

# Technical items

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# technical items

## SUCCESS OF BROWN, BOVERI & CO. IN THE UNITED STATES

Brown, Boveri & Co. at Baden (Aargau, Switzerland) recently received from the American "Tennessee Valley Authority" (TVA) the biggest individual order it has ever been awarded in the field of energy-producing equipment. TVA, the biggest public electricity concern in the United States, ordered from the parent firm of the BBC group at Baden four groups of turbines developing 1,230 megawatt each and representing a total value of some 600 million francs. In addition, TVA has taken an option on two other steam turbo-groups of the same power. The machines and plants in question are destined to equip new nuclear power stations.

## COMPUTERS IN SWITZERLAND

In 1973, there were 1,978 computers in Switzerland, representing an increase of 9 per cent over the year 1971-72. The total value of these computers amounted to 3.31 billion francs. In the middle of the year 1973, there were just under 4,000 terminals installed in Switzerland, i.e. about three times as many as in 1971-72. These are some of the results of the recently published survey carried out by the Institute for Automation and Operational Research at Fribourg University (Switzerland) concerning the number of computers and terminals in Switzerland in the middle of 1973. Apart from various statistics relating to the number of computers or terminals, by regions, branches, producers, etc., this report contains for the first time a number of statistics on salaries and wages in the data processing professions.

## SWISS TELEVISION NETWORKS

Although Swiss Television has just celebrated its 20th anniversary, it is still in a period of full development with regard to both programmes and the expansion of its technical installations. While the responsibility for the programmes falls to the Swiss Radio Broadcasting and Television Company (in accordance with the licence issued by the Confederation), the construction, running and maintenance of the networks of transmitters, programme distribution networks and the electronic equipment of the studios are the responsibility of the Swiss Post Office. At the end of 1973, the Swiss television network had nearly 520 transmitters and relay transmitters at 303 different sites. They are divided among the three linguistic regions of the country, forming in each of them three distinct transmitting chains. The large number of transmitters is dictated not only by the number of national languages; they are needed to ensure the TV coverage of the country, which is complicated by the tormented topographical conditions. The Netherlands, whose area is comparable to that of Switzerland, needs only six transmitters to cover the whole of its territory. The high number of transmitters required and the problems involved in their construction and electricity supply are the reasons why, in spite of 20 years of intensive expansion work, the stations are not all in operation yet. The 19 main and regional transmitters in operation in 1959 made it possible to reach 80% of the Swiss population. To raise Switzerland's TV coverage to 96.5%, as was the case in 1968, 120 extra transmitters and relay transmitters had to be put into operation. The building of 160 other relay

transmitters made it possible to achieve a TV coverage of 99%, i.e. an improvement of only 3.5%. To obtain — by 1975 probably — complete TV coverage of the country, planned at 99.2%, another 50 transmitters and relay transmitters will have to be built. While at present all built-up areas of more than 500 inhabitants are reached, tests are being carried out to bring television to areas inhabited by 200-300 inhabitants. Such undertakings involve considerable expenditure. By the end of 1972, the Swiss General Post Office had invested 212.3 million francs in television installations, to which should be added large sums for buildings.

## SWISS BOATS FOR SOVIET ROWERS

For the 1974 World Championships, the oarsmen of the Russian National Team will be using Swiss racing boats. The Soviets have just bought 17 boats (skiffs, coxed and coxless pairs and fours, double sculls, etc.) from a naval shipyard at Wollishofen (Zurich, Switzerland). The latter, which has 30 employees, has specialised for some 30 or 40 years now in the construction of racing boats known all over the world. In fact, apart from the Soviet Union, several other countries have already bought boats from the Zurich ship-builder; in particular Czechoslovakia, Poland, Romania, France, West Germany, Italy, USA, Canada, Australia and naturally Switzerland. Quite frequently at world championships or Olympic games, half the medals are won by teams racing in boats built by the Wollishofen shipyards.

## NEW SUCCESS FOR SWISS POSTERS IN CANADA

It has become almost traditional now for the Swiss posters entered in the International Poster Contest at the Royal Agricultural Fair in Toronto (Canada) to distinguish themselves. The results of the 1973 contest once again show the interest aroused in Canada by the achievements of the Swiss graphic industry; for the fourth consecutive year, the Exhibition's "grand prix" has been awarded to a Swiss work: the poster created for the Tramelan Horse Show 1973 (designed by H. Erni — printed by Büchler & Co. Ltd.), also winner in its category. In addition, the "Fiesta dei Fiori Locarno 1973" poster (Studio grafico A. Losa — Säuberlin & Pfeiffer) won a first prize; "OLMA St. Gall 1972" (R. Geisser — Eidenbenz & Co.) and "Jawohl, ein Döle, ein Döle zum Wohl!" (R. Hosli — J. C. Müller) each a third prize.

