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COMMERCIAL NEWS

New cable for electrical work about the house

At the recent Radio and Television Exhibition in Zurich, an interesting Swiss product was on show, which will doubtless prove very useful to both amateur and professional electricians for the installation of electricity indoors. It is an adhesive twin cable which can be applied instantly and permanently to all non-porous surfaces, such as painted wall-paper, wainscoting, ceramic tiles, etc. The surface of the cable which is to be applied to a wall is flat and is coated with an adhesive which does not dry, as it is protected by a thin sheet of paper. When applying the cable, all one has to do is to pull off the protective paper, and the cable is ready to be affixed. These cables, for which both Swiss and foreign patents have been applied for, are to be had in various colours, so that they do not clash with the prevailing colour of the rooms in which they are used. This useful invention, which has been subjected successfully to various tests, will no doubt find an extensive field of application.

Europe's most modern electro-magnet is in Lausanne

A new type of electro-magnet, intended for research work, has just been installed at the School of Physics, at the Lausanne University. This apparatus is the biggest of its kind in Switzerland and the most highly perfected in Europe. Its setting-up required work of the greatest precision, which was rendered all the more difficult by the fact that it weighed nine tons. It was built by an important machine works at Oerlikon, near Zurich.

Useful Hobby

A great many people like to spend their leisure time in making their home look more lovely. It is for them that the "Smyrna-Presto" apparatus has been devised by a Swiss firm. This consists of a small machine worked by hand, which produces the real Smyrna knot for the manufacture of raised pile carpets. It is very easy to handle, uses wool that has already been cut to the required length, and inserts it into canvas which is stretched on a frame supplied with the "Smyrna-Presto". The work is executed, in an absolutely regular manner, without there being any necessity to cut the loops, subsequently, or to close-cut the carpet.

First "All-Swiss" book-keeping machine

The "Hermes C-3", which is the first book-keeping machine of entirely Swiss conception and manufacture, was exhibited recently, as a prototype, at the Exhibition of Office Equipment, in Zurich. Production of the machine — the fruit of work and efforts pursued over a long period of time — is expected to start in 1962. This automatic machine is a combination of an improved typewriter (the "Hermes Ambassador Electric") and a calculating unit possessing computing headings, the number of which can be varied. The Hermes C-3 caused a sensation by the simple, rapid and silent way in which it operates, by the small amount of space which it takes up, and by the great flexibility attached to its utilisation. It combines the keyboard supplied with twelve keys of an adding machine, placed in front of the complete keyboard of a typewriting machine. The operator has at his disposal interchangeable control units which control electric contacts and relays, without being subject to any mechanical effort. Each unit makes it possible to

execute four programmes, and one can pass from one of them to another, simply by pressing a button. Furthermore, the machine is endowed with eight programmes of automatic tabulation, which are independent of the control units.

Swiss industry on the high seas

Four rapid cargo boats of 11,000 metric tons each, which have been ordered by a British company of ship-owners, are to be equipped with Diesel engines of a new type, of which the cylinders, which are 35.5 inches in diameter, are capable of developing 2,000 h.p. each. Thus, every 9-cylinder engine will possess a capacity of 18,000 h.p., which will enable the ship to attain a speed of 19 knots.

New physics institute in Switzerland

As a result of aid received from the National Fund for Scientific Research and from private enterprise, the University of Neuchâtel has now been endowed with a new building for its Physics Institute. This building, constructed on very modern lines, has been equipped with all the improvements and all the apparatus required nowadays for scientific research.

Great success of a Swiss invention in America

When the National Congress of the Republican Party took place, during the course of which Mr. Nixon was appointed as the Republican candidate for the presidential elections, the competitors present addressed themselves to the public by means of television. For this purpose, it was an Eidophore set, a Swiss invention patronised by the firm of Ciba S.A., of Basle, which was used, because it makes it possible for televised pictures to be projected with great brilliance on to a screen measuring 215 square feet.

