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COMMERCIAL NEWS

A Swiss to be head of international institution.

It is a Swiss, Mr. Eugène Hasler, head of a section in the General Administration of the Swiss Federal Railways, in Berne, who has been chosen for the post of a new Director-General of the Eurofima (European Society for the Financing of Railway Material), the head offices of which are in Basle. The fourteen railway networks of Europe, united in the Eurofima, have thus called upon a Swiss financial expert to occupy this important international post.

Another distinction for a Swiss film.

The Swiss film "It Happened in Broad Daylight", produced by the Praesens Film, in Zurich, the scenario being written by Fr. Durrenmatt and the principal part being played by the famous actor, Michel Simon — who is a Swiss, also — has been listed by the "Association des chroniqueurs suisses de cinéma" (Association of Swiss Film Critics) among the ten best films shown in Switzerland in 1958. It ranks fourth on the list, which is a very honourable position, coming after "Twelve Angry Men", "The Bridge on the River Kwai" and "My Uncle".

St. Gall Convent founded over twelve centuries ago.

The town St. Gall owes its origin to the religious house established there by the Irish monk Gallus in

the year 612. The monastery of St. Gall was founded about a century and a half later, and this year it celebrates the twelve hundredth anniversary of the death, in 759, of its founder, the Benedictine Othmar. A hermit's cell in the seventh century, then, later on, a monastery and a great centre of culture, St. Gall has now become, in the twentieth century, the centre for Swiss embroidery industries and fine cotton fabrics.

Switzerland steps up her production of electricity.

In 1958 the Swiss electricity plants produced more than 13 million kilowatt-hours, i.e., 4 per cent more than in 1957. During the month of December production increased by 3 per cent in comparison with the corresponding month in 1957.

Switzerland and European co-operation.

A "Swiss Society for European Economic Co-operation" was founded recently, in Zurich, on the initiative of a Committee composed of representatives of scientific and industrial circles. This new body will function as an independent Section of the "European League for Economic Co-operation", in Brussels, and will thus replace the Swiss Institute for Foreign Trade and the Study of Markets, which, up to the present, has maintained the liaison with the European League. The aim of this new society is to promote closer



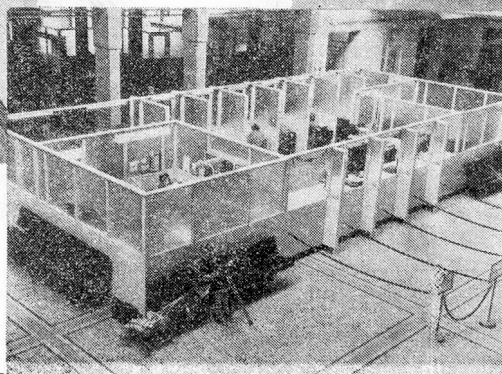
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cultural and economic relations between the West European countries, and to propagate the idea of European co-operation on the plane of political economy.

New institute of exact sciences in Berne.

Building work is to be started very shortly, in Berne, on a new Institute of Exact Sciences, attached to the University of this city, which is to be erected on the site of the former Institute of Physics, which had become too old and was destroyed voluntarily during the course of an exercise for anti-aircraft defence.

Highest dam in the world featured in Swiss film.

The Swiss amateur film producer, Roland Müller, has just shown in Lausanne his film entitled "Barrage" ("The Dam"), which he has devoted to a subject of gigantic proportions, namely the famous hydro-electric scheme of the Grande-Dixence, which is being erected at an altitude of more than 6,500 feet, at the further end of the Val-des-Dix, in the Canton of Valais. This dam, on which construction work started in 1951, will be, with its 930 feet, the highest in the world; its width at the top will attain 2,300 feet; it will be finished in 1962 (the entire job is to be concluded in 1965) and it will bring a very appreciable contribution to Swiss economy in the shape of 1,650,000 kilowatt-hours per year, of which 85 per cent will be winter electricity. The partial accumulation of water in the dam, which took place in 1957, has already made possible the operation of a first power plant — that of Fionnay — whilst a second plant, at Nendaz, will start operating next autumn. This construction job is being carried out under conditions which are often very hard because of the altitude, the difficulties of access, and weather conditions. During the high season some 3,000 workers are engaged on the job, and on some days the consumption of cement attains as much as 1,000 metric tons.

Swiss lifts for biggest hotel in Northern Europe.

In the biggest and most modern of the hotels in Northern Europe, the "Royal Hotel" now being built in Copenhagen (it will have twenty-two stories but no staircases), the five principal lifts are to be delivered and installed by the Swiss firm of "Fabrique suisse de wagons et d'ascenseurs S.A." (Swiss Car and Elevator Manufacturing Corp. Ltd.), of Schlieren, near Zurich. These machines have been built in accordance with the latest technical improvements, and comprise, *inter alia*, four lifts with accommodation for six persons each, travelling at the rate of 9.85 feet per second. The Royal Hotel, with its 500 beds, is being built by the SAS airlines company, and will be opened in the spring of 1960, under the management of the Swiss hotel-keeper, Mr. Alberto Kappenberger.

Carefree parking thanks to a Swiss invention.

It is the dream of many a man to possess a motor car. When he gets one, he thinks that now, at last, he can be happy; alas, his worries are only beginning! Among them, one of the first that has got to be mentioned is parking! It no longer suffices to find a place for parking, a task that grows more and more difficult in the big cities, but there is also the question of not parking longer than the time allowed for it. It is at this stage that help is forthcoming from a Swiss invention, the "Memopark", a meter of current usage, so that its price is much lower than that of a watch. This device, which is just as useful, also, to the technician, the housewife and the traveller, consists of an elegant key-ring and a disc, the size of a Swiss 5-franc piece, made from an unbreakable plastic sub-

stance, bearing a dial on one side, the rim of which is graded from 0 to 60 minutes. All one has to do is to place the arrow attached to a concentric button in the dial pointing to the desired figure and the "Memopark" will warn its owner, by means of a loud ringing, of the expiration of 15, 30, 45 or 60 minutes, or of any other intermediary lapse of time which has been fixed beforehand. This is an excellent means of avoiding any infringement of parking regulations.

A Swiss stadium serves as a model.

It is well known that Lausanne possesses a magnificent stadium, which was built in 1954, when the World Football Championships took place in Switzerland. A photograph of this stadium, which was published in an architectural review, was seen, by chance, by the Ethiopian Prime Minister, who thereupon commissioned the Swiss architect, Mr. Thévenaz, who had designed the Olympic Stadium in Lausanne, to submit plans for a stadium in Addis Ababa. The grandstand is to be built exactly the same as that of its model and will be provided — and this is very remarkable — with a roof having a pitch of 18.5 metres, overhanging, with no pillars to support it.

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