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COMMERCIAL NEWS

New possibilities in the Swiss machine industry.

The firm of Sulzer Brothers, in Winterthur, recently invited technology specialists of the press to visit the vast halls of its new foundry in Oberwinterthur. From the point of view of overall-planning, equipment and production capacity, this new installation is one of the most remarkable of its kind in Europe. Castings are produced there weighing between 100 kilogrammes (221 pounds) and 120 tons, not only for the firm's own use, but also for other Swiss and foreign machine factories. In the excellently equipped work-sheds, a longitudinal boring-machine can be found which handles parts up to 65.5 feet long; this 900-metric ton monster is equipped with nearly 150 electric motors. On the same occasion, the Sulzer firm demonstrated a new marine diesel engine, a type of construction which has become one of the firm's specialities. This is a fast two-speed reversible motor which is attached directly to the drive shaft of the propeller. This 6-cylinder, 8000 HP motor was designed for cargo boats; the direction can very easily be reversed, and this in record time. The motor is controlled by only *two* levers.

* * *

Important order from CERN.

The Oerlikon construction works near Zurich recently received an important order from CERN, the European Nuclear Research Centre near Geneva. The order was for 44 electro magnets weighing a total of 600 metric tons for complementary equipment of a large proton-synchrotron. In order to guarantee a perfect operation of the electro magnets — which will sometimes have to work under very difficult conditions, the interior coils will undergo tests with tensions 15 times higher than normal working tension, after lying in water for 24 hours.

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A new kind of parking-disk.

A Swiss firm recently created a new parking-disk which is simple and robust in construction, can easily and swiftly be operated and whose dial is very legible. This small device — which can be made of aluminium or of plastic matter — can immediately be adapted to the various parking regulations now in force. This moderately-priced parking-disk which is meant to be installed in automobiles, can be used as a means of advertisement — small advertisement-bills can be printed on each model — and this will, in turn,

simplify the parking-disk's distribution by bringing down its price.

* * *

Swiss invention in the field of air conditioning.

In order to solve certain air conditioning difficulties, particularly in buildings which are not new, a Swiss engineer in Zurich has invented an interesting new device. This consists of a small heat-pump which is worked by air alone and which makes it possible to condition the air in the rooms, both in summer and in winter, without the aid of water or contributory heat, by means of a reversible circuit operated by freon gas. This air conditioning apparatus functions fully automatically and provides for a set of offices of 17650 cubic feet fresh air in the summer and warm air in the winter; it can even be used to warm the premises during the intermediate seasons. Experiments have shown that the functioning of this apparatus is very cheap, amounting, as it does, to Swiss francs 3.— (U.S.A. \$ 0.795) per 10.75 square feet per year. Thus, this new pump constitutes a very interesting contribution to the technique of air conditioning.

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Private journals issued by firms in Switzerland.

The private journal issued by firms, with the aim of creating a link between the members of the staff of industrial or commercial undertakings as well as between the staff and the management has now become something indispensable in the big companies, in order to promote human relations. The oldest organ of this kind in Switzerland was established by the firm of Sulzer Brothers, of Winterthur, as far back as in 1920. The number of such journals has increased considerably during the last few years and there are now nearly two hundred of them in Switzerland.

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Miniature relay interrupter in Switzerland.

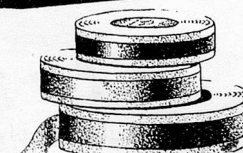
A firm in Zurich manufactures a miniature relay interrupter which, in spite of its reduced dimensions, is distinguished by high load capacity. This apparatus, which is insensitive to vibrations and shocks, can be used to great advantage under particularly difficult conditions, in the field of regulating and controlling technique, especially in apparatus where available space is very small and is subject to strong perturbations.



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Swiss telephone network.

Thirty years ago, the Swiss telephone network possessed 7,400 interurban circuits. Today, there are 33,000. During the same period, the number of inter-urban calls has increased in Switzerland from 79 to 455 millions per year. In order to avoid disturbances in the operation of this steadily increasing traffic, it will prove necessary, during the course of the next few years, to double or treble the number of circuits of the big telephone arteries of this country.

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A Swiss watch of new conception.

A Swiss watchmaking factory, in Bienne, has just put on the market a watch which will certainly please all those who wish to possess a time-piece which keeps exact time, in spite of all external circumstances. It is a well-known fact that however accurate may be the watch and however good the quality of its timing, the temperament of its wearer and the difference in temperature, in altitude, in pressure can all affect it and cause a variation in its movement. The absolutely new conception of the "Correctomatic", which can be timed without opening the case, now makes it possible to do away with all these factors of inaccuracy. The "Correctomatic" possesses in addition to the usual winding and setting-crown, two push-buttons. When the first of these is used, the hands of the watch which have been set at the approximate time, within 2 minutes, will, when the button is pressed at the exact signal for a quarter hour period (at any 15 minute interval : 15, 30, 45, or the hour), move instantly to the right place, and the watch will start going. Exactly 24 hours after setting, button No. 2 is pushed for automatic correction, which thus takes place if the loss or gain in time does not exceed two minutes. A variation of more than two minutes could only be the result of an accident and would therefore require the attention of a watchmaker. To sum up, it can only be said that the Correctomatic is truly the watch of the push-button era!

