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COMMERCIAL NEWS

The telepheric, a Swiss speciality.

The large number of telepherics, chair-lifts and other similar mechanical means of transport installed in Switzerland provides excellent references for this industry. It is this which explains the preference given to Swiss manufacturers for the supply of a great many of these devices abroad. For instance, we have just learnt that the "Société des Usines de Louis de Roll", which is one of the most important Swiss firms in the metallurgical and mechanical industry, is now engaged in building a telepheric for Turkey. This order comes from the municipality of Bursa-Uludag, a winter sports station. The complete equipment will comprise a telepheric, consisting of two sections, with two cabins running in both directions along each section, followed by a chair-lift cabin. The line will be able to carry 300 persons per hour, the total distance covered amounting to about 7.5 kilometres, with a difference in level of 1,345 metres. With the aid of this telepheric — which is to be ready for use in 1959 — and that of an aircraft, Turkish skiers will be able to reach the skiing fields in one hour from Ankara.

In the United States — in California, to be exact — the same Swiss manufacturers have delivered the light cabins and the coupling gear required for a telepheric for tourists and lovers of sport, as well as the telepheric running in the famous "Disneyland", which for the last two years has constituted the Number One attraction of this celebrated American amusement park. This Swiss firm has now received an order to furnish a telepheric of the same kind to another amusement park in California, namely the "Ocean Park" at Santa Monica, in order to enable visitors to visit the whole park, without any exertion, "as the crow flies".

Swiss industry plays a cultural role.

To promote the arts and culture — this is a task which forms part of the unwritten duties of every industry that shows signs of evolution. This tendency is developing more and more in Swiss industry. Thus, "Ebosa S.A.", manufacturers of rough movements and machines, at Granges (near Solothurn), has reserved a good deal of space for artists in its new Home, or Club, which it has just built for its factory personnel. Already on the principal façade, an ornament in low-relief, the work of the sculptor, Remo Rossi, clearly indicates the spirit of social collaboration which prevails in the firm. What is particularly striking when one enters the magnificent club building — where the staff and the workers of the Ebosa can

enjoy relaxation, comfort and recreation — is the large number of works of art, pictures and sculptures, which decorate, in particular, the entrance hall and the reading room. It is a real exhibition, which not only enables young artists to show their work, but also makes the employees familiar with what is most modern in the domain of the plastic arts. We would also mention the fact that at the recent inauguration of this model Club the well-known Swiss composer, Hans Haug, arranged for the first performance to take place there of an "Ebosa capriccio, to the glory of the Machine", which he had composed specially for this occasion.

A foreign Minister praises the Swiss franc.

Recently, during a public speech at Loerrach, the Finance Minister of the German Federal Republic spoke in praise of the Swiss franc. He had already drawn attention to the stability of Swiss currency, in 1949. To-day, nine years later, the purchasing power of the Swiss franc has only declined by eight per cent, whereas that of the dollar has gone down by fourteen per cent, during the same period.

India places a big order with Swiss industry.

The Indian Railways have given an order to Swiss industry for sixteen rail-cars of a special kind. The machines are multiple units, with a driving cabin at each end and power in the central section, capable of carrying 600 to 1,000 persons each. The first of these rail-cars is already on its way to India, where it is

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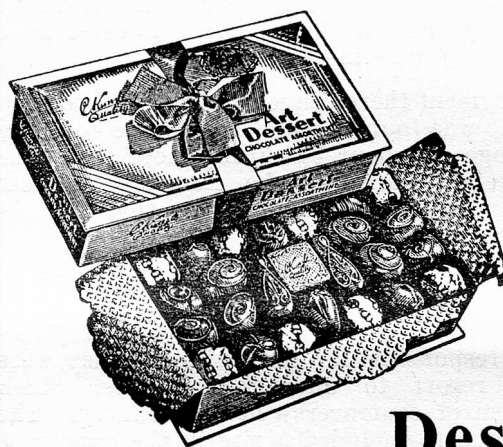
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expected to arrive during March, when it will be put into service on the lines in the suburbs of Calcutta. This rolling stock, of most modern construction, is the work of four Swiss railway car manufacturers and of three firms in the electro-technical branch of industry. The total value of this order comes to 15 million Swiss francs.

Foundation of a Swiss Museum of Technology.

Unfortunately, Switzerland does not possess a Museum of Technique, such as is to be found in a great many industrial countries. The Association which was founded ten years ago for the purpose of creating an establishment of this kind, and which since then has been engaged in collecting suitable objects for exhibition, has now decided to take action. The Swiss Museum of Technique is to be set up at Winterthur, with the help of the Confederation, of the Cantons, of the Swiss Universities and of industry.

Development of television in Switzerland.

The number of television sets in Switzerland subject to the payment of licences now amounts to nearly 33,000, of which more than 4,000 are to be found in public establishments and in hospitals, sanatoria, etc.

An Austrian airport on Swiss soil.

Official pourparlers are now taking place between Switzerland and Austria on the subject of the establishment, on Swiss territory, of a civil Austrian airport for the purpose of facilitating air traffic in the Austrian region of the Vorarlberg.

A Swiss firm acts as advisory engineering board for Irak.

The Development Board of Irak has entrusted to a Swiss firm in Berne the role of consulting engineer for the setting up of a plant for the manufacture of artificial textiles. It will be the firm's task to choose a site for the future factory, to decide upon its equipment and, later on, to supervise the installation of the plant and its being put into service. The plant is expected to produce seven-and-a-half tons of rayon and ten tons of staple fibre per day.

Success of an international exhibition in Switzerland.

The First International Exhibition for the purification of waters and of used waters was held recently in Basle, on the premises of the Swiss Industries Fair. It lasted for nine days and was visited by 15,000 people, who came from twenty countries. These results may be considered excellent if one takes into account the fact that this exhibition was not organised primarily for the general public, but for the representatives of industry and of the municipal services. In all probability it will be held again, in Basle, in three years' time.

Prolongation of the Swiss-Swedish Trade Agreement.

The Swiss-Swedish Trade Agreement has been prorogated for a period of one year, with retrospective effect as from 1st October, 1957. A Protocol to this effect was signed in Stockholm, between the Swedish Minister for Foreign Affairs and the Swiss Chargé d'Affaires at Stockholm. As a result of the liberalisation of trade exchange between the two countries, the lists of goods appended to the Swiss-Swedish Trade Agreement of 20th June, 1951, have now been abrogated.

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