

"Our fatherland" [continued]

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pany has moreover appointed sales representatives for Bermuda and the Canary Islands. The fact shows that Swiss sewing machines successfully compete in the most various parts of the globe.

The Tavaró Co. recently opened an ultra-modern varnishing department. The machine parts are varnished in an electrostatic field, and the application and drying of the colour is done with the help of infra-red rays on a moving belt. The new equipment is the first of its kind in Europe.

“OUR FATHERLAND”

(Continued from July Issue)

The Oberland: In less than 20 minutes one of the dozens of fast daily electric express trains brings you to the lake and town of Thun. The picturesque town with the quaint streets, the imposing Schadau Castle (containing a most interesting museum), is a fitting portal to the Bernese Oberland. Many fascinating walks are offered, both through the town and along the lake's shore, with the magnificent view of the Jungfrau chain as a background. From Thun you have the choice to proceed to Interlaken either by rail through lovely Spiez, or else by boat on the beautiful lake.

Arriving in Interlaken, the Oberland's famous tourist centre, your first delight is the splendid view of the Jungfrau, provided of course the weather is clear. From this place, you are within easy reach of the classical region of grand Alpine scenery. The overwhelming but harmonic beauty of the Jungfrau, the Eiger and the Monch has become famous all over the world. Interlaken itself has a fine promenade, splendid shops displaying tempting souvenirs, wooden carving, musical boxes, etc.

An easy rail excursion brings you to the Lanterbrunnen Valley with the Staubbach waterfall, and from there the Wengernalp-Jungfrau railway starts. Wengen, a prosperous village in the midst of luxuriant pastures, is quite a popular summer and winter resort. Continuing by rail to the Scheidegg you have a magnificent close view of the three famous peaks, all over 13,000 ft. high. From the Eigerglacier station, the great tunnel, piercing through the Eiger and the Monch, commences, but a halt is made at Eigerwand, where you view through a huge cut-out window the Swiss Midland right across to the Jura. And 10 minutes later at Eismeer station, another masterpiece of technical skill cut out of solid rock, affords a stupendous outlook over a great glacier to the lofty Schreckhorn, Finsterarhorn and Wetterhorn. This is a region where ice and snow reign absolute. The final stretch in this long tunnel finally brings you to the Jungfranjoeh at a height of 11,840 ft. There you can enjoy winter

sport all year around. The comfortable hotel, the Berghaus, is the highest in Europe. Situated high above the great Aletsch glacier, it is surrounded by many peaks over 13,000 ft., and provides a splendid centre for climbing in mountains or on glaciers.

The Oberland is not only famous for its splendid scenery, but also for cattle-breeding. Above all, the Simmental breed is much appreciated and is exported to other countries in Europe as well as overseas. Owing to the great number of romantic stories about Switzerland, the house of the Bernese Oberland peasant has become a prototype of a Swiss mountain house. It has grown into fame together with the beauty of its surroundings. These Swiss chalets are made of wood, built on stone foundations, like all other dwellings in the Alpine region. These chalets are wonderful pieces of art with fine proportions, the broad window-fronts decorated with wood carvings and inscriptions. Often lovely flower patterns are painted on the walls.

Bernese Gastronomy: The Inn or “Gasthof” is a tradition in the Canton of Berne. If you wish to eat a typical dish of this canton, visit one of the good old inns in the country, and ask for a “Bernerplatte.” This dish consists of bacon, sausages, ham and boiled beef, all cooked together and served with sauerkraut and potatoes. A Bernerplatte is a festive meal of the peasants as they used to serve it at weddings, christenings, harvest festivals—but with the years it has become one of the most popular of Swiss dishes.

Another favourite Bernese dish: split pea soup cooked with pig's knuckles or “Gnagi.” This dish is prepared by cooking about 200 grams of dried yellow peas, which have been soaked overnight to soften them, in two and a half litres of water together with pig's knuckles over a slow fire. After 2½ or 3 hours, the knuckles are removed and the soup is served with roasted bread “croustons” and the pig's knuckles are eaten separately with potatoes and mustard. Another specialty is young roosters with roast potatoes. These young roosters are known in the Bernese dialect as “Mistkratzerli,” an expression, we are certain, well known to most of our readers.

