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another 680,000 messages were sent by express, and 500,000 telegrams were received or dispatched for a total of 5,500,000 Swiss francs.

One section supplied 1,280,000 books to war prisoners, over 600 gramophone records, 4,419 games, and 15,000 music scores.

During the war the International Red Cross Committee sent to the prison camps, through Geneva, 32,980,000 food, clothing, and medical parcels, a total weight of 400,000 tons."

\* \* \* \* \*

A windfall for some of our war charities is expected from an unsuccessful smuggling transaction reported from Delle. When customs officials examined the Paris-Berne express a pile of gold valued about 17 million Swiss francs was discovered hidden under the footplate connecting two sleeping cars. All the passengers were searched and interrogated but the interested traveller could not be identified. Unfortunately the treasure-trove is now claimed by French officials.

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The pictures of the new "Pro Juventute" stamps are peculiar. As usual, there is a series of four stamps; they are issued on December 1st and enjoy currency till May 31st next year, both for inland and foreign postage. The 5 cts. and 10 cts. stamps were designed by the Wallenstadt artist Bickel and portray the late Federal Councillor Ludwig Forrer, who brought these charity stamps into existence, and Frau Susanna Orelli, who instituted the alcohol-free restaurants and community centres and whose 100th birthday is thus being commemorated. The remaining two stamps, the work of the designer Hans Fischer in Zurich, represent two typical alpine flowers, the dog-rose and the spring saffron or crocus.

—00—

A local earthquake described as fairly heavy was registered on Saturday morning, November 10th, at the Neuchatel observatory. The shock was felt throughout Switzerland, especially in the Bernese Oberland, and the centre is believed to be near Siders.

\* \* \* \* \*

The famous Cresta run near St. Moritz has attracted a good bit of publicity during the last few weeks; we doubt, however, whether the optimism of some English sports circles is likely to be justified this winter unless some of the sportsmen have been able to hoard money in Switzerland. Here is a small reference from the "Evening Standard," November 3rd, 1945:

"The St. Moritz Tobogganing Club Committee in London have agreed to permit the town of St. Moritz to rebuild the Cresta Run this year. People who will benefit mainly will be the Swiss and American soldiers, who will be able to go there this winter."

The Cresta Run was built and maintained by Britons who each year put up about £2,000 to keep it going. Swiss contributions were negligible. This year there will be no winter sports for Britons, but the committee feel the run should be started up again.

It is stipulated that control of the Cresta must remain in the committee's hands. The run must be organised by Britons. I should not be surprised to see Lord Brabazon, the chairman, and Colonel Jimmy Coates, the Secretary, in St. Moritz this winter for that purpose.

Lord Brabazon's committee agreed to a token contribution of 5,000 Swiss francs (£300). The Swiss should have no difficulty in finding the rest."

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Here is an obituary from the generally well-informed "Manchester Guardian," November 8th, 1945; we must have missed it in our Swiss news service, though the name is sufficiently familiar to us to arrest our attention:

"Pierre Ceresole, engineer son of a former President of the Swiss Confederation and founder of the movement known as the International Voluntary Service for Peace, died on October 24 at Lausanne at the age of 66. A friend writes:—

"He gave the small fortune left to him by his father to the Pestalozzi Foundation for Education and educated himself by working in oil wells in the United States, teaching English at Honolulu, and serving with a Baden engineering firm. Twenty-five years ago he organised the I.V.S.P. movement, through which he gathered together international groups to give emergency help where needed. Thus his parties helped sufferers from flood in Liechtenstein and Southern France and victims of Swiss avalanches. He paid two visits to India, where he and his friends did fine work after the Bihar earthquake, as well as at Brynmawr and other distressed areas in this country."

"The respect he was held in in Switzerland did not prevent him from being regularly imprisoned for his refusal to pay military taxes. Twice he crossed the frontier into Germany to deliver a peace message and the Gestapo handed him to the Swiss authorities."

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The stamp auctioneer, Mr. H. R. Harmer, of 39-42, New Bond Street, W.1, has kindly informed us that at the auction of November 5th a 4 Rappen stamp issued in 1843 in Zürich which was used on a piece of an envelope and postmarked with a black rosette fetched £100. A later stamp, the 2½ Rappen printed in Basle in 1845 and in similar condition realised £145.

Special sets which were issued for use by the League of Nations and the International Labour Bureau realised £48 each in unused pairs.

## COMMUNICATION FROM THE SWISS LEGATION.

We have received the following communication from the Swiss Legation, 18, Montagu Place, W.1:

"Swiss nationals wishing to return to Switzerland *definitely* will be able to do so in joining a single repatriation group which is to leave London on Wednesday, 19th of December, 1945.

Those who wish to avail themselves of this only opportunity of travelling back to Switzerland direct and who have not already put down their names on the repatriation list, should apply at once to the Swiss Federal Railway Agency, 11b, Lower Regent Street, S.W.1, and ask for the circular giving all the necessary details."

We wish to point out that this communication applies only to Swiss nationals who desire to return to Switzerland for good and *not* to Swiss people wishing to spend some time in Switzerland and return to this country afterwards.