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The Swiss, big consumers of soap

In 1971, Swiss consumption of toilet soap and toiletries of all kinds amounted to 1.34 kg. (2.95 lb.) per inhabitant. Switzerland thus comes first among Western European countries, followed by Great Britain (1.31 kg.—2.88 lb.—per head of the population). The consumption of these products has increased considerably since 1970: by 19.6% for shampoos, 8.4% for toilet soaps and 4.3% for shaving soaps. In 1939, Switzerland's total output of soap and washing products amounted to 38,200 tons. It has more

than trebled in the last 30 years. In fact, the Swiss soap-making industry, which employs some 1,900 people, produced 117,800 tons in 1971, including 61,500 tons of washing products (10,900 tons in 1939). It had a turnover amounting to approximately 300 million francs (US \$78.95 million). If one considers the total consumption of soap of all kinds, including cleaning products for industry, Switzerland came third among European countries in 1971 with a consumption of 16.2 kg. (25.6 lb.) per head of the population, behind Germany (17.2 kg.—37.8 lb.), and the Netherlands (16.4 kg.—36.1 lb.).

and a new Nordic ski school, "Peu Péquinet", has been opened at Le Noirmont in the Jura mountains. Those who want to go in for a competition can inscribe for the Einsiedler "Volkslauf" or national cross-country race (16 miles long) on 25th February. Tougher long distance skiers should go in for the fifth ski marathon of canton Grisons which will be held on 14th March and its 26 mile long course will lead from Maloja to Zuoz. A new brochure on long distance skiing this winter has just been published and this can be obtained at the "Schweizer Ski-verband", 3000 Berne 6.

TOURIST NEWS

"Klima in der Therapie" (Climate in the Therapy) a new SNTO publication in German

With the collaboration of the Working Group on Climatic Questions of the Federal Health Office and the Swiss Association of Climatic Resorts, the Swiss National Tourist Office published a paperback entitled "Klima in der Therapie" (Climate in the Therapy) at the end of November. This vademecum, written by Dr. med. J. S. von Deschwanden of the Bioclimatic Research Centre in Adelboden, is divided up according to 50 groups of illnesses. It contains indications on methods of treatment, information on a health resort's appropriate height and climate, the lengthy and success of a cure, etc. Over forty Swiss climatic health resorts lying between 600 and 5,400 feet are classified according to degrees of stress varying from 0 to 3. This new guide in German is especially designed for doctors and medical circles.

Long distance skiing: Switzerland's second national sport

Performance is not the only thing that counts with long distance skiing. This sport is equally good for one's physical and mental condition. More and more ski enthusiasts are taking this sport up since there is no age limit. Quite a few Swiss ski resorts have their own "loipes"—the most recent ones being those of: Grächen, Grindelwald, Les Marécottes, Mürren, Saas-Fee, Zinal and Zuoz (cross-country skiing track). Some runs are even lit up in the evening which allow for training when it's already dark outside, namely at: Albis (near to Zurich), Arosa, Bäretswil (Zurich Oberland), Disentis, Einsiedeln (the main long distance skiing centre), Gstaad, Les Cernets, Lucerne and Tiefencastel. Cross-country ski schools hold weekend courses in several areas. A three day course will be given by the cross-country ski school of Amman at Alt St. Johann for instance

"Klausjagen" a traditional festivity in Switzerland on St. Nicholas' day

The St. Nicholas procession at Küsnacht am Rigi is one of the most impressive customs pertaining to St. Nicholas' day (6th December) in Central Switzerland. On the Thursday before 6th December, over a hundred light-bearers or "Iffelträger" parade through the streets of Küsnacht followed by the Nicholas chasers: trumpeters, brass band and "Treichler" (youngsters equipped with large cowbells). The "Infuln" or Iffel" are mitres lit up inside and made of cardboard. Cut out in ornamental patterns they are illuminated from within by many candles. The demonic figures perform a sort of ritual dance through the crowds to the unusual rhythm of the music and bells. Only the "Chlepfer" or chasers can hold back the spectators by swinging their whips in the air, thus producing the effect of rifle shots in the night. All wait for the holy St. Nicholas to appear. Just before midnight, the village lights are lit again and the visitors warm themselves up with coffee or a glass of wine at the inns.

The first mobile Alpine hut in the world

A former carriage of the Bodensee-Toggenburg railways has been converted into a mobile Alpine hut.



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Decorated in true Appenzell style, its warm interior invites its guests to linger there comfortably. This first Alpine hut on wheels in the world belongs to the popular Amor-Express of the Bodensee-Toggenburg railways.

Attractive exhibitions to be held in December

Visitors to the exhibition at the "Musée d'ethnographie" in Geneva will find themselves in quite another world, namely that of Greenland, whereas Oceanian art will be on show at Geneva's exquisite "Petit Palais". Under glass paintings belonging to private Swiss collections will be on show at the "Bellerive Museum" in Zurich while Max von Mühlens's sketches for glass paintings can be seen at the "Kunstmuseum" in Berne. The role of sports in political caricatures will be the theme of the exhibition at the "Schweizerische Turn- und Sportmuseum" in Basel and once again. Illustrations of Zurich will be on show at the "Stadthaus" in Zurich.

