

# Dam built without concrete

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ascent to one of Switzerland's leading winter sports resorts would scarcely have been possible without the pioneering work of this great railway engineer.

"Youth Hostels in Switzerland" and "Private Sanatoria in Switzerland" are two free booklets newly published by the Swiss National Tourist Office in three languages — German, French and English. They give concise information regarding these two types of institution in all parts of the country.

"A City of Many Possibilities", according to a new illustrated folder, is Basel, whose are treasures are world-famous. A complete information kit for foreign visitors, containing artistically designed literature on local places of interest, has also been issued by the Basel Tourist Office.

A new wild-life and nature sanctuary has been created, by decision of the government of the Canton of Berne, in the upper Lauterbrunnen Valley, which is one of the beauty spots of Switzerland's Bernese Oberland. Bordering on the Canton of Valais in the south, it is studded with a great many snow-capped peaks soaring to between 10,000 and 15,000 feet and dominating the glaciers and ravines near the source of the Weisse Lütschine.

The Swiss love sociability, and the most sociable of all Swiss towns appears to be Morges (population 8,500) on the Canton of Vaud shore of Lake Geneva. In that community there are more than 160 clubs of which, it is true, a mere 30 are explicitly of a "social" nature. One of the most violently discussed problems in public as well as club affairs recently has been the Geneva—Lausanne motorway now under construction. "It mustn't cut our town in two but should be built around it," was the unanimous opinion of all 160 local clubs.

Zurich, the Venice of Switzerland, has a new nautical attraction — a pompous motor-boat decorated with intricate gold ornaments. As a fad of a romantically inclined owner of a fleet of hire-boats, it is the exact replica of an old-fashioned Venetian party-ship, destined to take sightseers up and down the river Limmat and the lake of Zurich.

Some 2,000 ski adepts are to meet at Villars-Chesières, in the Vaudois Alps of Switzerland, in December, for the traditional prelude of the Swiss

winter sports season, the 27th Ski Instructors' Group, which is organized every year by the Swiss Ski School Association. Thanks to the many local transportation facilities, including the Roc d'Orsay aerial cableway, the big crowd of participants can be carried beyond the 6,500-foot "snow-safety line" within less than an hour.

"The Leysin American High School", which will cater for teenage children of U.S. families living in Europe, is to open at the mountain resort of Leysin, in the Vaudois Alps of Switzerland, in September. A former resort hotel has been remodelled for this purpose.

A "Fisherman's House" featuring conference and exhibition rooms, a library and a small museum dedicated to the art of angling, is to be established at the medieval castle of Klingnau in the Swiss country town of the same name. It will overlook the river Aare, an angler's bonanza.

### DAM BUILT WITHOUT CONCRETE Swiss try new method

According to an ancient custom — of Celtic origin, it is said — a fir tree, decked with coloured ribbons, was placed the other day on the top of a dam in the Göschenalp, in the St. Gotthard group, to indicate that construction had been completed.

The new Göschener dam, 505ft. high and 1,771ft. across, is the first large dam of its kind to be erected in Switzerland, without a single cubic foot of concrete in it. It is made entirely of rocks, stones, sand, and earth, with inside a thick layer of clay, and displaces a total volume of 318m. cubic ft. It took five years to build.

This new system of dam building has two advantages. Its construction costs are much less than concrete, and, owing to the greater plasticity, it is much less vulnerable to earthquake shocks. Another advantage is that such dams do not disturb the landscape, since once vegetation has covered the sides the dams will blend with the scenery.

The Göschener dam will serve to provide at Göschenen (3,640ft.) power for several groups of turbines whose production will reach 425m. kWh. when they start working next spring. Electricity will be supplied to the Federal Railways, Lucerne, Basle, and Zurich, and a number of industrial concerns.

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