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BUSINESS IN SWITZERLAND

A Swiss achievement in the field of nuclear research

A team of Basle physicists working under the well-known atomic scientist, Professor P. Huber, has just succeeded in perfecting a nuclear research apparatus capable of producing polarised deuterons. A remarkable feature of their achievement is that the group obtained this success with comparatively small financial means — Fr. 70,000, granted them by the National Fund for Scientific Research. The apparatus makes it possible to follow experimental nuclear reactions with even greater precision than hitherto and thus obtain new and invaluable elements in the field of nuclear research. The new apparatus will be placed at the disposal of the Institute for Terrestrial Magnetism in Washington, which will be able to use its capacity to the full.

In Switzerland: a new power station on the Rhine

Work has just started on the construction of a new electrical power station at Säkingen, on the Rhine. This electricity works represents the last stage in the use of the waters of the Rhine between Schaffhausen and Basle, along the German-Swiss frontier. The dam will raise the level of the river about 18 feet in order to supply 5 groups of turbo-generators capable of producing some 400 million kWh annually. The power produced will be shared equally between Switzerland and Germany. The total cost of the project is estimated at 190 million Sw. Fr.

Swiss packaging machinery abroad

Swiss packaging machinery enjoys an excellent reputation abroad. Convincing proof of this fact is that the biggest ice-cream factory in Germany recently acquired 6 SIG packaging machines which work twice as fast as the plant previously used. In the space of one minute, each machine wraps 200 ice-creams, each on its wooden stick. Thus, during the hot weather the output of the whole group easily exceeds 1 million ice-creams a day. It is interesting to note that the order was not given on the basis of a prototype or a set of manufacturing plans but quite simply on the strength of the international fame of the manufacturer.

Souvenirs

Now that the tourist season is at its height and foreigners are flocking to Switzerland and buying hundreds of thousands of souvenirs, which are not always in the best taste, an association of small tradesmen in the Ticino has opened an exhibition of local craftwork in the centre of the town of Lugano. This interesting display comprises over 500 exhibits made by 22 artists of both sexes from all parts of the canton. This timely exhibition is meeting with great success, particularly among the numerous foreign visitors to Lugano, who appreciate the attractive objects of local folk inspiration, that are so full of charm and have nothing 'mass-produced' about them.

Swiss contribution to winter sports in Portugal

Very few people realise, one imagines, that Portugal has excellent winter sports resorts. In order to take advantage of the ideal conditions in the Serra de Estrela district, which has been attracting a growing number of skiers, the local Tourist Commission decided to build a big aerial cableway from Piornos, at an altitude of 5,250 feet to Torre at approximately 6,500 feet. The Swiss firm of Bell, at Kriens-Lucerne, has just been awarded the job, which was competed for by almost all the aerial cableway manufacturers in Europe; this firm — which has been established for over a hundred years — has been making funicular railways for eighty years and aerial cableways for several years. The cableway, which is nearly two miles in length and has a difference in altitude of 1,156 feet, will be equipped with two cabins, each holding thirty-five passengers. The bottom of the cableway is some 6½ miles from the town of Covilha, to which it is connected by an excellent highway kept open all the year round. The Serra de Estrela aerial cableway is expected to be put into operation in 1962.



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