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A PROCESSION OF LIGHTS — AN OLD TRADITION

At the end of October and the beginning of November, in the last warm days of Indian Summer, when the evening twilight falls early over fields and meadows, towns and villages, the young folk from the region of Zurich up to the districts of Schaffhausen and Thurgau realize that the time has come to celebrate a charming old custom. Under the watchful eye of the older children and school-mistresses, dozens of huge round white or yellow turnips are carefully hollowed out. They are adorned with all kinds of imaginative carvings and a candle is fastened inside. These lights (called "Räbenlichter") are then carried around in the evening, in small or large processions, to the accompaniment of an accordion or even of the village band. By the flickering lights the children wander up and down the village and sometimes even visit the neighbouring one. From a distance these processions of lights look like shining serpents meandering in the darkness and the children express their delight and happiness in old folksongs.

[S.N.T.O.]

THE "ENGLISH SPEAKING UNION OF SWITZERLAND" IN ZURICH AND GENEVA

Through the "English Speaking Union" the opportunity is offered to English-speaking people of all nationalities to get acquainted with Swiss. Zurich, following the example of the British Commonwealth and the United States, took the lead by launching the first "English Speaking Union" on the Continent. Members pay a small fee and can join in the various weekly entertainments such as dances, lectures and panel discussions, concerts and excursions. Every Tuesday evening tables are reserved in a restaurant in town for informal get-togethers. There is also a "Youth Club" for teenagers (16 to 21), the events of which are also open to "seniors". Anyone interested may obtain information from E-SUS, P.O.B. 137, Zurich. A sister organization is now also afoot in Geneva.

[S.N.T.O.]

MUSIC IN AN INTERNATIONAL KEY

Musical life in Switzerland will be given additional zest by tours planned by foreign ensembles for November. The "Quartetto Italiano" which will be heard in Berne (24th November), Basle (26th November), Geneva (27th November) and Lausanne (28th November) is no newcomer, and neither are the "Trio di Trieste" to give concerts in Lugano (28th November) and Fribourg (29th November) nor "I Musici di Roma" whose exquisite art can be enjoyed in Neuchâtel on 30th November. — 1st November marks a guest concert by the Paris Orchestre National in La Chaux-de-Fonds, while Olten expects the Stuttgart Philharmonic on 13th November. A special treat for concert-goers in Basle will be the concert by the Belgian National Orchestra with Arthur Grumiaux (violin) as soloist (1st November). Serge Jaroff's popular Don Cossack Choir will again make appearances in Basle (3rd November), Geneva (4th November) and Berne (6th November), while the Budapest Gypsy Orchestra will play folk music in Neuchâtel (2nd November), Lausanne (4th November) and Geneva (9th November).

[S.N.T.O.]

BERNE OFFERS WIDE CHOICE OF EXHIBITIONS

Among the many notable shows of 19th-century French painting which the Museum of Fine Arts in Berne has already organized, the Eugene Delacroix exhibition, scheduled for the months of November, December and January, will take a prominent place. The centenary programme arranged in Paris to commemorate the painter's death in 1963 once again recalled to the public mind his outstanding importance as an artist. — The Kunsthalle will be showing works by the sculptor Etienne-Martin in November. — The MOWO Fashion, Home, Industry and Trade Exhibition to be held again at the Festival Hall in Berne from 7th to 17th November is sure to attract many visitors. — The PTT Museum, too, has something new to offer, since it is organizing a philatelic exhibition, "50 Years' Air Mail in Switzerland". — In Memory of the great printer, Giambattista Bodoni, who died 150 years ago, the Gutenberg Museum will hold a typographical and book art exhibit. — Subject of a show at the Swiss National Library is "Switzerland and Sweden from the Middle Ages to the Present Day". Thus, the Federal capital may look forward to an eventful month of exhibitions.

[S.N.T.O.]

MODERN ENGINEERING PROVIDES ACCESS TO NEW SPORTS REGIONS

The one and only raw material Switzerland may call its own is water, and this is being exploited more and more for high standard electricity supply. This modern development calls not only for barrage walls and dams, head race tunnels and pits, but besides artificial lakes and high voltage aerial lines drawn high across the peaks it also means good and safe roads. These new connections give access to hiking and ski regions heretofore hardly attainable. On Göschener Alp, for instance, a huge dam has been built to pen the waters from an extensive area of glaciers and eternal snow. Thus, in a quarter of an hour's drive by car from Göschenen, on the St. Gotthard route, one now easily reaches one of the most fascinating regions for hiking and mountaineering, with good solid rock to climb, and manifold possibilities for excursions in snow and ice, and summer and winter skiing.

[S.N.T.O.]

A TELEPHONE CABLE THROUGH THE WALENSEE

The small village of Quinten, on the steep, pathless north bank of the Walensee, built on what probably was a Roman site, is most likely the only village in Switzerland which can be reached by waterway only. It is shut in on three sides by high precipitous walls of solid rock with but the lake offering easy access. Thus sheltered and with direct south exposure, Quinten has an extraordinarily warm climate, evidenced by the flourishing almond and fig trees. This little place has but twenty telephone connections. While the postman, wedding and christening parties, funeral processions, in short anyone who has matters to attend to outside of the village — and this also includes the school children — cross the lake by boat, the telephone cable was not able to weather the storms. Now it has been immersed in the waters and, because of the great depth of this mountain lake, it had to be lengthened by 1½ miles.

[S.N.T.O.]