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SNTO NEWS

Successful reconstruction of the Municipal Theatre in Lucerne

Lucerne :—On March 14th, 1970 the Municipal Theatre in Lucerne was festively reopened with a performance of Moliere's comedy "Les femmes savantes". The rebuilding and enlargement of the theatre was accomplished within the record time of one and a half years and is the result of a long period of careful planning aimed at a productive theatre. Its nucleus is the lobby which is two floors high and extends along the entire width of the west side of the building. A considerable part of the budget was used for technical improvements such as fire protection, the renewal and completion of technical apparatus pertaining to the stage, an air conditioning and ventilating as well as a new heating system. A new sound booth and a modern lighting effects booth were also installed in appropriate places.

William Tell's disciples at Hönggerberg

Zurich :—Just before Whitsuntide, on May 15 and 16, crossbow marksmen from Germany, Austria and Switzerland will meet in Zurich for the traditional three countries' contest. Thus on the Hönggerberg range which is 30 metres (about 100 feet) long the world's best shots will compete in a discipline that in recent years has greatly gained in popularity and today has fans in all of Western Europe. This is partly due to the development of the crossbow into a modern and very accurate sporting weapon and partly due to the fact that the contest is almost soundless. Each of the three nations is going to send two teams of six men. On Friday the juniors will compete and on Saturday it will be the turn of the elite. Each marksman has to shoot 30 times in a kneeling and standing position at a disc 30 metres (about 100 feet) distant, with an inner circle radius as wide as 20 mm (about $\frac{3}{4}$ "). The arrows have a cylindrical point with a radius of 6 mm (about $\frac{1}{4}$ ").

First European Festival of Recreation

Geneva :—The International Recreation Association (IRA) announces that the First European Festival of Recreation will take place from May 28 to June 7, 1970 at the "Palais des Expositions" as well as the Sports Centre of Geneva. It will consist of a convention, an exhibition and a festival of sporting and cultural events. The European Organising Committee is headed by Lord Luke of Pavenham (Great Britain), president of the IRA, and includes among others: Federal Councillor Roger Bonvin (Switzerland), Dr. Georg von Opel (Germany), Dr. W. Kämpfen, director of the Swiss National Tourist Office. The Reception Committee is headed by Swiss Federal Coun-

cillor Paul Chaudet (retired). The exhibition is planned to show an attractive cross section of today's recreation activities in all their variety. The Swiss National Tourist Office is to be represented by its own booth. The festival of sporting and cultural events includes regattas on Lake Geneva as well as swimming, light athletics, basketball and gymnastics competitions. It is hoped to secure the participation of various European champions. Music recitals and folkloristic dances will take care of the cultural aspect of the festival.

"From every house an honourable man has to participate in the pilgrimage to the shrine of Stoss"

Appenzell :—In the year of our Lord 1405—just two years after the victorious battle of the Appenzellers against the army of the Abbot of St. Gall at a place called Vögelinsegg near Speicher—the Appenzellers were again threatened by a warlike attack from the region of Altstätten where the Abbot's army had set up its camp, reinforced by troops of Duke Frederick of Austria. In the morning of June 17 the attack was to start against the Appenzellerland. The Appenzellers—about 500 men strong—were on the alert. They lured the Abbot's army, about 1,500 men, into a trap and drove it away. The enemy suffered severe losses while the Appenzellers lost "only" 20 men, among them Uli Rotach, the hero of the shrine of Stoss. The pledge to make an annual pilgrimage to the battlefield in perpetuity is observed even to this day. In the morning of May 14 (this year's Ascension Day) the men of the Land of Appenzell will foregather in order to make their pilgrimage to the shrine of Stoss. At the meeting point above the city of Appenzell the "travel letter" will be solemnly read. After more than an hour's march the battlefield is to be reached and at the memorial chapel divine service is to be followed by the Stoss sermon. After an hour's rest the men's pilgrimage is to start off on the return trip. Clergy, government, captains and cantonal judges officially represent the canton on this occasion. The pledge calls for one honourable man from every house to participate in the pilgrimage.

Following the VIP's — the entire nation goes ski-ing

Pontresina :—Cross country ski-ing develops more and more into the people's winter sport. This became an obvious fact when on March 15 no less than 2,024 participants, 100 of them women, started off on the Second Engadine Ski Marathon. This means an increase of more than 100 per cent in one year. The Organising Committee which consists of members of the nine ski clubs of the Upper Engadine has been optimistically looking forward to the spreading of a healthy sporting discipline. The collective start of more than 2,000 skiers on the wide starting point

of Lake Sils was a particularly gripping sight. This was the largest Central European ski-ing event which some time ago was initiated by the Swiss National Tourist Office with its cross country runs of VIP's. Even the highest government officials took part in them and they were so well received that for some time cross country skis were sold out all over Switzerland. However, the remarkable success of Swiss cross country runners at the Winter Olympics and various other international competitions also contributed toward the increase in popularity of this beautiful and healthy type of sport. The participants of the Second Engadine Ski Marathon came from all walks of life and were from 20 to 76 years old. Already now one may look forward with joy and satisfaction to the Third Engadine Ski Marathon.

THE SWISS SUPERMARKET

(condensed by the Editor from an article in the Weltwoche.)

Switzerland has five main chains of department stores. Surprisingly enough, the largest of them is almost unknown by name. It is called Maus Frères Holding S.A. and is based in Geneva. Its 63 shops gross about 600 million francs a year. These shops bear such better-known names as La Placette, Magazine zur Rheinbrücke, Nordmann and Vilan. The holding is a family affair and has only recently disclosed its turnover. The next most important group of large shops is Jelmoli A.G. Its turnover is about 560 million francs and by no means confined to the main store in Zurich, but also shared by Au Grand Passage in Geneva and the Innovation shops erected in many of the smaller cities. Then comes Globus, with a turnover of about 400 million francs with its offshoots. Neue Warenhaus AG (EPA) which controls Oscar Weber is a private business and does not disclose its turnover. The same applies to Gebrüder Loeb. Jelmoli and Globus are public companies quoted on the market. But the great majority of the equity was held, in the case of Jelmoli, by the Ringer family and recently acquired by the Swiss Credit Bank, and in the case of Globus, the majority holders are still the Mahler family.

The total turnover of these department stores lay at about two billion francs last year, which means that each Swiss spent 300 francs or just under £30 in a department store. Considering that the Swiss spent 46 billion francs on private consumption last year and that half of this went in retail goods, the large shops absorbed a bare 10 per cent of the market.