## PRE-CAST CONCRETE WALLS

A few months ago, the "Piz Badura" pre-cast concrete elements developed by a Wädenswil engineer (Zurich, Switzerland) were used for the first time on a building site in an Alpine valley in the Grisons. These elements (dimensions: 120 x 120 x 70 cm), which can be laid extremely quickly, offer a rational method of erecting protective

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walls for roads, dams, dikes and breakwaters, avalanche breaks, etc. The elements are secured together by small steel trusses and can also be used for top work; they resist a lateral pressure of 50 tons. In addition, they possess the advantage of being easy to move and re-use elsewhere, when widening a road for example.

#### SWISS ATOMIC CLOCKS FOR THE FRENCH NAVY

A Swiss firm in Lausanne, specialising in the manufacture of highly technical complicated watches, has just supplied two rubidium atomic clocks to the French Navy. These two clocks have been specially designed and made according to the specifications of the French Navy, which has already in the past placed orders with this Swiss firm, well known for its avant-garde research department and the reliability of its products. The high precision of the clocks just supplied is truly remarkable: they vary, in fact, by less than 1 second in 3 centuries, i.e.  $1.10^{-10}$  seconds per month.

#### SWITZERLAND — AN INSURANCE CENTRE

According to the figures given by the Swiss Reinsurance Company, in Zurich (Switzerland), the gross amount of the premiums received by all Swiss insurance and reinsurance companies totalled 14.06 billion francs in 1972, which represents an increase of 10.2% of the volume of premiums recorded in 1971, about two-thirds of this increase being attributable to foreign transactions. A quarter of the amount received is accounted for by life assurance companies, a quarter by professional reinsurers and half by accident and damage insurance companies. In 1972, the premiums of life assurance companies increased by 13.7% to total 3.48 billion francs, those of accident and damage insurance increased by 11.7% to total 7.18 billion francs and those of professional reinsurers increased by 4.2% to reach the figure of 3.4 billion francs. The premiums received by foreign insurance companies domiciled in Switzerland amounted in 1972 to about 189 million francs, i.e. some 7.7% higher than in 1971.

recently been issued tells the visitor where to go, eat, shop, etc. in Lucerne. It's obtainable at all bookshops and newsvendors for Fr.5.50.

#### Gipsy Travels through the Swiss Jura

It's now possible to enjoy a carefree gipsy's life in the Swiss Jura from May till October. You can travel from ten to thirteen miles a day with a horse and cart. You set off from Lucelle which can be reached by car via Laufen-Porrentruy or Delemont and by train to Delemont and from there by postal coach. The itinerary takes eight days and leads past Courgenay, Roche d'Or, Montmelon, Montfaucon and Sornetan returning to Lucelle. You stay at hotels along the way. All the horses belong to the "Bund" breed and don't need an experienced hand to be driven. All-inclusive cost for a group of four comes to Fr.46 per person daily. This includes the use of a fully equipped gipsy cart, hotel accommodation in a double room with bath or shower, breakfast, care of the horse, insurance, maps and travel documents. For more information, contact: ACS-Reisen AG, Laupenstrasse 2, CH-3001 Bern.

## TOURIST NEWS

#### Preparations Under Way for Vevey's Winegrowing Festival in 1977

The small town of Vevey in the very heart of the vineyards on Lake Geneva is preparing for this century's fourth Winegrowing Festival which is to take place in August, 1977. The very first one of its kind was held as far back as 1797. It was staged on Vevey's well-known market-place, the "Grande Place" in an Alpine decor. At the last Festival which took place in 1955, 3,500 extras, 950 children, 450 singers and 120 musicians performed before an audience of 1,700. Marcel Maréchal, director of the "centre dramatique" in Lyon and, as of late, director of the Avignon Festival, is in charge of the staging for the 1977 Festival. Eugène Dénéréaz (president of Switzerland's biggest convention ever, the Rotarians' congress in Lausanne in 1973) will be the administrative director.

and Pastry has been entirely renovated and its exhibition of over 100 different kinds of Swiss loaves is especially noteworthy. Original vehicles illustrate the development of transport and tourism at the Swiss Transport Museum. The Old Quarter boasts an incredible amount of cafés, bars and art galleries. The "Guide to the city of Lucerne" which has

#### Made-to-measure Accommodation in Switzerland

Everyone can find his special kind of accommodation in Switzerland. The following hints will furnish you with the necessary information and addresses. The Swiss Hotel Association Guide and about a dozen regional hotel lists inform you about hotels and pensions. The Swiss Travel Fund (Schweizer Reisekasse, Neuengasse 15, CH-3001 Bern) provides holiday apartments. The Travel Fund has holiday centres at Albonago (above Lugano), Montfaucon, Wildhaus, Zinal

#### Lucerne: An Attractive City Throughout the Year

The city of Lucerne is to remain attractive to tourists throughout the year and not just during the summer months. Only twelve of its seventy hotels do not stay open all the year round. Beside the usual "musts" such as its Lion Monument and the Glacier Garden, Lucerne boasts further cultural points of interest. Its Museum of Swiss Costumes and Folklore has a collection of over 100 costumes and rustic implements. The Archive of the Swiss Yodelling Association adjoins this museum. The National Museum of Bread



*A happy Marmott family in the Swiss National Park.*