the leading foreign associated engineering offices in London. We hope to play a useful part in the further development of this country and look forward to continued and increased activity during the years which lie ahead. Management and staff work hand-in-hand and team spirit is prevalent."

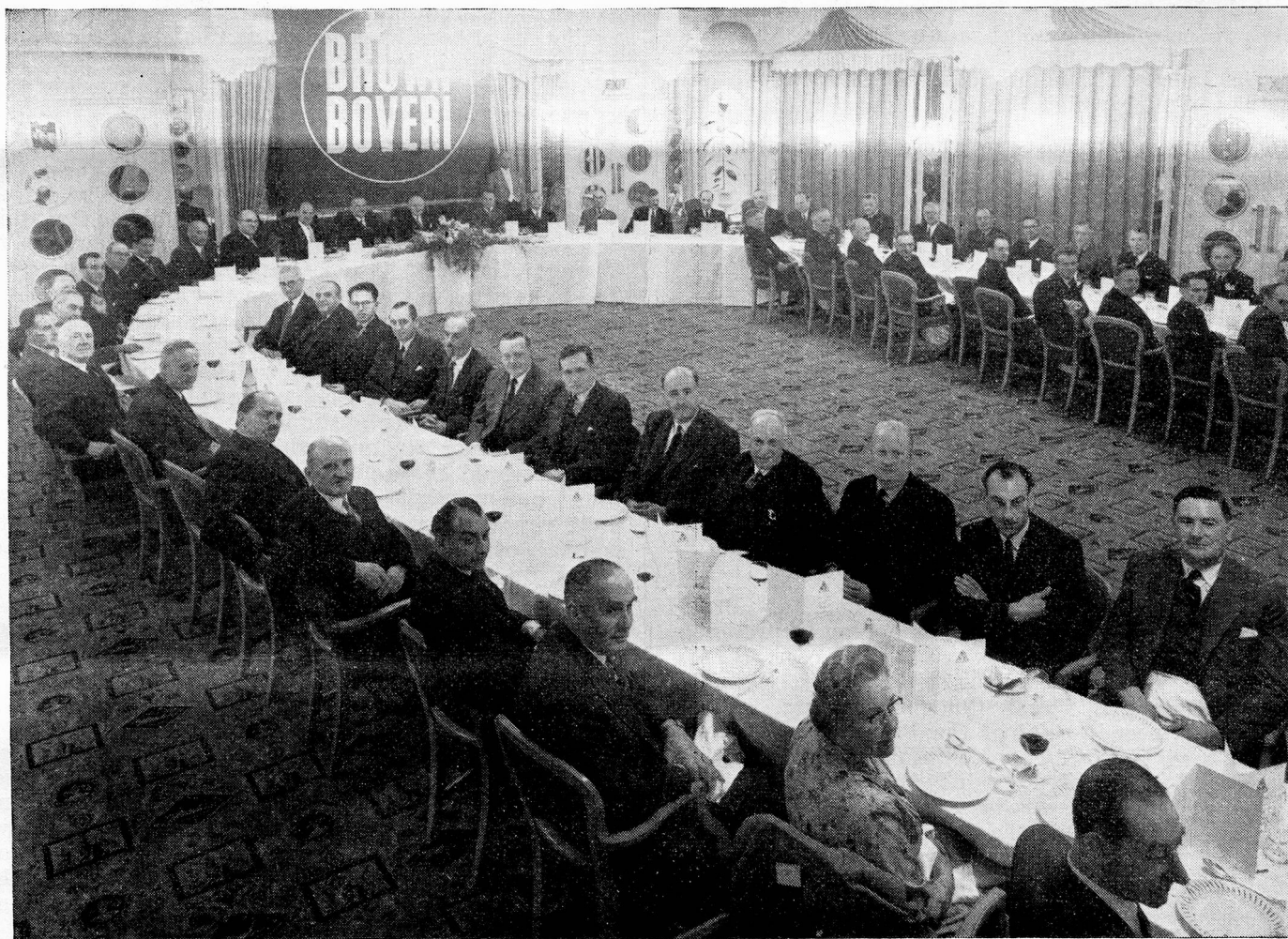
Loud and prolonged applause greeted the excellent speech of the company's Managing-Director.

The next speaker was Mr. R. Vodoz, Chairman of British Brown-Boveri Limited, and a Director of Brown Boveri & Co. Baden, who proposed the Toast "The Guests". He said that when he was informed some time ago that British Brown-Boveri Limited would soon be 50 years old he was somewhat surprised, remembering that the mother company in Baden celebrated its fiftieth anniversary only fifteen years earlier.

Mr. Vodoz mentioned that the legally independent Company in Great Britain ranks amongst the earliest of the Brown-Boveri establishments set up outside Switzerland, and can rightly claim to be the first beyond the shores of continental Europe.

