

Facts and Figures

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FACTS AND FIGURES.

By MR. RYSLER.

According to some recently published statistics, air traffic in Switzerland increased still further in 1958. From them we learn that the national airline company Swissair carried about a million passengers, this being an increase of 7 per cent as compared with 1957. The weight of the freight transported rose by approximately 25 per cent to 15,000 tons. On 1st July 1958 the airline network of Swissair extended over 120,000 kilometres, this being 25,000 kilometres more than in the preceding year. In 1958 the following foreign airline companies operated the lines between their respective countries and Switzerland, throughout the whole year: Austrian Airlines, Vienna; Finnair, Helsinki; Trans-Canada Airlines, Montreal; Olympic Airways, Athens; Polish Aviation Company, Warsaw; and — after an interruption lasting for five years — the Misrair Heliopolis, Egypt. The number of foreign airline companies carrying out flights to our country regularly, the whole year round, has thus now gone up to 29.

* * *

The loan which was put up for public subscription in Switzerland recently by the British Petroleum Company Limited, and which amounted in value to 60 million francs, has proved extremely successful. The subscriptions exceeded the available amount to a considerable degree so that they can only be taken into consideration partially and on a very reduced basis.

* * *

As announced by the American Cyanamid Company, an important firm in the chemical and pharmaceutical industry, the preparatory work for the setting up in Geneva of a Laboratory for Fundamental Research has now been brought to a satisfactory conclusion. This Research Station, which is to bear the title of "Cyanamid European Research Institute", will employ Swiss, British, French, German and other scientists, and will devote itself to long term fundamental research in the domain of chemistry and biology. This American undertaking has the intention of placing in the service of the Institute six or seven leading scientists who are specialists in various branches of science. Each research scientist will be at the head of his own special department and will have at his disposal not only the most modern equipment, but also a competent staff.

* * *

A new road-tunnel — which is the longest in Switzerland, with its 15,000 metres — was recently put into operation in the Blenio Valley, in the Canton of Tessin. This tunnel makes traffic possible the whole year round without any danger from avalanches and snow-drifts. An interesting feature of this tunnel is its automatic ventilation, which, naturally, works in accordance with the amount of exhaust gas present. Should the ventilation plant break down for some reason or other, traffic at both ends of the tunnel is stopped automatically by means of traffic lights.

* * *

A new power station is to be set up shortly in Veytaux, in the vicinity of the Castle of Chillon, by the Lake of Geneva, the entire plant being housed in a subterranean cavern which will measure 100 metres in length, 23 metres in width and 20 metres in height. The building costs for this new power station are estimated at approximately 30 million francs.