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COMMERCIAL NEWS

Expansion of the Swissair Company in 1954.

In the night of the 29th-30th December, Swissair's Douglas DC-6B, flying from New York, accomplished its thousandth crossing of the North Atlantic, in the direction of Switzerland, this event being duly inscribed on the Honour List of the Company. During the same night, another DC-6B also brought the number of flights, in the direction Switzerland-New York, to the thousand mark. Thus, the Swissair has now already carried out 2,000 flights across the North Atlantic. The first two flights along this route were undertaken by Swissair in May, 1947. During that year, only seven flights in each direction took place. To-day, there are as many every week. This shows the progress which has been made.

1954 proved to be a year of expansion for the Swiss Air Line Company. It is typical of air traffic that it develops by leaps and bounds. And, 1954, happened to be a year which coincided with one of the bounds, on the part of the Swissair. Its capacity for transport increased by 60 per cent. As a result, it is only natural that the co-efficient of utilisation decreased from 70 per cent to 58 per cent. Swissair is now going to make use of 1955 in order to consolidate its positions and to make still better use of the material at its disposal.

The increase in Swissair's capacity for transport is demonstrated by the creation of a new trans-Atlantic line, connecting Switzerland with Brazil, by an intensification of the traffic on the existing lines and by the putting into service of new aircraft. Thus, having increased its equipment and extended its network, Swissair views the future with confidence. Air traffic is steadily on the increase and the Swissair Company is ready to play its part.

Swiss Cheese Exports.

As compared with 1938, Swiss exports of cheese have declined to a considerable extent. At that time they amounted to 22,300 tons, whereas to-day they hardly attain 20,000 tons. Thus, the decrease amounts to approximately 10 per cent.

This decline, however, is not to be observed in regard to all the various kinds of cheeses. It is particularly marked in respect of the big round flat hard cheeses, which are the traditional Swiss export cheeses. In this category, the decrease amounts to about 17 per cent. On the other hand, the carton cheeses, which at the present time represent a little more than one-fifth of Swiss cheese exports, show an increase of approximately 20 per cent.

There has also been a great change in the markets for this commodity. France, who before the last war, was Switzerland's best customer by a long way for this particular product, now ranks third, having exchanged her place with Italy. The United States remain the second most important customer and their consumption remains more or less stationary; purchases from Germany, however, now only amount to one-third of what they were in 1938.

French Loan in Switzerland.

The "Compagnie française des pétroles" has just launched a loan of 50 million francs on the Swiss

market, which has been taken up "firm" by a consortium of Swiss banks and which is now being offered for public subscription. This loan, which bears an interest of 4 per cent, will have a maximum duration of fifteen years. It is being issued at par.

The "Compagnie française des pétroles" is, after "Péchiney" and "Matériel électrique S-W", the third French company to have recourse to the Swiss capital market. It is well known that, at the present moment, this company is playing an important part in the petroleum world trade, principally as a result of the holdings it has in the oil-wells of Irak, and now also in those of Iran. It also participates in the activities of a great many prospecting, refining and distributing companies. It has the intention of developing, on a large scale, its distributing network and it is for this purpose, more especially, that use will be made of the loan which has just been launched on the Swiss market.

New Carriages for Swiss Railways.

The Swiss Federal Railways invited four manufacturing firms to take part in a competition for the best ideas for equipping the new 3rd class railway carriage, of a unified type, which they intend to create. A large number of very interesting suggestions were received, as a result of which new directives for the construction of the carriages were established,

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and an order, in common, was given to the two firms which obtained the greatest number of points.

The new carriages will be divided into only two compartments and the two entrances will be over the bogies, where the travellers will find convenient and wide steps leading to a low platform. In winter, the compartments will be heated by means of warm air and in the summer they will be ventilated by means of fresh air. A new system which ensures water-tightness and de-frosting will do away with any clouding over of the windows, as well as with drafts.

Within the space of the next ten years, these new carriages will replace all the two or three-axle carriages which still exist.

Inauguration of a new telpher in Switzerland.

The inauguration took place recently, on the slopes of Mount Pilatus, near Lucerne, of a new telpher which goes from Kriens to Fräkmüntegg. This new telpher also goes from the suburbs of Lucerne and rises to an altitude of 1,415 metres, from where it is possible to have access to a region well-suited for excursions, in winter as well as in summer. The initiators of this scheme plan to prolong the route of the telpher right up to the summit of Pilatus, in order to form a junction with the mountain railway.

This telpher has been constructed according to the Wallmannsberger system and it possesses closed cars, each one capable of carrying four persons. Two other telpherages of this kind already exist in Switzerland, and function to the satisfaction of the companies running them. The principal characteristic of this system is its very solid construction and its automatic devices for security, which guarantee the travellers


against all risks. Moreover, it offers great flexibility in respect of adjustment to the demands of traffic, owing to the possibility it presents of putting into circulation a number of cars corresponding to the affluence of travellers; it is capable of carrying as many as 400 persons per hour, in both directions.

Retrospective motor-show in Geneva.

On the occasion of its 25th anniversary, the forthcoming "Salon de l'automobile de Genève", which opens on the 10th of March, will present a retrospective show, in which will be found the most astounding models of cars from the last century and from the beginning of this century. Thanks to the disinterested collaboration of a number of firms who are taking part in the Salon and of our national museums, visitors will be able to see motor vehicles which originate from seven different countries.

An entire show-room will be given up to this retrospective show, which will be an event in itself.

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