"I think the step across the water was well worth it", he said, "judging from the progress Mr. Oswald has just outlined. On behalf of the Swiss Company's Directorate, I pay tribute to the past and present management, who have rendered such sterling service to the Brown-Boveri organisation as a whole."

The Company's Chairman then extended a hearty welcome to all the guests, mentioning various personalities by name (who are already contained in the Reception List), and in conclusion said: "Your Excellency, my Lord and Gentlemen, it is thanks to you, that British Brown-Boveri Limited prospered in



TOP TABLE.

Left to Right: Dr. E. M. Bircher, The Earl of Verulam, R. Vodoz, H.E. The Swiss Minister, Dr. A. Daeniker, H. Oswald, John A. Wedgwood, S. B. Warder, J. W. Rodger, T. P. Everette, Dr. R. Faessler.

the past and I raise my glass in your honour". (Applause).

The last Toast was the one "The Company", and was given by Mr. John H. Wedgwood, Deputy Managing-Director of Messrs. Josiah Wedgwood & Sons Ltd., Barlaston. The speaker, on behalf of the guests warmly thanked the Management of the British Brown-Boveri Limited for their hospitality.

Referring to Mr. Oswald's report concerning the activities of the Company, he mentioned that 50 years ago, electricity consumed in all Britain amounted to about 1½ thousand million units annually. By 1920, this had increased to only 3¾ thousand million. In 1938, the figure had reached 20 thousand million. By 1956, in spite of the war years, the total had trebled, and now exceeds 60 thousand million. As late as 1925, the electricity consumption in agriculture was less than three units per worker per year. In the succeeding 20 years it had risen 300 fold.

Mr. Wedgwood then touched upon the future of the industry, its problems and difficulties, saying: "The next 50 years of the life of British Brown-Boveri Limited are likely to be even more varied and fruitful than those whose passing we are commemorating today, they will be fraught with even greater responsibility to the public."

After referring to the close business connections between his firm and the British Brown-Boveri Limited, he said that three things were required for success — pioneering spirit, reliable workmanship, and economical operation — all of which were so prevalent in this Company, concluding with the words: "I have, therefore no doubt of the security of the future of our hosts to whose future health and prosperity I ask you to rise and drink." (Applause).

Thus a memorable mile stone in the history of the British Brown-Boveri Limited has passed, and we too gladly join all those who paid tribute to the company for their many remarkable achievements, wishing them a bright and successful future. *ST.*

SOPHIE WYSS BROADCAST.

Our readers might be interested to hear that Miss Sophie Wyss, the well-known Swiss soprano is broadcasting on August 1st from Glasgow (3rd Progr.). She is singing six Catalan folk songs by Robert Gerhard, who is of Swiss descent.

On Saturday, July 14th, she will give a recital of French songs with Anthony Hopkins (Home service, special Saturday morning recital).

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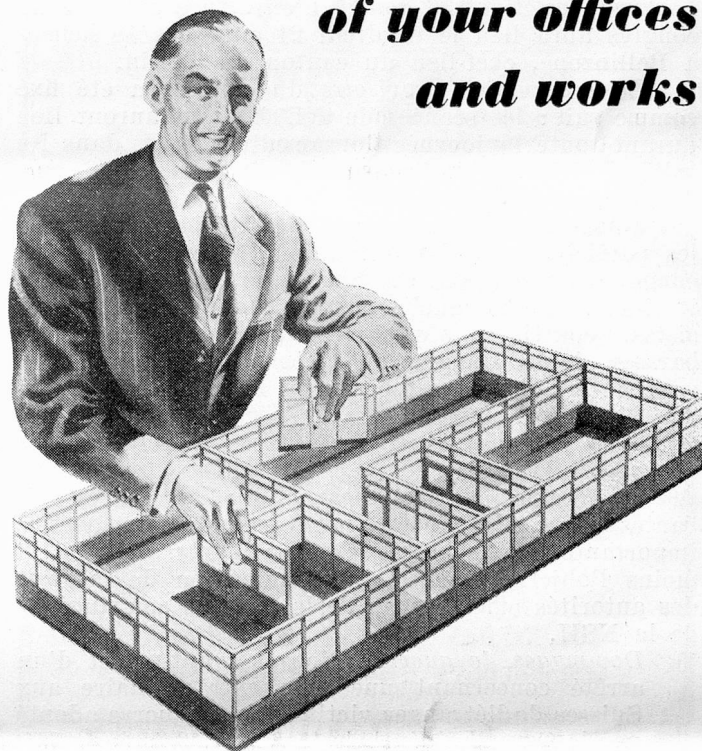
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