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THE Swiss company, Steiger Ltd, a member of the Schweiter group, recently presented a new link in their production line, the Electra 2x2, a microprocessor-controlled flat knitting machine for the production of pullovers and other knitted outerwear, using the most advanced technologies ever applied to knitting machines.

The result is a machine consisting of very few moving parts – needing virtually no servicing – and very easy to programme and to maintain. Technically the Electra 2x2 is twin-carriage, electronically controlled double system flat knitting machine with individual electronic needle section both on front and rear needlebeds.

□ □ □

PLANT Baby, the latest development of Fabromont at Schmitten, just needs a spot with some light because it literally feeds on light alone.

Life and development of the little plant can be observed at all

times, right down to the roots.

Plant Baby thrives in a transparent, virtually closed container with a cleverly encapsulated long-term nutrient supplier. Because its growth is slowed biologically, it can remain in this protected environment for months.

Its modest water needs can be checked without any special indicator. If the plant needs more space after a number of months, it is raised in lift fashion and can continue to thrive for a long time as a hydroponic plant.

Transplantation to a hydro or earth culture is possible as well.

Unlike "bonsai plants," Fabromont's Plant Baby has a price tag that anyone can afford. It is truly something new in a nearly saturated market.

Even if you are away from home for months, the plant

stays healthy as a result of its natural equilibrium.

□ □ □

THE ideal swivelling bathtub for disabled and elderly people has been devised by Bremetal Ltd.

The idea behind it is simple: the bath-tub has got to go to the patient and not vice-versa!

The bath-seat is mounted on castors, enabling it to be run right up to the bed where the patient need only transfer himself to the seat. Because the seat is hollow in part, it can be filled with hot water to warm it.

In a seated posture the patient is moved into the bathroom and into the bath, which is then swivelled from the vertical into the horizontal position: the patient is now ready for his bath. The adjustable seat allows the

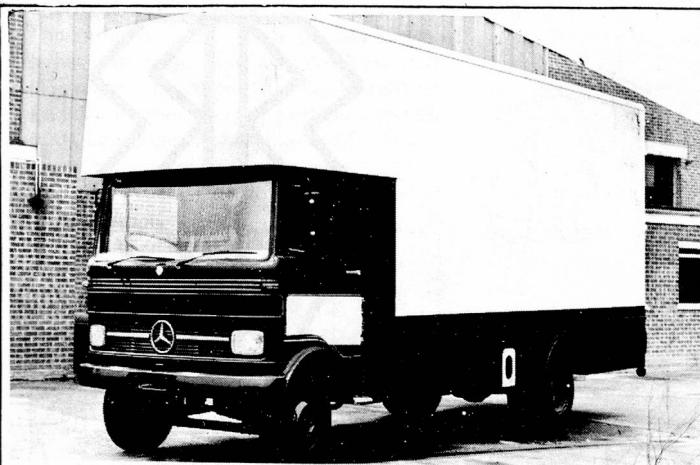
nursing staff to wash the patient at the ergonomically optimal height. The risks of back strain to the nurse and possible dangers to the patient are thus minimised.

□ □ □

THE weakness of the Swiss franc in October vis-à-vis the dollar did not continue during most of November. At the end of the month, it stood at 1.74 Sfr./\$.

Also the Sfr./DM rate remained quite stable, closing at 90.40 at the end of the month.

The Swiss foreign trade situation is likely to deteriorate. But recent figures indicate that this will happen to a much lesser degree than in most other industrial countries with competing currencies.



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