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The Swiss Federal Railways during the first half of 1959.

From the 1st January to the 30th June, 1959, the Swiss Federal Railways carried 113 million passengers, i.e. 2.6 million more than during the first half of last year. The transport of goods remained practically unchanged (11.25 as against 11.2 million tons). A decline of 12 million francs occurred, however, in respect of the profits derived from the operation of the railways, this due mainly to an increase in cost.

Swissair during the first six months of the year.

This year, Swissair is effecting its last preparations for the putting into service of jet aircraft. Traffic results for the first six months of the year are, fortunately, very satisfactory. Compared with the results for the same period in 1958, there has been an increase of 8% in tendered kilometre-tons (94 million) as also in utilised kilometre-tons (54.5 million). The average co-efficient of 57.6% in regard to occupation remained unchanged. Both passenger and postal traffic increased by 3%. Goods traffic increased by 31%, principally owing to the fact that a DC-6A Cargo-liner was used, the capacity of which is larger than that of the DC-4 used during the corresponding period in the previous year.

On the North Atlantic route, Swissair has been able to increase passenger traffic by 15.6%. One of the reasons for this success is due to the excellent reputation enjoyed by the Swiss Company on the other side of the Atlantic. Three new lines have been inaugurated by Swissair during the first six months of 1959, namely to Ankara, Teheran and Kuwait. Its air line network now comprises 54 places of call in the five Continents, and extends over more than 120,000 kilometres. Thus, when taking into account the length of the network, Swissair now ranks sixth among the 88 companies which are members of the IATA.

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Success of the television in Switzerland..

In July, 1959, the number of licence-holders for television in Switzerland increased by a further 1,643, and has now attained the total figure of 67,882, of which 47,814 licensees are to be found in German-speaking Switzerland, 14,694 in French-speaking regions and 5,374 in the Tessin.

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Building of new housing units in Switzerland.

During the first half of this year, 6207 new housing units were built in Switzerland, as compared with 5352 in the corresponding period of 1958; the increase was less marked in the big cities, than in other places.

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A useful watchmaking novelty.

Swiss watchmakers not only endeavour to perfect the mechanism of watches and to make their use more agreeable, but they also strive to make some changes in their appearance, a task which demands a good deal of imagination as, after all, a watch remains a watch and does not offer much scope for change. It is,

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of course, a double advantage to the user when a fashionable novelty also carries with it a practical advantage, as is the case in regard to the new "Stand up" models, created by a watchmaking factory in Geneva. In this new device, the watch is placed diagonally on the bracelet, so that it is no longer necessary to turn the wrist completely and to have the watch facing one exactly in order to see the time, because here midday is placed on the spot where one finds 1.30 p.m. on the dial of the traditional watch-bracelets. Moreover, by means of a little special hinge, the watch can be raised from the bracelet, thus making it easier to see the time when one is driving a car, or reading, etc. This new device is being adapted to a whole series of watches belonging to the very flat type, for ladies and for men, to automatic watches and to calendar and alarm watches. This new, extremely practical device brings a very attractive modern note to watches.

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A new Swiss amplifier.

A concern in Bienne, Switzerland, has just put a transistorized amplifier on the market which has some very remarkable qualities. Actually, this is the smallest and lightest amplifier now on the market, with the enormous output-power of 45 Watts. Weighing approximately 8.85 pounds, small in construction and using very little current, this small amplifier can be transported and installed very easily; it can be connected instantly and operates anywhere. It is particularly suited for use in publicity, parades, sports events and can also be used by the police and the army, on building sites, in railroad stations, and so on. There is even a special type for fire-brigades.

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A Swiss pioneer of technique in Argentina.

In Buenos Aires, the Swiss mechanical engineer Karl Fischbach recently celebrated his 80th birthday. Mr. Fischbach, a graduate of the Winterthur Institute of Technology, left a post in Germany for a position as head-machinist of the Buenos Aires central power-plant. In 1910, he opened a firm of his own, and today, he is still at the head of a technical concern. He took part in equipping many Argentine industries and constructed all kinds of installations, in the field of public works as well as of industry. Mr. Fischbach was the first president of the Swiss chamber of commerce in Buenos Aires, founded in 1938, and is now an honorary member of this organisation.

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