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COMMERCIAL NEWS

Swiss insecticides

In 1959, out of total imports of insecticides and other products for the protection of crops, to the value of 7.6 million Marks, the German Federal Republic imported from Switzerland such products to the value of 2.8 million Marks. Thus, Switzerland supplied Germany with approximately 37 per cent of her imports of products of this kind.

The Crossbow, Swiss trade-mark of origin

The Central Bureau for Swiss Trade-marks is of the opinion that its trade-mark, "The Crossbow", is destined for new and very important tasks within the framework of the EFTA. The Committee is now engaged in studying the protection of the "Crossbow" trade-mark which has not as yet been patented in Great Britain, Norway, Sweden, or Denmark. In 1959, 46 associations and 1,432 private firms were using the "Crossbow" trade-mark for their products.

Swiss Package Competition

The Fourth Swiss Package Competition, organised by the specialised journal, "Tara", was held recently. This competition, which is open to all the packages invented in Switzerland during the past year, brought in 198 packages, of which fifty were awarded prizes, 32 being in respect of their graphical realisation and 20 because of their technical advantages. As a result, two packages were awarded prizes, both from the graphical and the technical point of view. One was a small bag made of lacquered paper, containing an inner bag of paper impregnated with a synthetic resin, intended for the packaging of Hag Coffee (without caffeine), while the other was a sprinkler package, made of polyethylene, for the Gesarex insecticide powder.

Hopes misplaced

At the beginning of the month of May last, the SEAG (Petrol Suisse S.A.) started its first borings for oil, in the vicinity of Zurich. This operation was to have played a decisive role in the putting into operation of a systematic programme of prospecting. The choice of the spot where boring was to take place had been preceded by nearly three years of geological studies. However, after having drilled to a depth of 8,800 feet, the engineers were forced to come to the conclusion that the soil which had been subjected to borings did not contain either oil or natural gas. This disappointment does not, however, lead one to infer that the Swiss substratum does not contain any hydrocarbons.

Switzerland at head of small-clocks industry

The reputation of Swiss watches is known everywhere, but it is not so much a matter of common knowledge that the Swiss watch-makers are also manufacturers of small clocks which are in the vanguard of progress. The clock which "lives from the tune played by the weather", that is to say, the motor of which is wound up through the effects of the variations of the temperature, has already been known for a long time past. A variation of only one degree is sufficient to wind up the little clock for 48 hours. Among the most recent creations are two little clocks which are kept going by light, that is to say, in which the light of day produces, via photo-electric cells, the electric current required for the running of the mechanism. Without going into the details of construction of these two little marvels — one of which is produced by a firm in Geneva and the other by a

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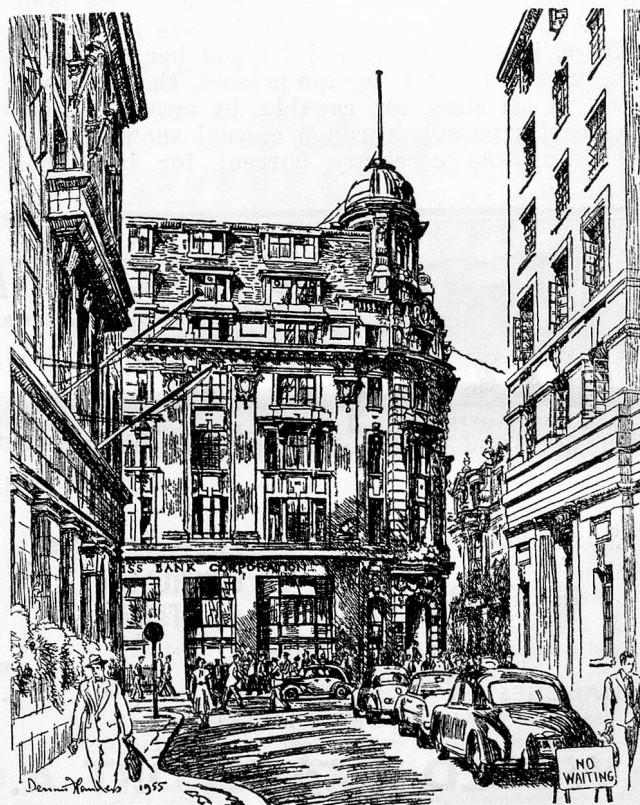
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manufacturer in La Chaux-de-Fonds — suffice it to say that the mechanism is so sensitive that the slightest amount of light is enough to keep it in action. In one case, one day of sunshine is converted into sufficient energy to ensure the running of the clock for 140 days.

Furthermore, a famous watchmaking firm in Geneva is now making the smallest quartz clock in the world. Its total volume does not exceed 61.023 cubic inches, including the accumulator which ensures its movement for 200 hours. This little timepiece, which is quite portable and can be used out of doors, does not have any moving part other than the time indicator.

An American academy in Leysin

A pre-university academy, situated at a high altitude and intended for the sons of American families residing in Europe, has just been established in Leysin, under the name of Leysin American High School. This school, which will be able to accommodate a hundred pupils permanently, has been installed in a former hotel and is to be inaugurated in September.

FACTS AND FIGURES.

By ASHTON-JOHNSON

In to-day's economic survey, we will cast a glance at the position occupied by electric energy in Swiss economy.

As a result of the early use made of her hydraulic power, Switzerland is one of the most highly electrified countries in the world. All the railways operate with electric power, and smoky coal-driven locomotives are, so to speak, unknown. Electric current helps our industry in its production, and smoking chimneys are conspicuous by their absence from the Swiss landscape. And yet Switzerland, rich as she is in lakes and rivers, is seriously troubled about her sources of energy. It is true that, for the present, the 600 power stations, of all sizes, are capable, by means of high-tension cables passing through eternal snow and ice, of providing the necessary current for industries,

railways and private households. They can still do this in summer, but in winter, when there is the greatest need for it, Switzerland is obliged to obtain some electric energy from abroad. During the summer, when the rivers and lakes are full of water, the power stations generate a great deal of energy. Moreover, as less energy is required during the warm summer weather, the power stations are even able to export electric energy abroad. In winter, however, when the consumption goes up with a bound and the amount of water in the rivers declines, electric current has got to be bought abroad, in order to be able to meet the requirements. These imports of electric power are twice as great as the exports in summer. They amount to 7% of the total yearly consumption of electric power in Switzerland, and last year the country consumed more than 16,000 million kilowatt-hours. It has been calculated that one would have to burn 200 railway wagon loads of coke every day in order to produce, on a thermal basis, the amount of energy that Switzerland is obliged to import, additionally, during the year. The Ruhr coalmines are the nearest to us, but, even then, they are too far away from our borders. The transport of such coal to Switzerland and its transformation into electric energy would come far too expensive.

Moreover, the consumption of electric energy grows apace. During the past twenty years alone the consumption of electric energy in Switzerland has increased threefold. And it is not so much industry as the private household which has caused the use of electric energy to go up so rapidly, because of all the electric stoves, irons, vacuum cleaners, refrigerators, and so on, which are now in use in most homes, and which devour a steadily increasing quantity of electricity. Swiss electricity experts estimate that the consumption of electricity will increase still further at the rate of about 6 per cent per year. What is being done and can be done in order to satisfy the increasing demand? For the present, more and more power plants are being built. There are at present twenty-nine which are approaching completion. It has now been found, however, that suitable building sites are not easily available. There are no more rivers that are suitable



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