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COMMERCIAL NEWS

A Swiss film wins an award

At the First International Festival of the Industrial Film, in Turin, the Cup offered by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs was awarded for the film "Swiss Porcelain", which had been produced in Switzerland, for the account of the Langenthal Porcelain Factory.

A giant screen

On the 15th of January last, there took place, in Zurich, the first public projection of televised images, in the unusual size of about 645 feet. This show, which was realised by means of a Swiss apparatus, the "Eidophore", was thrown on a screen that could be taken to pieces and had no visible seam or joint. This screen, the biggest of its kind in Europe, was manufactured by a Swiss firm.

Swiss firms carry out a big order in Turkey

The General Management of the State Atatürk Farm, in Ankara, has just given an order to the Wefcoma-International, of Lucerne, for the complete technical equipment of the big Marmara Hotel, near Ankara. This order, which is being executed by several Swiss firms, comprises the complete installation of the laundry, the cellar, the kitchen, the larder and the restaurant, with all the necessary equipment and accessories, such as washing machines, kitchen ranges and grills, kitchen utensils, crockery, etc. This order was obtained, in spite of very strong international competition.

A far-seeing clock.

There is a calendar-clock in Switzerland, which indicates the days of the month, right up to the 28th of February, 2100, automatically taking into account the 29th of February, in Leap Years. When that moment arrives, however, it will prove necessary to modify the date by hand, owing to a subtlety of our calendar.

The clock in question forms part of a new astronomical unit which has just been installed at the Technicum, in Le Locle, the famous Swiss watch-making centre. This unit comprises two clocks, the dials of which are 19.7 inches in diameter; one of them shows the solar time and its mechanism corrects, with the greatest precision, the difference between the real solar time and the mean time; moreover, it shows the hours at which the sun rises and sets. The other clock indicates the civil or Standard time in hours, minutes and seconds, and also gives the days of the month — as already mentioned by us — the days of the week, an indication of the month, and also the lunation. The phases of the moon are shown by means of a disc, which accomplishes a revolution in 29 days, 12 hours, 44 minutes and 3 seconds, which is the exact time taken by a revolution of the moon.

Several months of work have been required for the manufacture of these two clocks, all the various parts having been made by hand. It constitutes a curiosity which does great honour to the Swiss watch-making industry.

A new Swiss sewing-machine.

A well-known Swiss firm has just placed on the market a new sewing-machine for industry and the trade, called "Bernina kl.217". This is a big machine for straight sewing and for zigzag stitching, which is distinguished by the large size of the zigzag and the maximum length of the stitches, both of which can attain about 0.236 inches. When doing zigzag stitching, the machine accomplishes 2,700 revolutions per minute. This machine is specially intended for tailors and dressmakers, as well as for the industries which manufacture ready-to-wear clothes and underwear, and it should prove of great value, in that it makes it possible to perform all the work required for the making of clothes, such as over-stitching, buttonhole stitching, the sewing of buttons, hooks, etc., as well as doing piping in various widths, making ornamental stitches and various kinds of seams, edges, etc.

A new Swiss scientific society.

A Swiss Group for the study of clays and rocks was founded at Zurich, last October. Its aim is to unite, on a national plane, the efforts of all the university and industrial research workers, in order to surmount the difficulties which hamper scientific research conducted individually on a private plane. A continuous evolution is taking place in methods of investigation, whilst, at the same time, the field of research is expanding, so that it is not possible for any private concern to obtain, all by itself, the results which would be made possible by close co-ordination in this domain. This new Group comprises personalities representing the Universities, the Federal Laboratory for Testing Materials, pertaining to the Metallurgical Industries, the tile-making, ceramic and cement industries, the oil-prospecting branch, the producers of refractive materials and the big chemical industry.

Australia to be the guest of honour at the next Lausanne Fair.

The 41st Lausanne Fair is to be held from the 10th to the 25th of September, 1960. Its success has already been assured, no less than 95% of last year's

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exhibitors having announced their intention to participate. Faithful to its traditional formula, the Lausanne Fair will again welcome the official participation of a foreign country, this time — Australia. The presence of this guest of honour at the next Lausanne Fair proves the interest felt by foreign nations in exhibiting in a Special Pavilion, organised by their own Government in agreement with the Swiss Authorities.

The next Geneva Motor Show.

The 30th International Motor Show, at Geneva, will be open to visitors from Thursday, the 10th, to Sunday, the 20th of March. As usual, it will be solemnly inaugurated by the President of the Confederation, Mr. Max Petitpierre.

In the Swiss radio industry.

The total number of radio listeners and TV viewers in Switzerland has now attained approximately 1,400,000 whilst the sale of sets amounts to some 120,000 per year. The sets manufactured in Switzerland are adapted to the difficult reception conditions prevailing in that country, as a result of its geographical situation. Thus, the domestic industry has succeeded, in spite of heavy competition on the part of Germany and Japan, in preserving an appreciable part of the market. The exportation of Swiss radio sets to the neighbouring countries is hampered, however, by high customs duties.

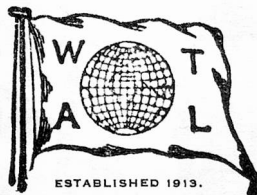
A revolutionary new electric cooker.

A Swiss firm in Schwanden, which specialises in the manufacture of cooking apparatus, has launched a new type of electric cooker which has revolutionised housekeeping technique. Taking into account the fact that nowadays kitchens are apt to be very small, the new Therma cooker has got its two, three or four plates (as the case may be) arranged, not in the shape

of a square, as is usual on the classical type of cooker, but in a straight line; this arrangement considerably reduces the space for this cooker. Moreover, when not in use, it is possible to tip back the plates into a vertical position, when detachable bowls, made of stainless steel, will be found under them, which can be used for the preparation of dishes. Being provided with a perforated cover, these bowls are also useful for draining vegetables; a board can also be placed over them, if there is any chopping or mincing to be done. As for the plates these are mounted on tubes placed at the same level as the plate when it is in use; these tubes form a kind of grating on which pots and pans can be placed after the cooking has been done. We would like to add that this electrical cooker is covered with a plastic substance which matches the colour of the kitchen.

A weighbridge for very heavy loads

The new plant belonging to the Swiss firm of Brown, Boveri, has now been equipped with a weighbridge, which is the biggest of its kind in Switzerland, and is intended for weighing railway trucks and road vehicles. The capacity of this weighing machine amounts to 200 metrical tons, thus making it possible to weigh special vehicles, loaded with articles of bulky dimensions, such as are to be met with in the manufacture of large machinery. The bridge of this weighing machine measures 7,875 feet in length and 9.2 feet in width; it is the first of its kind to have been made out of prestressed concrete. The graduated scale-beam is furnished with weights which make it possible to weigh kilo by kilo. When this giant weighing-machine, which has been built by the machine-making factory of Louis Giroud, at Olten (Switzerland), was subjected to standardisation tests, the results obtained were quite remarkable in that the maximum fault in respect of a weight of 200 metric tons, only amounted to 19 pounds, i.e. to less than 1/20,000.



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