The Ticino also attracts visitors in winter

An average of 549 sunshine hours are registered in Lugano from December to March. More and more sun worshippers "hibernate" on the Swiss Riviera because of its relatively mild climate. The various ski resorts lying at a height of 3,300 to 5,100 feet are visible proof that it can be very wintry in other parts of the canton. You can go skiing in the Blenio valley, the Gotthard region and further south in Faido Cari, on the slopes of the Monte Cimetta above Locarno and on the Monte Lema. These regions are sure to have snow and can easily be reached by train, postal coach or car. There is also a large number of artificial ice-rinks for skating enthusiasts at Ascona, Ambri-Piotta, Bellinzona, Chiasso and Lugano. There are riding schools at Bedano, Contone, Massagno, Novaggio, Novazzano, Origgio, Quartino, Tegna, Tesserò and at the "Centro Quadri" hotel, four miles away from Lugano. Also at the "Centro Quadri" is the biggest of the 11 heated indoor swimming pools in hotels of the entire Ticino; the pool is 150 feet long and is equally open to non-residents. You can find covered tennis courts at Lugano and Locarno. A visit to "Swissminiatur" at Melide is fascinating both for adults and children: it portrays well known sights of Switzerland at a ratio of 1:25 over a surface of 42,000 square feet. The Ticino is well known for its art treasures—churches, castles and "palazzi" sometimes to be found in the most remote areas. Should you be looking for risotto ai funghi, genuine polenta, spaghetti, a thick minestrone soup or home-made canelloni in

the Ascona-Losone region for instance, you can refer to the gastronomical guide covering that area. All inclusive rates for a seven day sojourn at Lugano in four different hotel classes start at 190 francs and include board and lodgings, free rides on local public transport and a few more surprises.

Ski competitions during the winter season of 1972/73 in Switzerland

Many ski competitions are forecast on this winter's calendar in Switzerland. The season will begin on 10th. 11th January, with the 1st International FIS European Cup ladies' race at Mürren which will be followed by the 43rd international "Lauberhorn" race (men's world cup race in Alpine skiing) at Wengen from 13th to 14th January. The World Cup men's giant slalom will take place on the following day, 15th January, in Adelboden while the international ladies' ski races in downhill and slalom will be held at Grindelwald on 16th to 17th January. Competitors in the Europe Cup race for men will be meeting at Thyon on 20th-21st January. During the Swiss Ski Federation international ski jumping week, ski jumping competitions will be held at Engelberg, St. Moritz, Gstaad and Le Locle from 21st to 28th January. The International Ski Competitions of canton Vaud will take place on 22nd January; on the same day, the play-off for the Alpine Europe Cup will equally be held in the Vaudois Alps. The FIS B Alpine Cup race will end up the skiing events for the month of January. Certainly worthwhile mentioning are the men's and ladies' downhill races for the World Cup to be held at St. Moritz from 9th to 11th February. Other important events: the International Grand Prix for ski-bobbing at Montana-Crans (3rd to 4th March) and the first Para-ski World Cup at Flims from 11th to 18th March (this is a combination of parachute jumping and Giant slalom). The 3rd FIS International ladies' ski races (slalom/giant slalom) to be held at Arosa from 29th March to 1st April, will be the last of these ski competitions.

Graphic Arts: A decisive step

Up till now the automatic checking of the longitudinal register on rotary printing presses only came into operation when an error was actually detected. The slowness of the reaction of these conventional presses led to a limitation of production speeds and insufficiently reduced wastage. At Drupa 1972, a Swiss machinery factory in Lausanne presented a new appliance marketed under the name of Registeron with three control systems capable of solving with the maximum efficiency the registering problems peculiar to the different rotary presses and shaping machines fed by spools. Based on a unique principle, it offers a system of preventive correction of the register, at speeds never achieved before. The result of research carried out on a computer simulating the working conditions of a rotary press, it corrects errors in register by controlling the tension of the band between the printing groups. With this new appliance, corrections can be made 10 times as fast as with a conventional registering group.

Keeping the law on ski slopes

Should ski runs be considered as a public thoroughfare, submitted to the ordinary rules of traffic? Is a skier tearing down a crowded slope at speeds beyond his control to be considered in the same way as a driver exceeding the speed limit or otherwise breaking the highway code? This question is becoming more topical all the time, more and more people reach for the Alps every winter. A former federal judge, Mr. Karl Danneger from Gstaad, said during an information press gathering organised by the Swiss Committee for the Prevention of Ski Accidents, that the laws on road traffic were also applicable to ski slopes. He said that the relevant legislation (Article 237 of the Swiss Penal Code) punishing by means of fines or imprisonment those who, intentionally or through negligence, obstruct or endanger public traffic, could also be applied to erratic skiers.

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