However, the most popular single dish in all Switzerland is the “Rosti.” This is made from potatoes first boiled, then peeled and sliced in thin slices and pressed into a cake, and browned in butter or fat until a golden brown. In Switzerland this dish is a natural accompaniment of cold meats or roasts, while the peasant often makes an entire meal out of it with tomatoes or fresh green salad.

The Bernese wines are from the shores of the lake of Biene, like the famous Twanner, Ligerzer, whereas from the lake of Thun come the excellent brands from Spiez or Obershofen.

Generally speaking, the wines of Switzerland are as varied as the population and the climate.

Growing in many valleys, along protected slopes and mostly on the shores of many lakes, are the homes of various excellent wines. Already during the Roman epoch, vineyards were cultivated in ancient Helvetia.

Wines should be stored at an even temperature all the year around and bottles must be laid flat so that the wine touches the cork. When serving wine you must observe two rules: Always chill white wine, but never add ice to it; never chill red wine, just serve it at the temperature of the room.

E.M.

(To be continued)

JOHANN CASPAR LAVATER,

1741-1801

A SWISS CITIZEN OF THE WORLD

(Concluded)

In his tireless efforts to find an issue to this conflict, Lavater laid himself open to bitter attack. A passionate and venomous polemic broke out over the question of the so-called "miracles," which were actually pure hypnosis and suggestion. In the end a number of physicians undertook to examine Lavater's hypotheses, investigated his "cures" and found that, beneath the surface mysticism, there was a sound core of truth which showed prospects of future development. Thus at a time when the world in general knew nothing about it, empirical psychology was coming to birth among a handful of experts.

Lavater never understood the rationalistic standpoint of the medical men of his time, and would have fallen a hopeless victim to religious delusions if he had not been saved by the two powerful roots of his personality—his patriotism and his world-wide intellectual understanding. At a time when the world had already pronounced judgment on him, in the last years of the eighteenth century, Switzerland was on the point of succumbing to revolution, civil war and foreign intervention.

The old Confederation had collapsed, and in the eyes of its bedazzled citizens, salvation could only come from beyond the Swiss frontiers. At this critical moment, Lavater pulled himself together, looked about him and at once grasped the moral danger that was threatening his beloved country. In spite of the scorn and hostility to which he was exposed, without heeding the criticism that was sure to come, and reckless of the actual danger to his very life, he spoke from the pulpit with all his old fire and eloquence, calling upon men to take thought and remember the oldest of Swiss virtues—the defence to the death of the freedom of their country.

A wave of devotion to the national cause spread over the country. Lavater did not remain alone. In every canton men arose who preferred an honourable end to a prudent fraternisation with a powerful oppressor. Lavater himself wrote an open letter to the Directoire in Paris, and publicly accused the commanders of the army of occupation of all the wrong they had done to a defenceless population. In those years of national struggle he fully made good all the sins against the European mind his misunderstood mysticism had led him to commit. Nor did Europe refuse him his due meed of admiration for his courage in the cause of his fellow-men.

When Lavater was struck down by a French bullet, and, after lingering for a year, was called away from the scene of his earthly struggles, it was not only his Swiss compatriots who followed his body to the grave. Even the French officers and all the foreigners in Zurich walked in the funeral procession of the man who had given the world the example of an unshakeable loyalty to his native land and of a spiritual fraternity encompassing all nations.

Mary Lavater-Slomann.

LETTER FROM SWITZERLAND

AN EXCLUSIVELY LAND-LOCKED COUNTRY, SWITZERLAND NEVERTHELESS POSSESSES A MERCHANT FLEET

An exclusively land-locked country, with no seaboard of her own, Switzerland would probably never have thought of creating a merchant fleet if circumstances had not forced her boldly to find a solution to the problem of obtaining supplies.

The difficulties encountered during the last war made Switzerland realise how useful it would be to have a merchant fleet sailing under her own flag. A Swiss maritime law was then drawn up, which came into force on April 9th, 1941, a date which can be considered as the veritable birthday of the Swiss merchant fleet.

When the war ended, it was unanimously decided that this fleet should be maintained and placed in the hands of private enterprise. Since the outbreak of war in Korea, it has even been found desirable to increase its size still further. This made it necessary to modify the existing maritime law. That is why a new Bill has been drafted and will very shortly be submitted to the Federal Houses.

This Bill placed the Swiss merchant navy under the supervision of the Federal Council, and makes the place of jurisdiction the town of Basle on the Rhine. The owners and builders must be Swiss, resident in Switzerland and with their main offices in this country. Similarly all share-