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COMMERCIAL NEWS

Swiss industry and Spanish trains

The first rail-car of 3,000 h.p. to be built in Spain, for the account of the Spanish State Railways, was recently shown at Barcelona. This rail-car train is intended for the transport of passengers. It has been built by a Spanish-Swiss group, with the technical assistance of the following Swiss firms: the Schindler Car Manufacturing Company, Ltd., the Swiss Car and Elevator Manufacturing Company, Ltd., Messrs. Brown Boveri & Company, Ltd., and the Sécheron Works.

The general plan for the reconstruction and modernisation of the Spanish rail network provides for the putting into service of 143 rail-car trains of this kind. These are composed of three carriages and are 250 feet in length. Their speed amounts to 68 miles per hour and they are capable of carrying 636 passengers.

Swiss innovation in the field of radio reception

Swiss manufacturers of wireless sets, directed and supported by the specialised laboratories of the P.T.T. and by the Swiss Broadcasting Corporation, have just perfected an ultra-short-wave receiver which eliminates the increasingly large number of atmospheric disturbances caused more particularly by the starting of the engines on motor-cars. These appliances, which are being sold at a moderate price, are similar to others, so far as long and medium waves are concerned. On the other hand, the reception part of the radio for the ultra-short waves has been considerably improved; this solution seemed to be a better one than a campaign for the elimination of interference, the results of which would, of necessity, have been only partial. Thanks to this new receiver, those inconveniences which prevented a perfect reception of ultra-short waves in Switzerland, have now been completely done away with.

Oil pipe-lines in Switzerland

The Government of the Canton of Tessin has concluded an Agreement with an Italian company, in Milan, in regard to the oleoduct which it is planned to build between the Port of Genua and the Federal German Republic. According to the terms of this

Convention, in which the Government of the Canton of Grisons is also interested, this pipe-line, coming from Italy, will pass through the Canton of Tessin, and, from there, via the San-Bernardino, will enter the Canton of Grisons. The signature of the Agreement only represents the first stage of the proceedings; it authorises the Cantons concerned to use this oleoduct for the conveyance of heavy oils which are necessary for their own requirements.

An atomic achievement in Switzerland

The first Swiss atomic reactor, called "Diorit", was put into operation on 26th August. The first studies for it began fourteen years ago, whilst the construction of the reactor took four years. All this will no doubt have made it possible for a number of physicists and, more especially, technicians to acquire the practical knowledge which is indispensable for future constructions. This realisation will also render it possible to carry out numerous experiments, which are in no way less necessary both for scientific research workers and for Swiss industry. The heavy-water Diorit reactor, which was built by the Reactor Company, Ltd., which comprises several Swiss industrial undertakings, is to be found at the atomic centre at Würenlingen, in the Canton of Argovie, which is the Federal Institute for Research Work Concerning Reactors. The reactor was started officially by Mr. Max Petitpierre, the President of the Confederation, in the presence of a great many personalities belonging to the world of industry, of higher education and of politics.

Swiss timekeeping at the Olympic Games

In order to be able to measure the time taken for sports performances, the director of the Chronometrical Service of the Olympic Games had at his disposal 180 persons for measuring the times, provided with Omega chronometers, furnished with a First Class certificate. Moreover, for certain sporting events Omega electrical registering apparatus was used in addition, operated by a quartz clock; for the Olympic swimming events, the Swiss Omega watchmaking firm had perfected an electronic chronometrical apparatus, which is absolutely new and has now been used for the first time.

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The "Montres et Bijoux" exhibition at Geneva

It was on 9th September that the famous annual exhibition, "Watches and Jewellery", opened its doors, at Geneva, and during three weeks it showed the most lovely new creations of those artists, the Swiss watchmakers and jewellers. This year this magnificent parade was enriched — the term may be taken quite literally — by an exhibition of diamonds, both in the rough and already cut.

Big foreign order placed with a Swiss firm

A Swiss firm dealing in industrial materials, in Lausanne, has just received an important order for the carrying out of the soldering work on the continuous rails of the new railway, 467 miles in length, which is to be built in Mauritania, from Port-Etienne to the iron-ore beds at Fort-Gouraud.

The 1960 Swiss Week

The Swiss Week is an event which takes place during two weeks, every year, in Switzerland, for the purpose of promoting the sale of domestic products. Last year 43,000 retailers participated in this Swiss Week, and exhibited Swiss products in their windows, attention to their origin being drawn by special cards. This year the Swiss Week will be held from 15th to 29th October.

American topographical map made in Switzerland

A topographical map, at a 50-thousandth scale, of the Mount McKinley region, in Alaska, which is the highest summit in the United States, has just been published, as the result of close American-Swiss collaboration. It was Mr. Bradford Washburn, the Curator of the Science Museum in Boston, who was the instigator of this map, for the carrying out of which he called upon the collaboration of the Swiss Federal Topographical Service, in Berne, and of the Wild Factory for the manufacture of geodesical instruments, at Heerbrugg (Switzerland). The publication of this map gave rise to a manifestation of Swiss-American friendship, in Berne, at which were present, among other personalities, Mr. Paul Chaudet, the Swiss Minister of War, and Mr. Taylor, the Ambassador of the United States in Berne.

Swiss telephone experts for countries to be developed

Acting in accordance with the terms of the technical aid furnished to the developing countries by the International Union of Telecommunications, Mr. Emil Frey, Director of Telephones at Basle, has just gone to Israel, in the capacity of an expert, in order to occupy himself with the problems peculiar to automatic telephony. Furthermore, Mr. Dag Hammarskjöld, Sec-

retary-General of the United Nations, has asked Switzerland to place some experts and technicians at his disposal, for the reorganisation of the telecommunications in the Congo; at the request of the Federal Authorities, Mr. Henri Challet, Director of Telephones of the Lausanne District, has declared his willingness to supervise the carrying out of this work. He left Switzerland for Leopoldville on 5th August, and will very shortly be joined by a team of technicians.

Success of the Swiss Transport House

More than 250,000 people have already visited the Swiss Transport House, which was inaugurated last year, in Lucerne. This interesting permanent exhibition has been receiving the attention of a great many personalities from all parts of the world.

Swiss couturier at Iranian imperial court

In 1950 the proprietress of the Nino Fashion House, Teheran, went to Paris to seek for a first-class colleague, in view of all the preparations for the marriage of the Shah of Iran. It was there that she met Swiss couturier Mr. Pierre Krattiger, whom she engaged for a period of several months. However, ten years have now elapsed since then, and Mr. Krattiger is still in Teheran, which he has made into the centre of fashion for the Middle East, and, at the same time, has become the official Court couturier in Iran. Monsieur Pierre, as he is generally called, has a staff of thirty persons working under his direction. It goes without saying that he had an enormous amount of work on the occasion of the new marriage of the Shah of Iran. In short, Mr. Krattiger is a great credit to Switzerland whose textile and clothing industry enjoys a world reputation for high quality.

Swiss machinery abroad

At Cambalé (Angola) an electric power station is now being built which will comprise four units of 90,000 h.p. each. This station constitutes the first stage towards the exploitation of the river Cuanza. A group of Swiss and French firms, under the direction of a big Swiss concern, has been commissioned to carry out the electric equipment of this station.

Switzerland and the EFTA

During the course of the last few months, there has been a marked increase in the demand for books relating to the economic integration of Europe. This is why a Swiss publishing firm has now started to edit a bulletin entitled "La Suisse au sein de l'AELE", which is supplemented by a bibliography of all the new books which have appeared, dealing with European integration, the O.E.E.C., the Common Market and the European Free Trade Association.



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