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SWISS HOSTEL FOR GIRLS.

A meeting took place at the Swiss Legation, under the chairmanship of Mrs. M. Daeniker. The main item on the agenda was a discussion of the Memorandum of Association and Articles of Association for the Swiss Hostel for Girls Ltd. Company. A draft had been circulated among all members of the company elected at the meeting of 4th January. This was accepted with a few alterations relating mainly to the programme of activities of the fixture hostel.

Six new persons were elected members of the Company. This now includes, besides the representatives of the protestant and catholic organizations of the "Amies de la jeune fille" and the pastors of the three churches, a score of personalities representing all interested circles in the Swiss colony.

Four new members were also added to the Council of Management which has now been constituted as follows: Mrs. M. Daeniker, President; Mr. F. G. Sommer, Vice-President; Mr. A. Gautier, Assistant Vice-President; Mr. F. Ansermoz, Secretary; Mr. G. Keller; Mr. A. Gandon; Miss S. Morosi.

Miss Rosie Preiswerk who has arrived in this country some time ago was welcomed by the President and hailed as manageress of the Hostel pending her formal appointment by the Council of Management.

Mr. Sommer reported on the long-drawn negotiations which led to the purchase of the premises at 9-11, Belsize Grove and the obtaining of the permission to open the Hostel. There has been a number of administrative delays, but it is hoped that it will be possible to start soon with the actual repairs.

Dr. Faessler reported that the appeal for funds among Swiss industrialists, businessmen and bankers had met with a most encouraging success. The sum obtained so far has topped the 100,000.—frs. which was the objective. The collection will go on however for some time yet in order to make sure of as important a reserve fund as possible.

ESCHER WYSS: 1805-1955 CELEBRATIONS OF THE OLDEST SWISS ENGINEERING FIRM.

(The following article is reproduced from the "Engineering", issue July 8th, 1955, by courtesy of the Editor.)

It is not an over-simplification to discern in the 150-year history of the famous Swiss engineering firm, Escher Wyss, Limited, a continuous thread in the application of fluid force allied to rotary motion. There are certain design principles which are common to several of their most important products — water, steam, and gas turbines, axial fans, turbo-pumps, compressors and blowers, marine propellers and industrial centrifuges. And the subject is not altogether unconnected with sluice gates, refrigerating machines, heat pumps, evaporators, cement-making machines, plant for the chemical industry, pipe-lines, and boilers and their auxiliaries, all of which Escher Wyss make. The continuous thread was tenuous in the early years of the firm, being represented only by water-wheels, but it can be followed throughout the whole of the period, even when they were building ships in the Nineteenth Century, with the Alps separating them from Switzerland's nearest sea outlet.

Escher Wyss have had many vicissitudes during those 150 years; more than once their fortunes have been at a low ebb. But happily the anniversary was celebrated last week in an atmosphere of prosperity, the firm welcoming friends from all over the world and entertaining them royally. On Monday, June 27, visitors toured the works at Zurich. The shops, offices and research laboratories revealed that orderliness which is so characteristic of Swiss engineering practice. Next day, hosts and guests set off to travel the length and breadth of Switzerland and see some of the power stations and plants, built or building, having Escher Wyss machines. Over the frontier into Germany one party visited the company's works at Ravensburg, where the closed-cycle gas-turbine plant embodying an air heater fired with pulverised coal is nearly completed.

From our personal experience we would say that tour "G" was second to none. The journey was by train through the Bernese Oberland to Martigny in the Rhone valley, and then a long climb by motor coach to see the Mauvoisin dam under construction, 6,450 ft. above sea-level. Of the two power stations visited which are fed from this reservoir, the Fionnay underground station is the most remarkable. It will employ the largest head so far used in a Francis turbine — 1,500 ft. It is situated some distance down the valley and is reached by a tunnel cut through the rock in the side of the valley. There will be two vertical Francis turbines of no less than 62,800 h.p. each, although they are characteristically compact.

From Fionnay, water will flow to a compensation basin nearby, and from there it will pass through the mountain to two penstocks running down to Riddes power station in the Rhone valley. Here there will be five Pelton wheels of 68,000 h.p. each.

The dam is still in the early stages of construction. During the summer about 1,000 men are employed. They are housed in a village built for them just below the site. From mid-November to mid-April,

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however, only about 300 are retained on the site. The catchment area at Mauvoisin is being artificially increased by means of two galleries cut through the mountains on both sides of the valley and connected to several minor catchment areas.

