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Odds and Ends

The second "Pro Aqua" Exhibition will be held on the premises of the Swiss Industries Fair in Basle from 30th September to 7th October this year. A great number of exhibitors from various countries have already signified their intention to take part in this specialised fair devoted to the problems of water supply, waste water purification, refuse disposal, etc. A series of scientific lectures with simultaneous translation has been arranged to take place during the period of the fair; twenty-five lecturers from ten countries will be talking on various subjects connected with water, its use, purification and protection.

* * *

It was ladies' day at the businessmen's Club, and one unfortunate member found himself seated next to a very talkative woman.

"I'm going to look to you for a lot of stimulating conversation," she gushed, "because you businessmen have so much to talk about. By the way, what is your business? I'm sure you must be full of your subject."

Came the reply, "I'm a prune packer."

* * *

Whisky is now the favourite spirit in Switzerland — by a wide margin over cognac, the second most popular drink — the Swiss Association of Spirit Merchants reported in Bienne.

The annual general meeting was told that 560,000 litres of whisky were imported last year, and that the sum of approximately 70,000,000 francs is paid each year in spirit tax.

* * *

A panoramic view of twenty-seven glaciers awaits the sightseer from the Chenalette mountain station which was recently opened to traffic. Visitors to the world-famous Great St. Bernard Pass area are conveyed to a height of 9,200 feet above sea level. The most imposing feature of the Alpine panorama is Mont Blanc, towering to a height of 15,750 feet, across from Chenalette.

* * *

A Lugano bar owner will bring Italian divers from the Lake Como region to search for the body of an 18-year-old youth drowned a month ago in Lake Lugano.

Gaetano Lanzani, owner of the Bar Elite in Lugano, has raised more than 1,000 francs to finance the search for the body of Renato Locca.

* * *

QUOTE — from "Humour", Australia:— "Message sent out on its teleprinter network by the United States Weather Bureau's San Francisco office: 'Forecast delayed by bad weather'."

* * *

On what does the average paterfamilias spend his income? Every year some 400 typical families in Switzerland are asked to keep an exact account of their personal expenditure and receipts, during the course of the whole year. These "index families" are selected in accordance with a special pattern, so that they present an exact mirrored image of the Swiss population according to its income, occupation, place of residence and number of persons composing the household. According to the table drawn up for the year 1959, an average Swiss family, with one child, spends about a quarter of its income on food. The second most important item of expenditure is in respect of the rent, which swallows up about one-eighth of its

income. Another one-eighth, that is to say, as much as the rent costs, goes for social, old age and sickness insurances. Then, tobacco, wines and other beverages, the care of the health, education, recreation and amusements absorb more than one-quarter of the income of the average Swiss family. During the course of 1959, the family with one child consumed, on average, 700 pints of milk, 400 eggs, and about 220 pounds of meat. Furthermore, this Swiss family, consisting of three persons, ate approximately 440 pounds of fresh fruit and 375 pounds of fresh vegetables.

When, in addition, one takes into account the fact that private savings put into saving-books and deposit-books, in Switzerland, are increasing yearly by 5,000 million Swiss francs, or by 1,000 francs per head of the population, and when one compares these figures with those of other countries, one cannot but come to the conclusion that the Swiss standard of living is among the highest in the world.

A magazine posted in Berne to "Mrs. P . . ., West Notting" was correctly delivered to Mrs. Elizabeth Palmer of 52 Blake Road, West Bridgford, in Nottinghamshire, England.

Mrs. Palmer's comment: "It's astounding."

* * *

A selection of the best canvases of the famous French painter, Berthe Morisot, is being shown at the Musée Jenisch in Vevey during the period 24th June to 3rd September 1961.

* * *

The first rack railway in Europe, the line leading to the Righi, a famous viewpoint overlooking the lake of Lucerne, was inaugurated on 21st May 1871 — ninety years ago. The line did not go right to the top, however, and passengers who wished to reach the summit had to complete the climb on foot or horseback. During the first year of its existence, this railway, which represented a remarkable technical achievement for the period, carried some 60,000 passengers to the Righi, at a height of 5,900 feet.

* * *

Swiss stamp collectors were astonished to find that a new and beautiful series of Liechtenstein stamps had been bought up by mystery speculators — and that one stamp out of the series of five was completely unavailable. The stamp, which is officially worth 1.50 francs, is expected to fetch about six times this price.

The Swiss Philatelic Association has protested to the Liechtenstein government about the disappearance of the new stamps, but the Liechtenstein government rejected the protest. The stamps had been officially printed and anyone was free to order them in advance, said the government of the little pocket-state between Austria and Switzerland.

The exact number of stamps printed is not known, but it is expected that the speculators will make a profit of at least half a million Swiss francs.

The new stamps are pictorial and show German minstrels of the 13th and 14th centuries, known as the "Minnesänger". They are printed in six colours and are technically of a remarkably high standard.

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A notice in a West End Club:

"We respectfully advise members that no responsibility can be accepted for cars left in our care."