

Facts and figures

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manufacturer in La Chaux-de-Fonds — suffice it to say that the mechanism is so sensitive that the slightest amount of light is enough to keep it in action. In one case, one day of sunshine is converted into sufficient energy to ensure the running of the clock for 140 days.

Furthermore, a famous watchmaking firm in Geneva is now making the smallest quartz clock in the world. Its total volume does not exceed 61.023 cubic inches, including the accumulator which ensures its movement for 200 hours. This little timepiece, which is quite portable and can be used out of doors, does not have any moving part other than the time indicator.

An American academy in Leysin

A pre-university academy, situated at a high altitude and intended for the sons of American families residing in Europe, has just been established in Leysin, under the name of Leysin American High School. This school, which will be able to accommodate a hundred pupils permanently, has been installed in a former hotel and is to be inaugurated in September.

FACTS AND FIGURES.

By ASHTON-JOHNSON

In to-day's economic survey, we will cast a glance at the position occupied by electric energy in Swiss economy.

As a result of the early use made of her hydraulic power, Switzerland is one of the most highly electrified countries in the world. All the railways operate with electric power, and smoky coal-driven locomotives are, so to speak, unknown. Electric current helps our industry in its production, and smoking chimneys are conspicuous by their absence from the Swiss landscape. And yet Switzerland, rich as she is in lakes and rivers, is seriously troubled about her sources of energy. It is true that, for the present, the 600 power stations, of all sizes, are capable, by means of high-tension cables passing through eternal snow and ice, of providing the necessary current for industries,

railways and private households. They can still do this in summer, but in winter, when there is the greatest need for it, Switzerland is obliged to obtain some electric energy from abroad. During the summer, when the rivers and lakes are full of water, the power stations generate a great deal of energy. Moreover, as less energy is required during the warm summer weather, the power stations are even able to export electric energy abroad. In winter, however, when the consumption goes up with a bound and the amount of water in the rivers declines, electric current has got to be bought abroad, in order to be able to meet the requirements. These imports of electric power are twice as great as the exports in summer. They amount to 7% of the total yearly consumption of electric power in Switzerland, and last year the country consumed more than 16,000 million kilowatt-hours. It has been calculated that one would have to burn 200 railway wagon loads of coke every day in order to produce, on a thermal basis, the amount of energy that Switzerland is obliged to import, additionally, during the year. The Ruhr coalmines are the nearest to us, but, even then, they are too far away from our borders. The transport of such coal to Switzerland and its transformation into electric energy would come far too expensive.

Moreover, the consumption of electric energy grows apace. During the past twenty years alone the consumption of electric energy in Switzerland has increased threefold. And it is not so much industry as the private household which has caused the use of electric energy to go up so rapidly, because of all the electric stoves, irons, vacuum cleaners, refrigerators, and so on, which are now in use in most homes, and which devour a steadily increasing quantity of electricity. Swiss electricity experts estimate that the consumption of electricity will increase still further at the rate of about 6 per cent per year. What is being done and can be done in order to satisfy the increasing demand? For the present, more and more power plants are being built. There are at present twenty-nine which are approaching completion. It has now been found, however, that suitable building sites are not easily available. There are no more rivers that are suitable



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for harnessing for the purpose of the generation of energy. For the future, Switzerland will now have to look round for new sources of energy, as industry, also, is now consuming more and more energy as a result of the increasing number of electric appliances and plants required for automation.

A great many discussions have been taking place lately regarding the utilisation and the profitableness of two sources of energy for supplying the current required for commercial purposes — petroleum and atomic energy. Plans have been made to bring a pipeline for oil from Genua which will pass through Switzerland to South Germany and from which a conduit will branch off into the canton of Valais, where an oil refinery will be set up in the lower part of the Rhône Valley. It has also been suggested that, in addition to the refinery, a thermo-power station could also be built there. Moreover, prospecting for oil has been going on in Switzerland for a great many years, but whether the borings that are now going on in the vicinity of Zurich will prove successful remains to be seen.

“ ROULEZ TAMBOUR ”

Who among our compatriots does not know that fiery and inspiring song of our French-speaking brethren, which long ago became the common property of our nation! This patriotic song is celebrating its 103rd birthday anniversary, and it is well worth recalling at what time, and in what circumstances, this martial tune first saw the light of day.

“ Roulez Tambour ” originated during the Neuchâtel dispute of 1856/57, which created a great stir not only in Switzerland, but throughout Europe. In contrast to the other twenty-one cantons, which constituted the Swiss Confederation, and which were without exception of a purely republic character, the canton of Neuchâtel, which entered the Confederation in 1815, was still a principality under foreign jurisdiction. The King of Prussia was in fact called, among his other titles, Prince of Neuchâtel and Count of Vallangin. When, a hundred and three years ago, the regeneration movement swept away reactionary governments in most of the cantons, the republicans in the canton of Neuchâtel revolted against its rulers, but the revolution was put down by force. The small but active republican party did not lose heart; the discontent with the representatives of the royal dynasty grew rapidly, and many adherents were won over in various parts of the Jura.

During the great and far-reaching political events of 1847 and 1848 a new and vigorous revolution broke out, and the Government was promptly chased over the border. A new constitution was proclaimed, which was more in keeping with that of the Swiss Confederation. Prussia, which at the time had its own troubles, seemed to take but little notice of the happenings, treating the matter very contemptuously; but nine years after this event the royalist party, under the leadership of Colonel de Pourtalès, tried to reinstate the old régime. On the night of 2nd/3rd September, his troops stormed the castle and took possession of

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