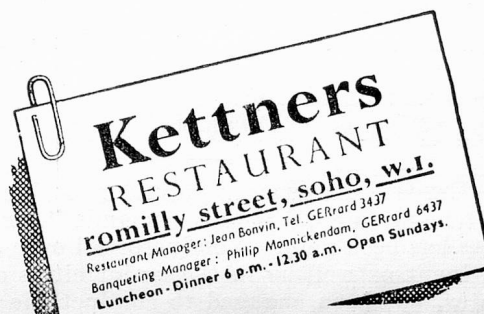
Escher Wyss are supplying the turbines for these two power stations, thus adding to the several hundred machines of their make which are already in service. A comprehensive review of their work in this field, and of design and production considerations, was given in vol. 25-26 of the *Escher Wyss News*. This publication, which is available in an English edition, also dealt with pumps, valves and pipe-lines.

The 150th anniversary of the firm — stated to be the oldest engineering firm in Switzerland — was formally celebrated at a luncheon at the Kongresshaus, Zurich, on June 27, when the President, Herr P. Schmidheiny, received the guests. The history of the firm was recalled in a special book prepared for the occasion. Hans Caspar Escher (1775-1859) was led to found the firm as a result of his interest in the early spinning machines. He designed one in the cellar of his parents' house, and in 1805, with the financial help of several friends including the banker Salomon Wyss, he established a spinning mill. In due course the mechanical engineering department of the business prospered, especially as Escher's only son, Albert, applied himself to managing it. Unfortunately the son died in 1845, and when the father died 14 years later there was no one obviously fitted to take over the management.

Names which stand out in the subsequent history of the firm include Henry Zoelly, of steam-turbine fame, and above all Colonel Jacob Schmidheiny, who pulled the firm through the great difficulties of the 1930's. Colonel Schmidheiny died a few months ago, on January 8, 1955, and it is his son who has succeeded him in presiding over Escher Wyss. To-day the firm is alive to modern developments and opportunities. In the research department some valuable new apparatus is being installed which will enable further advances to be made in the design of all those machines in which fluid force is allied to rotary motion.

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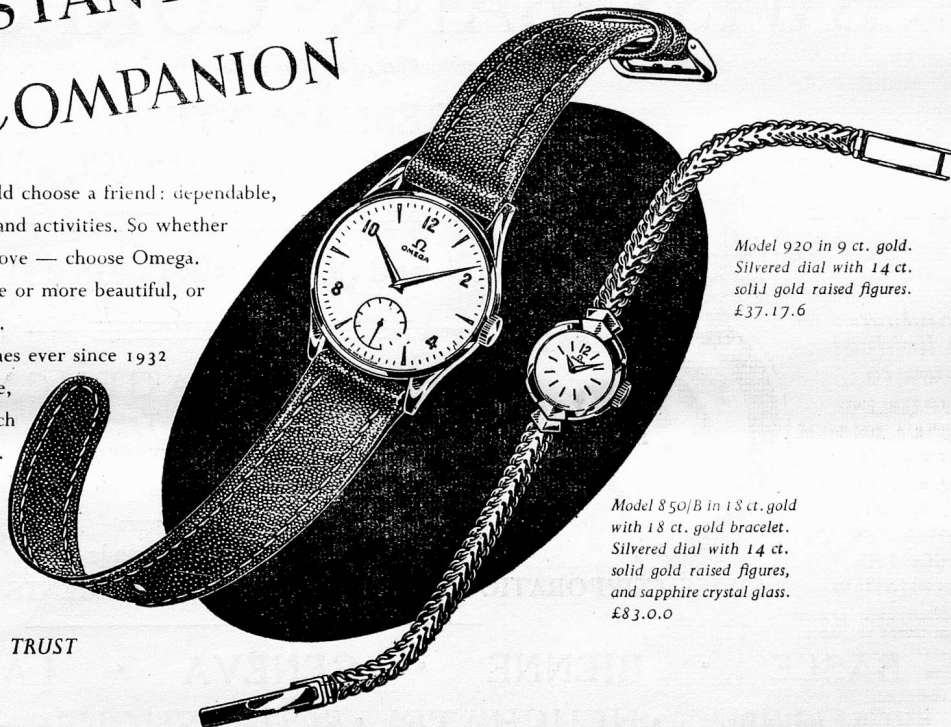
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