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COMMERCIAL NEWS

Yet another power station in Switzerland.

A new hydraulic power plant has been put into operation, near Ardon, in the Rhône Valley. The plant comprises two groups of machines with an output capacity of 40,000 kW. Once the water supply is fully ensured, the annual output of electric power will amount, on an average, to 120 million kWh.

Diesel marine engines made under Swiss licence.

Although Switzerland is an inland country, she belongs to the leading producing countries for marine Diesel engines. The new Sulzer engine, Type RD, has been given an enthusiastic reception, not only in Europe, but also in Japan. At the end of December 1959 the Japanese firm which makes Sulzer engines under licence had received orders which surpassed 300,000 h.p., a figure which, since then, has gone up still further. According to information received from a Japanese source, this licence-holding firm has received more than 45 per cent of all the orders placed in Japan up to 1st February 1960 for Diesel engines of more than 1,000 h.p. This satisfactory result is due mainly to a very large order which a Japanese shipbuilding yard received from the Government of the Philippines, for twelve ships, each equipped with an engine of 11,700 h.p.

An unusual transport operation.

An unusual kind of transport was carried out recently in Switzerland. This was a matter of conveying the rotor for the largest single-phase generator in the world, a piece weighing 115 tons and measuring 42.5 feet in length, from the Oerlikon Engineering

Company to the Göschenen Power Station of the Swiss Federal Railways in the Gotthard Region. In view of the fact that the size of this object, and above all its weight, exceeded the maximum clearance of the railways, the transport had to take place at a maximum speed of 50 kilometres per hour, this speed having to be reduced still further at certain places. Finally, the rotor was loaded on to a low-level road transporter with 48 wheels. A number of lorries were required to help with the moving; these furnished an output of 700 h.p. — all together — on the steepest parts of the road, with one gradient of 12 per cent. When crossing the bridge which spans the Reuss, in order to avoid any dangerous oscillations, the road transporter had to be drawn, by means of winding-apparatus on a lorry, over to the other side of the river. The necessity for all these precautions will easily be understood when it is realised that the rotor, which will weigh 170 tons with its poles, must have a precision of plus or minus one-hundredth of a millimetre to revolve at 500 r.p.m. in a single-phase 50,000 kVA. generator.

Success of Swiss Photocopying Machines.

The Photorapid range of office machines for document copying, manufactured in Zurich by Buro-Gerate G.A. is winning international fame in a very competitive market.

New machines of improved design and performance have so captured the U.S.A. market that home production was almost swamped, but production has now expanded to cope with the present world demand from some forty-six countries.

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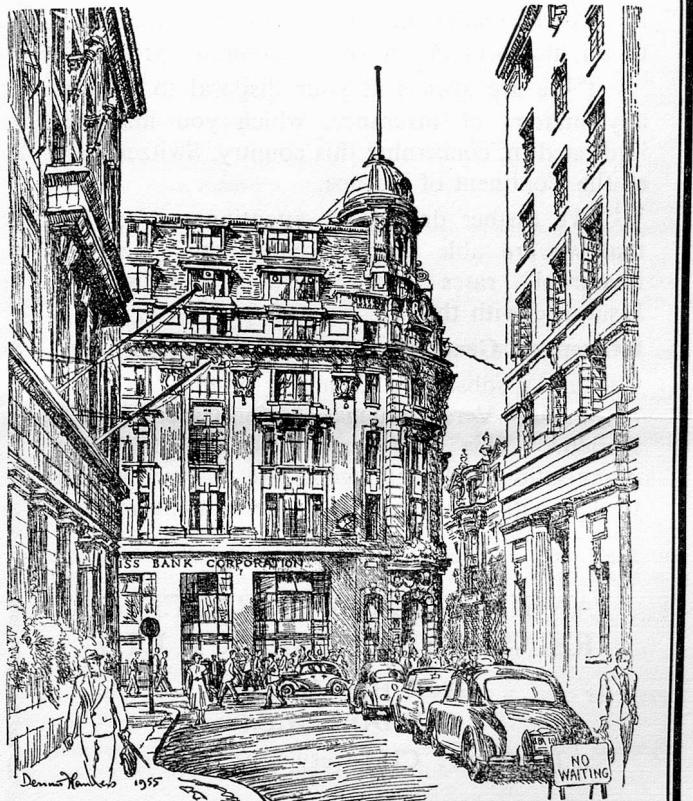
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UNIONE TICINESE SING
at Press Reception given by the Swiss
Gruyère Cheese Process Association.

You may wonder what connection the Unione Ticinese have with Gruyère Cheese. Well, apart from their Swiss origin, there is normally none. But the combination produced a very enjoyable and rather unusual evening.

The occasion was a press reception given by the Swiss Gruyère Cheese Process Association to publicise the nutritive value of their products, and the Corale were asked to sing in order to give the proceedings the genuine "Swiss Touch". The date, 8th June; the place, the charming house of Mr. Jeremy Peyton-Jones, at 20 Cheyne Walk, one of the more respectable parts of Chelsea.

The Corale arrived an hour before the start to have a quick rehearsal, and at first glance it appeared that circumstances had combined to frustrate all the prearranged plans. The weather — it had been raining nearly all day — was still blustering, and as the singing was to be done on the lawn at the back of the house, anxious glances were cast at the ominous clouds scudding across the evening sky. But worse was to come — Mr. Lui Bruni, the Corale's maestro, was informed that there was no piano available. However, undaunted by these setbacks, a quick rehearsal was held the members of the Corale having been fortified by a preliminary drink "on the house".

At 9 o'clock the first guests arrived, and at 10 o'clock the Corale duly sang, accompanied by a solitary accordion played by P. Morosi. Considering all the difficulties, the Corale gave a creditable performance and special appreciation must be accorded to their Maestro for the way he overcame the setbacks. One person in the audience was especially pleased — none other than Isa Miranda, the Italian actress, who in a spontaneous burst from the heart thanked the Corale for giving her a most pleasant and unexpected thrill. She said she had never dreamt of hearing such singing in London.

The remainder of the evening was given over to drinking, and eating the very tasty and attractive snacks in which, as you may have already guessed, the main ingredient was cheese. Among the other attractions was an Alpenhorn, which was tried by several people — with varying success. Many of the English people present were interested in its functional purpose, and one of the Corale gave them the facts as he knew them.

All things considered, the evening was a great success, and a special bouquet must be given to the organisers for the very attractive way in which the house and garden were decorated, and for the way the food was set out. One thing puzzles me though: no one mentioned gruyère cheese all evening; but maybe they thought the snacks spoke for themselves.

J.B.D.