The friendly ticking of an old clock

It is a curious fact — which is sometimes rather comforting — to discover that in our era, so advanced technically, man still feels the need to cling to the proved values which connect him with the past. This is one of the reasons for the tremendous interest in antiques! It is in order to satisfy this need to escape into time that a Swiss clockmaker has created the "Buco 1320" clock — the most ancient of modern clocks, in that it is a reproduction of a timepiece which dates back six hundred years. Made entirely of wood, but, of course, with that particular care which is the rule in Swiss industry, this clock possesses only one hand, as was customary in the 14th century; its movement is visible, and it is driven by a weight. Such as it is, this very decorative clock is not intended for the control panel of an aircraft, but for those pleasant and restful rooms in which modern Man likes to spend his leisure hours in congenial company, and where its tick-tack will mark those hours which are not devoted to business, but to friendship and to the pleasure of good company. No doubt that, conceived in this way on the plane of human relationships, the "Buco 1320" will find a great many purchasers.

Europe's biggest automatic-bowling-alley factory

Now that technique has taken a hand in the matter, the game of skittles is fast becoming a sport. For, to-day, skittle alleys are being set to function automatically; not only are the balls returned to the players, but the fallen pins are also set up again automatically. It is in Switzerland that is to be found the most important factory in Europe manufacturing such

automatic skittle-alleys. Thanks to an electronic control panel, these modern automatic skittle-alleys can be made to conform in their functioning to the different ways that exist in the playing of skittles, the rules not being the same in all the countries. For example, it is possible to have the ball sent back for a second bowling without those pins which have already been knocked down being set up again; moreover, the electronic control panel also makes it possible to tot up the points won by each of the players, in accordance with the manner of counting in use in each country. The very acme of refinement consists in a new gadget which, in order to comply with the rules of the game as played in the United States, takes into account the slight displacement caused by the ball to the ninepins, without bowling them over. The Swiss firm exports two-thirds of its production to countries in Europe and overseas, and produces an average of 80 such automatic skittle-alleys per month.

The next census in Switzerland

Statisticians — and through them the sociologists and the economists — require precise data on the state of the population, at fixed periods. That is the reason why a new census is to take place in Switzerland, enumerating all the persons living in that country on the night of 30th November — 1st December, next. The very comprehensive questionnaires distributed to all the households (in the broad sense of the term) will make it possible for the authorities to obtain an exact idea of the structure of the population, in regard to age, education and professional training, and will also furnish other interesting demographical data.

Plastics at the next Swiss Fair at Basle

Next Spring, the Swiss Plastic Material Industry will have at its disposal, at the next Swiss Industries Fair, a superficial area for exhibition purposes,

amounting to 8,000 square yards, as compared with 1,800 square yards, previously. This was decided recently by the management of the Swiss Industries Fair, at Basle, following upon a meeting which had brought together more than eighty delegates of manufacturing associations and firms belonging to all the various branches of the Swiss Plastic Material Industry.

Swiss jewellers receive foreign awards

It was on 4th October last that the "Diamonds International Awards" were bestowed this year, in New York. Among the nineteen jewellers who obtained this "Oscar", there were two Swiss firms, namely that of E. Meister, Jewellery, in Zurich, and that of Patek Philippe, in Geneva.

New process for manufacturing vinegar

The origin of vinegar goes back to the remotest antiquity, and the methods used to manufacture this product have changed very little through the centuries. Now, a Swiss firm at Ballaigues (Vaud) has just perfected an automatic system of submerged acetification known as "Acetomatic", which possesses distinct advantages over previous methods. The production of vinegar by the "Acetomatic" system does away with wood shavings which become charged with "mothers" of vinegar; consequently manufacture is much more hygienic. In addition, this production process is approximately ten times as fast as the traditional methods, the output 10 per cent higher, the space required ten times less. The plant can be fitted with special devices making the whole process completely automatic. Most of the apparatus and gear necessary for the erection of the "Acetomatic" plant can be bought locally and installed by the customer's own staff.



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