

News from Switzerland

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THE FIGHT TO OVERCOME NOISE

Noise, which is unpleasant at all times, can even be dangerous in certain industries by causing premature fatigue among workers and thus increasing the possibility of accidents. A Swiss engineer from Zurich has put an industrial noise protector on the market, in the form of two pads held over the ears by a sheathed metal blade, somewhat similar to a telephonist's earphones. This protector is also available in a hat for the use of workers employed in the open. The "Riwosa" protector can be made to fit any shape of head; furthermore there is no danger of infection or wounds, for no part of it enters the ear; it is comfortable to wear, even over a long period of time, it is washable and therefore hygienic. Reducing noise by about 45 decibels, it is recommended for use in engineering and boiler works, weaving mills, engine testing sheds, on aerodromes, in the construction of tunnels and in all concerns in which the personnel is exposed to intense noise for a long period of time.

GREAT ST. BERNARD ROAD TUNNEL

On April 5th, the Great St. Bernard Road Tunnel was finally pierced; next year it will be open to traffic, thus providing a direct year-round link between Switzerland and Italy. The tunnel is 19,121 feet long, at an average altitude of 6230 feet above sea level; it will be completed by covered approach roads $3\frac{1}{2}$ miles long and rising from a height of 5350 feet on the Swiss side, and 8 miles long and at an altitude of 5050 feet on the Italian side. This first important international Alpine tunnel, capable of coping with over 500 vehicles an hour at peak periods, is expected to lead to a big development in tourist traffic and road transport; naturally all safety precautions and signalling devices will satisfy the strictest modern requirements.

MARK OF QUALITY FOR HOUSEHOLD PRODUCTS

Thanks to the liberalism of Switzerland's trade policy and the high degree of industrialisation in the country, the Swiss market is particularly well provided with products of all sorts, especially in the field of household goods. The Swiss Institute for Housekeeping Research in Zurich therefore fulfils a useful role by examining the household products and utensils offered on the Swiss market and awarding a mark of quality to products and articles that have passed its analyses and practical tests. For the first time, the Swiss Institute of Housekeeping Research, which had an enquiry stand at the Basle Fair (from March 31st to April 10th, 1962), has published a list of all the products that have been awarded the mark of quality.

SWISS WATCHES TO THE FORE

In its December 1961 number, the fine periodical "La Suisse horlogere" gave an account of the main sporting feats in which Swiss watches have played a role. Expeditions full of danger to the highest peaks in the world, the lowest depths of the oceans, and deep into the bowels of the earth . . . it is impossible to attempt to list them all here. Let us simply mention the many expeditions to the Himalayas in which Swiss watches were used, in particular the first two ascents of Mount Everest, one British, the other Swiss, in collaboration with Nepalese Sherpas, the conquest of K2 (Karakorum), Lhotse, and Aconcagua, the highest peak in the Andes. Under the water, let us refer to the exploits of the holder of the world diving record, the Swiss Hannes Keller, and the submarine exploration of the famous Commandant Cousteau. Swiss watches have crossed the seas, attached to the hulls of ships, and continued to work perfectly: in the record dive of the late Professor Piccard's bathyscaphe Trieste, to a depth of 36,000 feet, during a crossing from Le Havre to New York and back on the Ile de France and during the trans-Atlantic trip of the Mayflower II. Swiss watches have gone deep into the earth with numerous explorers, into the Berger gulf, for example, to a depth of 3681 feet, as well as with Norbert Casteret. Among the feats connected with the conquest of the air, let us recall that Charles Lindberg, the first to fly across the Atlantic, wore a Swiss watch, long before the creation of the special models that are used by airmen today. A tragic page in this report is the account of the air and sea catastrophes in which Swiss watches proved their resistance. First of all, there is the Swiss watch which was found in perfect running order after being submerged for 9 years in an American bomber, which fell into a Swiss lake in 1944, and then the cargo of waterproof watches that remained for 18½ months at a depth of 260 feet in the hold of Captain Carlsen's "Flying Enterprise" and which suffered no damage; the same mishap was met with by two batches of Swiss watches in the Shannon air catastrophe in 1954. These are just a few examples from a long list, to which should be added various expeditions to the North and South poles as well as to the Tropics, and many sporting feats.

PROFITABLE INDUSTRIAL COLLABORATION

The first of the three turbines for the Ferrera power station on the Swiss section of the Rhine has just been put into operation. This power station is to be equipped with three horizontal Francis-type turbines, each developing almost 100,000 H.P. under a maximum head of 1712 feet. This is the highest fall in Switzerland provided with turbines of this type, and probably the second highest in the world. These machines were supplied by Escher Wyss Ltd. in Zurich and the Charmilles Engineering Works Ltd. in Geneva which pooled their experience and great knowledge in this field.

SWITZERLAND PLAYS HER PART

According to the statistics published by I.C.A.O. (International Civil Aviation Organisation), Switzerland came 13th in 1961 for the total number of passenger-miles effected by the air lines of countries adhering to this organisation (which include neither the U.S.S.R. nor Communist China). The United States was first with 39,440 million passenger-miles; Switzerland with 855 million passenger-miles came before Belgium, Mexico, Sweden, Colombia, Spain, South Africa, Norway, Denmark, etc.

ONE AND A-HALF MILLIONTH RADIO LICENCE

The Swiss Postal and Telegraph Services have just issued the 1,500,000th radio licence. The million mark had been reached on November 18th, 1949.

SWITZERLAND CALLING

Frequencies: 13,94m (21520kc), 19,59m (15315kc), 25,28m (11865kc)

AUSTRALIA, NEW ZEALAND AND THE FAR EAST

GMT 9.00 = Local Standard Time: 21.00 New Zealand

MONDAY: 09.00, News; Sports Results. 09.15, Alpine Echoes. 09.30, On the Spot: Actuality Programme. 09.45, Swiss Composers. 10.15, Reflets suisses (Jean Martel).

TUESDAY: 09.00, News; Political Comment; Bank Rates. 09.15, Alpine Echoes. 09.30, Close-up (Mark Steiner). 09.45, Promenade Concert (Sylvia). 10.15, Schwizerspiegel (This Adank).

WEDNESDAY: 09.00, News; Political Comment; Bank Rates. 09.15, Swiss Strings. 09.30, The Swiss Economic Scene (Walter Pielken). 09.45, Jazz Panorama. 10.15, Prisma svizzero (Brenno Bruni).

THURSDAY: 09.00, News; Political Comment; Bank Rates. 09.15, Alpine Echoes. 09.30, Swiss Gazette (Life and People). 09.45, Melody Train: Musical Request Programme. 10.15, Reflets suisses (Jean Martel).

FRIDAY: 09.00, News; Political Comment; Bank Rates. 09.15, Alpine Echoes. 09.30, DX Corner (Ronald Green). 09.45, Concert Hall: Symphonic or Chamber Music. 10.15, Schwizerspiegel (This Adank).

SATURDAY: 09.00, News; Political Comment; Bank Rates. 09.15, Rendez-vous in Switzerland. 09.30, Youth Magazine and Youth Forum. 09.45, Swiss Country Get-together. 10.15, Prisma svizzero (Brenno Bruni).

SUNDAY: 09.00, News; The Week in Switzerland. 09.15, Bells of Switzerland. 09.30, In His Name; Sunday Concert. 09.45, Swiss Sunday Special (Lance Tschannen).