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OF BEDS, GOATS AND WAITERS

In November, the foundation for consumer protection in Berne received a parcel from a housewife. It contained 7 kg. of printed advertising matter which had been delivered to that woman in the course of twelve months — useless waste for which the consumer pays in the end.

Young Swiss chef and waiter apprentices took part in a competition in Vienna from 16th to 20th November. They were two teams of four each, and they finished first as chef team and second as waiter team, and this in keen competition with nine Austrian teams and another invited team from Bavaria.

A young man of 28, Hanspeter Zeltner from Muttetz (BL), has successfully completed his training as a captain of the high seas. The diploma enables him to take passenger and freight boats of any tonnage across all seas of the universe. He was first trained on the "Leventina", the training boat of the Schweizerische Reederei, then served on the Rhine between Basle and Rotterdam and finally went to the maritime officers' school in Bremen.

Eleven years ago, the Swiss Red Cross started a scheme to provide beds for large families who, in some of the remoter parts of Switzerland, are not well off. The 5,000th bed (complete with bedding) was delivered to a family with twelve children at Fieschertal in the Upper Valais on 21st January. During the same period, 4,000 parcels of bedlinen, 300 wardrobes and chests, 88 second-hand sewing machines, 40 cookers and simple washing machines were given to ailing or invalid mothers.

Stringent regulations govern the import of livestock into the U.K. Swiss goat breeds are known here, too, but since 1931 no Swiss exports to England were possible. Recently it was deemed advisable to freshen up stocks, and after extremely difficult negotiations and much formality, nine goats of the Toggenburg and Saane breeds were flown from Kloten to London in a specially adapted plane on 7th February. After some renewed and exhaustive tests, the animals will be put at the disposal of the British goat breeders.

[A.T.S.]

MONTREUX AS A FILM SHOWPLACE

The Lake of Geneva's "Riviera" has long been a favourite residence of film stars. Now it has also come into its own as the setting for a new motion picture. Under the direction of the famous English actor, film writer and author, Peter Ustinov, sequences for "Lady L" are currently being shot in and around Montreux. Mr. Ustinov, an enthusiastic resident of the area, wrote the film script based upon a novel by Romain Gary. Among the international stars taking part in the filming are: Sophia Loren (Italy), David Niven (England), Paul Newman (U.S.A.), and Claude Dauphine (France). The story is set at the turn of the century, and Montreux has a few buildings notably representative of that era — particularly the worthy old Palace Hotel which, alongside the much older Chillon Castle, is among the city's architectural landmarks. Montreux's importance in the world of "Show Business" will be further emphasized when the Fifth International Television Festival opens there (29th April to 8th May). Highlight of the Festival will be the awarding of the highly prized "Golden Rose of Montreux".

[S.N.T.O.]

FOOD, GLORIOUS FOOD ...

The well-known cooking studio at the Dreikönigstrasse in Zurich has organised a programme lasting several weeks and dealing with proper feeding. Switzerland has been leading in the tinned food industry, dehydrated foods and deep freezing. The courses and classes are designed to interest people, especially from the country, in the best use of meat and fruit.

There has been a new record in the importing of citrus fruit. In 1963, 7,645 trucks (ten metric tons) were imported and 9,543 last year. 5,427 trucks of bananas came into Switzerland, an increase of 11.6% over 1963. Italy is still at the top of the importing countries, Spain has moved up, but Israel and South Africa have gone down. For bananas, it is Guatemala which tops the list.

The "meat budget" for 1965 which has been worked out by the Swiss co-operative for slaughtering cattle and meat consumption, estimates a demand of veal amounting to 36,580 tons. Home killing will cover no more than 90.6%, and the rest will have to be imported.

A report just published estimates the consumption of potatoes in Switzerland at 189.3 kg. per family in 1963, 2 kg. more than in the previous year. This is considerably less than before the war (215 kg. on average). Manual workers still consume more potatoes than their colleagues in sedentary occupations.

The Swiss, next to the Americans, are the largest consumers of soup. It is reckoned that every day over one million portions of ready-made soups are consumed in Switzerland. 1964 has seen another increase in the success of the Swiss soup industry.

Last year was much the same as 1963 as regards the consumption of chocolate which reached 8.2 kg. per head of the population. This is higher than anywhere in the world. The demand for cheaper varieties on one hand and that for special fancy arrangements and specialties on the other are both on the increase.

Finally, we learn that an average of 1.7 million eggs are laid in Switzerland every day.

[A.T.S.]

INCREASE IN GENEVA'S HOTEL FACILITIES

The City of Calvin is keeping pace with its preferential position in the world of international business and diplomacy. For the Spring of 1965, it has announced a 20% increase in hotel capacity compared to last year. Of the 9,500 existing hotel beds available, 1,650 were added during 1964. Among the new hotels, which generally offer the most modern accommodations, is the "Grand Pré", created by Jean Armleder of the stately old Hotel Richemond. This ultra modern, first class house, is in the best tradition of Swiss hostelry; its hundred rooms are decorated with individual charm, each with bath or shower and radio (television optional). The "Grand Pré" also has several luxury apartments in Louis XVI style, as well as studios with kitchen facilities. Only about 500 yards from the main railway station, in the direction of the U.N. complex, the "Grand Pré" is in a quiet, garden-filled quarter. There are conference rooms available, and, in addition to the parking lot, individual garages. The management elected to forego building a hotel-restaurant, leaving its guests to choose from the wide selection of restaurants nearby. Breakfast, however, is served either in the rooms or in the Bar, which is decorated as an old-fashioned Western Saloon.

[S.N.T.O.]