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NEWS FROM SWITZERLAND ★ ★ ★

WATCHES UNDER REFRIGERATION

The watch manufacturers of La Chaux-de-Fonds, one of the major centres of the watchmaking industry in Switzerland, have just inaugurated a new cold chamber of over 40,000 cu. ft. of space for the stock-piling of watches and movements. This giant refrigerator will have a capacity for more than a million watches which can be stored for a period of 2 years, and will still be in a perfect state of functioning because the oil will not deteriorate.

MILK AND THE SWISS FEDERAL RAILWAYS

Through the restaurant concessions, the Swiss Federal Railways are responsible for the distribution of a large percentage of local milk supplies. The annual consumption of milk and milk products in these station restaurants amounts to some 550,000 gallons. On the basis of this successful experience the Railways management has decided to buy 15 vending machines for milk and milk drinks which will be installed these next few weeks in the Swiss Railway stations.

HUGE GAS STOVE

There has been just installed in the kitchen of the Zurich Central Station a giant gas stove on which can be used more than 100 casseroles. It has a capacity for baking more than 600 pieces of pastry per hour and for warming over 1000 plates at one time. Installation of this giant was critical and had to be done with the utmost speed to avoid any interruption of the service. Thanks to a work team of 30 men, the new gas stove was ready for service hours ahead of schedule.

TELEVISION IN SWITZERLAND

In Switzerland at the end of May, the number of television licences issued exceeded 320,000. On the same date, there were over 1,500,000 radio licence-holders, over 400,000 of whom receive their programmes through the telephone system.

CLOCK FOR PRESIDENT KENNEDY

During the course of President Kennedy's trip to Berlin, the Mayor of the city, Mr Willy Brandt, presented him a "Chronotome" clock with a crystal movement. The "Chronotome" is made in Geneva (Switzerland) and has a large dial which gives the Washington time and two smaller dials which give the corresponding hour at Moscow and at Berlin respectively.

SWISS FEDERAL SHOOTING CONTEST

Rail travellers to and from Zurich this summer may be a little disconcerted by the high proportion of their fellow passengers carrying firearms of every possible description. But this will be no general mobilisation on the 1939 scale, only a perfectly peaceable, and indeed festive, occasion, namely the Swiss Federal Shooting Contest.

This is due to take place at the recently extended Albisgutli range in Zurich, and will last three weeks from July 24 to August 12. At least 60,000 people are expected to take an active part in the contest.

With over 300 events to be shot, the noise of rifles and pistols will continue almost without a break for the whole three weeks. The extremely large number of marksmen taking part is an impressive demonstration of the Swiss people's lively interest in their national defence.

GOOD SKIING IN THE GLACIER REGIONS

The very heavy falls of snow which took place this winter and spring have created unusually good conditions for summer skiing on the snow and ice fields of the Swiss Alps. Crowds of skiing enthusiasts, with the aid of seasoned mountain flyers, will spend the summer or autumn touring the vast expanses of snow to be found throughout the higher regions of the Alps.

The experts add a word of caution: It is becoming increasingly clear that the ease with which the altitudes of perpetual snow may now be reached has engendered a somewhat lackadaisical attitude to the need for proper equipment; even in fine weather the high mountains are not without their hazards, and a rucksack with food and other necessities, together with suitable warm clothing, are essential.

SUMMER FESTIVAL ON ZURICH LAKE

It is good to hear that some bold hearts in Zurich have declared war on the inconstant elements and decided to put on an open-air show and make one of the most attractive spots on the lakeside a background for a world-famous musical comedy. Friml's "Rosemarie" has been extensively adapted and made into a "musical," which can be enjoyed from August 3 to September 1 in the refreshing atmosphere of the lakeside.

The scene has been set on an artificial island left over from a previous exhibition, and a Canadian Wild West town will be decorated complete with Indian canoes bobbing round it. A cast of some 200 will help to make this a memorable and lavishly staged revival of a piece whose melodies will awake treasured memories in many listeners.