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VALLE DI MUGGIO

New Territory for Tourists

Although the Ticino has long been a well-travelled region, there are still valleys in this southernmost Swiss Canton, which are virtually untouched by tourism. In these remote valleys whose inhabitants generally wrest a hard living from nature, there is little to be seen of the blossoming prosperity which has blessed other parts of Italian-speaking Switzerland. One of these valleys is the Valle di Muggio, wealthy only in natural beauty, with its deep gorges, its steep, dark green slopes, gentle meadows and ancient villages. As recently as 50 years ago, the Valle di Muggio was accessible only *via* a donkey track which ran along the banks of a small river that has its source on Monte Generoso, and which wound in sharp curves up to the foot of the 5,600-foot mountain. Today, a modern steel bridge spans the ravine, and the narrow valley road which formerly could be travelled only by specially constructed post coaches, has been gradually widened. But the streets of the local villages are still narrow that the wheels of even the smallest trucks brush the walls of the picturesque houses. A few years ago, a project was completed which is of some importance for the valley: the road was extended up to Muggio, a self-governing community within the Mendrisiotto, as the most southerly tip of the Canton of Ticino is called. Muggio itself, which looks like a stony Mediterranean village, is now the terminal stop for regular postal coach runs from Chiasso and Mendrisio. Motorists wishing to visit this village at the very end of the Valle di Muggio, will find it necessary to make the last lap of the journey in a small bus, if their own car is of more than medium size. From Muggio, excellent walking paths lead up to Monte Generoso, the ridges of which close off the valley. A visitor with enterprise enough to pay a visit to this valley is certain to be enthusiastic about its beauty, its chestnut groves and fresh mountain air — and about his own fascinating discoveries.

[S.N.T.O.]

LAUSANNE — PLANS FOR THE FUTURE

Soon we shall see the start of building operations for a new 500 bed economy class hotel, the "Hotel — Tour d'Ouchy" costing £2½ million. The project includes a congress hall seating three hundred people, a dance hall, several dining rooms, restaurant, bar and covered swimming pool. It is planned to open the hotel in 1971.

Lausanne is the seat of the International Olympic Committee and has an Olympic Museum. Plans for the construction of a 1,000 feet high Olympic Tower have just been announced. This will house the Olympic Museum as well as vast film library containing records of the various summer and winter Olympics.

Helicoidal in shape, the Olympic Tower will have a width of 90 feet at its base and 45 feet at the top. A central well will contain two very fast lifts. The lower part of the building will have nine storeys (museum, film library, exhibition halls, offices) and the upper part, with two panoramic roofs, a luxury restaurant, grill-room and snack bar, six storeys.

The next few years should witness the completion of this spectacular project which is a positive addition to Lausanne's touristic and Olympic character.

[S.N.T.O.]

THE FIRST PARKING GARAGE AT ST. MORITZ

A generously conceived parking garage for 500 motor vehicles is being built at St. Moritz, the tourist centre of the Upper Engadine Valley, whose shortage of parking space has become unbearable. On a central site near the lower station of the Corviglia cable-car, the new building will comprise 40,000 m² (about 430,600 sq. feet). The community of St. Moritz has reserved the roof of the parking garage as a free arrival and departure depot of long distance buses and hotel buses. A cafeteria in a circle-shaped building will invite tourists to do something for the inner man. Tickets for mountain railroads and funiculars as well as money changing facilities will be available at special windows to the users of the parking garage which will be several floors high and will be equipped with all modern facilities.

[S.N.T.O.]

BAD RAGAZ

The other day, while looking over some past numbers of the "Swiss Observer", I came upon a brief allusion to Bad Ragaz. It roused in me a vivid memory of an hour or two spent there one late September morning in 1936. I had slept in Mels and started off early, walking across a field-path and reaching Ragaz in time for a second breakfast. The day was warm and sunny and I sat down on a seat under some trees to enjoy the fine view of hills and plain. It was, indeed, a pleasant spot.

I hoped to follow the windings of the Rhine, as far as was possible, and a friendly passer-by did what he could to direct me. I did not then know how insecure these were for the pedestrian and how many arduous detours would have to be made once Ragaz was left behind.

My Baedeker of 1909, too intimate ever to be given up for a later edition, tells me amongst other things that Ragaz is "one of the most frequented resorts in Switzerland (30,000) visitors annually", that its baths receive the mineral waters of Pfäfers and that in the cemetery is a monument to the philosopher Schelling. I bought a picture postcard — "Ragaz vom Wartenstein" and it remains to remind me of that fine watering-place, of wooded hills and distant peaks, as well as of those less communicable impressions which every landscape offers to the onlooker. Greetings to Bad Ragaz!

E.F.I.

ROSENLAUI

Rosenlaui, whose loveliness I chase in leisure hours,
No mountain lore, no tale of proud ascent, are mine to give,
Only fair memories of glacier and glen,
Of small and venturesome flowers,
Of brilliant peaks beneath a quiet heaven.

The years have sped.
No guide can link me with your course ahead,
No rope secure a path,
Only a pen.

E.F.I.