

News in brief

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DISCOVER SOUTHERN SWITZERLAND BY POSTAL COACH

(snto). Try travelling comfortably and trouble-free through the southern part of Switzerland by postal coach for a week. The all-inclusive ticket entitles you to unlimited travel on a 780 mile long network and on roads going to St. Moritz, Chur (San Bernadino Tunnel), Disentis, Andermatt, Stresa, Varese and Luino. It only costs Fr. 35 for adults, and Fr. 25 for children and owners of Holiday Tickets and half-price vouchers. This ticket is obtainable at all postal travel offices in southern Switzerland and at sales offices in Zurich, Berne, Chur, St. Moritz, Disentis and Andermatt.

NO LONGER ANY NEED TO DREAD RADAR CHECKS

The jury of the International Salon of Inventions in Geneva awarded the Swiss Office for the Development of Trade Prize, an award given to the best Swiss invention, to the speed limit warning device for automobiles produced by a firm at Renens (Vaud, Switzerland). This small appliance warns the driver of a vehicle by means of an acoustic signal every time he approaches the speed limit set beforehand on one of the keys on the instrument; as speed limits are tending to become more and more general in all countries, this accessory saves motorists from having to keep their eyes glued to their speedometers instead of being able to concentrate on the road. Mounting is very quickly done and requires no special installation; it is enough to fix a probe near the tachometer, without direct connection to the cable, and to plug the instrument into any available socket, the cigarette lighter for example. (SODT).

NEWS IN BRIEF

The firm of Wild Heerbrugg Co. Ltd., Heerbrugg (St. Gall, Switzerland), manufacturers of optical instruments, has acquired a majority share in the Ernst Leitz works at Wetzlar (West Germany) well known for its production in the fields of microscopy, photography (Leica cameras) and measuring technique. In co-operation with Leitz, Wild plans to revise the manufacturing and sales programmes of the German firm; a special effort will be made in the sectors of microscopy and measuring technique by joint research programmes. (SODT).

The Swiss chemical group Sandoz (Basle) has acquired a majority share in the American firm of Vital Assists (Salt Lake City), specialising in haemodialysis equipment. The latter will continue its work in the field of renal therapeutics, but will also be responsible for the sale in the United States of a certain number of other Sandoz products. (SODT).

SWISS NOVELTY IN ELECTRONICS

About 1950, cold cathode tubes attained their technical maturity. For many years, they were considered as advanced electronic components; but the appearance of semi-conductors gradually ousted them from their position of supremacy. Recently however there has been a veritable rebirth of cold cathode tubes. Their great stability, insensitivity to overloading and peak voltages, wide range of temperatures, reliability and long life make them ideal for many uses in simple automatic controls and regulating circuits. It is above all miniature welding diodes for printed circuits that triggered the present demand for these components. A specialised Swiss factory at Mannedorf (Zurich) presented a number of high-power switching diodes for welding in printed circuits at the recent Electronic Components Exhibition in Paris. These diodes come in two versions (striking voltage of 200 and 400 V respectively); they make it possible to produce impulse generating sweep circuits of very simple design and are both reliable and economical. Their main fields of use are appliances for lighting natural gas, starters for sodium vapour lamps and other high pressure lamps for lighting roads and sports fields, appliances for electric fencing etc. (SODT).

INCOME TAX IN SWITZERLAND

Switzerland is one of the countries in which the part played by income tax in the overall fiscal revenue is the biggest. According to the most recent OECD statistics, 42.0 per cent of Switzerland's total fiscal revenue (including social insurance taxes) in 1971 came from income tax and tax on profits. Of all European countries belonging to OECD, the proportion of these taxes was higher only in Denmark (48.2 per cent), Sweden (46.8 per cent), Finland (43.0 per cent) and Luxembourg (41.9 per cent). Great Britain was on a par with Switzerland. On the other hand, the proportion of income tax and tax on profits in the total fiscal revenue was much lower in all other European countries: Netherlands (34.2 per cent), Belgium (32.8 per cent), West Germany (31.3 per cent), Norway (29.4 per cent), Eire (29.1 per cent), Austria (26.0 per cent), Portugal (24.3 per cent), Spain (20.8 per cent), Italy (18.6 per cent), France (15.9 per cent) and Greece (14.1 per cent). (SODT).