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*A view of the village of Segnes which belongs to the commune of Disentis*

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young men were not compelled to emigrate or to enter foreign military service.

The building of new roads and later of the line of Rhaetian Railways from Ilanz to Disentis (1912) brought a modest prosperity to the Surselva.

But it was only after the Second World War, when tourism began its boom in all parts of the country, that the existence of the valley-dwellers was assured.

The agriculture of the Surselva has profited at all times from the favourable climate. The

valley-dwellers were always farmers, living on the land they cultivated.

And agriculture – constantly undergoing modernisation – is still an important economic factor today. The trades, based on old handicraft traditions, have also developed.

Many towns and villages derive benefit from small and medium enterprises such as building and transport companies, garages and product distribution firms.

Industry has not been able to establish itself, with the sole exception of the textile factory at Trun.

Factory workers are also employed by the Emser Werke at Domat/Ems.

Since the Second World War a few power stations have been erected in the valley and have provided work for many young people both during the building phase and under operational conditions.

Tourism is today one of the chief economic stays of life in the valley. Once places like Sedrun, Disentis, Breil/Brigels and Obersaxen had evolved into holiday resorts with a respectable infrastructure, smaller villages began to follow suit, and in most cases their efforts were crowned with success.

# **Touring... on skis**

SPRINGTIME skiing in Switzerland first became popular when the higher mountain regions, which had snow as late as May or even June, became accessible after the construction of railways and ski lifts.

The real sportsman however experiences even greater satisfaction if he climbs a mountain on

his own, then skis down new slopes having no designated runs.

Powder snow, common in January, is found in the higher regions even in late spring. Yet one mustn't forget the danger involved.

Ski tours ought never be attempted alone! Skiing as a group considerably increases the

possibility of mutual assistance. Just such team-work, such dependence on one another, is indeed an unforgettable experience that many people in our mechanised world can no longer have.

Prerequisites for a 2,000-4,000 meter ski tour consists of confident, experienced skiing ability and physical fitness. Year-round intensive training always pays off.

Before beginning a tour, the skier should be thoroughly familiar with the equipment: rope, climbing iron, pickaxe, climbing harness and, above all, the avalanche search beeper.

Because the weather often changes from one minute to the next, the initial thrill soon wears off, and the tour can become a truly difficult venture.

Furthermore, each member of such a trip through the winter loneliness, far from civilization, must carry the bare essentials on his back from hut to hut.

Swiss mountain climbing schools provide a choice of guided ski tours at all levels of ability for the challenging peaks of the Swiss Alps. A fascinating experience that lives on in memory.

★ ★ ★

BARGAIN hunters looking for a last minute skiing holiday, should contact Interhome, who have apartments available in Switzerland during March and April.

Late skiers must look for high resorts to ensure that there will still be sufficient quantities of snow about, though Zermatt, Saas Fee, Verbier/Haute-Nendaz/Mayens-de-Riddes or Crans-Montana are usually safe bets.

Of course, if you book late, you have the added advantage of being able to check snow reports first.

## **BACKGROUND IN PSYCHOLOGY OR MEDICINE**

*We are looking for Swiss German people to work as interviewers on a project between mid March and mid May. Interesting and reasonably well paid.*

*May suit post graduate student. Please send brief details quoting day and evening telephone numbers to:*

**Mrs Wyncoll, Eyescan, The Boathouse,  
The Embankment, Putney, London SW15.  
Tel: 01-788 8819.**