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Among the musical items the "Concerto Grosso" by Rivaldi, which was played by the Scala Orchestra from Milan during Lucerne's musical week was especially appreciated. Notwithstanding the precarious times the City of Lucerne had organised, as in previous years, this international rendezvous of musical art. - So to speak under the heading of "Believe it or not" we were told, that on account of the petrol restrictions, the City of Basel had turned one of her tram cars into a vehicle for newly weds, devoted to the sole purpose of manoeuvring wedding couples about town, from wedding headquarters to the church, the civil registrar etc.. This tram-car, of course, can accommodate whole wedding parties and take them anywhere in Basel or surroundings for the wedding celebrations, as long as there are rails. So Basel from now on stands for the slogan: "Where there are rails, there is hope," and is openly taking the part of the womenfolks, whereas the men are left minus a good excuse. It is therefore not surprising that apprehension was expressed, that this philanthropic venture of the City of Basel may be used by vitriolic Basler Beppis as a target for future carnival jokes.

The next Sunday broadcast from Switzerland will take place on the 5th of October. In the meantime we shall listen in to the daily broadcasts on wavelength 48.66 from about 4.45 p.m. to 5.15 p.m. In recent days I have often been unable to get Switzerland, as previously, on this wavelength in the morning (8.45 a.m. to 9.15 a.m.)

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WAIKATO 1st. OF AUGUST CELEBRATIONS.

The 650th Anniversary of our Country's Independence was the memorable occasion of a happy gathering of Compatriots of the Waikato district, at the residence of our old and respected friend John Steiner, Eastport Rd., Waihou. After welcoming about 50 guests a happy evening was spent with the time honoured card game, "Jass", with singing and dancing. The "Ruetlischwur" the oath of allegiance to the newborn Independence of Switzerland, sworn on the 1st. of August, 1291, was solemnly repeated by Messrs. Gysler, Fischlin and Vonholzen, representing their respective Cantons, Uri, Schwyz and Unterwalden. Two daughters of the host and some others were attired in their national dresses. The supper will doubtless be remembered by all present: Swiss sausages, Sauerkraut, Krapfen, Birrenyagge, besides other dishes and sweets. Is it a wonder some guests did not like to leave the table? The Parish priest of Waihou addressed the guests, blessing our dear old country and hoping that it may remain immune from the ravages of the war. A telegram from our respected Consul, Dr. W. Schmid, was read, wishing the gathering every enjoyment and the best of luck. After breaking up the happy party at 3.30 in the morning, some had very little time to spare to reach their homes for milking time.

At the home of Mr. Joseph Werder, Waitoa, a small number of Swiss gathered for a Jass evening and a cup of black and "well fortified" black coffee, - a set of Swiss too old for dancing, but all enjoyed themselves thoroughly, as could be expected in Joe Werder's hospitable home.

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EXTRACTS FROM A SPEECH DELIVERED BY OUR EMBASSADOR IN LONDON.

At a Luncheon arranged by the London City Swiss Club, on June 7th last, our Minister Monsieur Thurnheer delivered a very interesting speech regarding a recent trip he made to Switzerland. Condensed extracts are as follows:

"The trip high above the sea and in or above the clouds was very pleasant. Still, we were all glad when we saw after seven hours flying the lovely Portuguese coast dotted with small white glimmering villages surrounded by vineyards. Portugal makes from the very start already at the airfield, the impression of a well-run country; it is now a very important gate, opening on one side to Europe, on the other to the Atlantic Ocean. You feel its international atmosphere immediately upon arriving when one sees Portuguese, Spanish, Italian, German, English, French and American

" aeroplanes, all on the same airfield. The hotels are packed with an international crowd. Lisbon at night gives one a most striking and pleasant impression of a city in peacetime, with all the streets and shops splendidly illuminated and the people walking gaily about. I had almost forgotten how nice and friendly an illuminated town looks at night. I looked at Lisbon like a child at a Christmas tree.

In Lisbon I met a Delegation of the International Red Cross from Geneva and postponed therefore my departure for one day. The following day the aeroplane for Spain left very early, at 6.30. Storm and heavy rain hindered the landing at the civil airfield in Madrid, so we had to come down far from the capital at one of the military airfields which has played an important part in the Spanish Revolution. From Madrid I continued directly to Barcelona. Flying over the mountains in Spain you still see trenches here and there, a remembrance of the civil war. They resemble scars on the beautiful surface of this famous country.

In Barcelona my air trip ended. The present train service between Barcelona and the Swiss border is not yet perfect. This is due to unrepared railways and to lack of coal and rolling stock both in Spain and France. Only two fairly good trains leave every week, the rest are slow ones. A fellow traveller of mine who was in a great hurry, took in Barcelona his chance in one of the slow trains, hoping to arrive in Geneva before the faster train for which I was waiting and which was leaving two days later. However, when I arrived in Grenoble, I overtook him there; he was worn out after three days uncomfortable travelling. Another drawback in one of the countries is that no traveller is allowed to cross the border with currency of that state in his possession, the change must be made after his arrival. This can cause much inconvenience, as it takes time to find the money changer and you might wish to spend some money in the meantime. The same holds good when leaving that country. The food I got in Spain and France was everywhere sufficient, which does not mean that every inhabitant of these countries had enough to eat. The officials at the borders were everywhere courteous.

You can imagine my joy when I arrived home after a trip of seven days which in normal times would have taken $2\frac{1}{2}$ hours by our excellent Swiss Air. This comparison is in itself an indication of all the difficulties Switzerland has to endure in its contact with the outside world not only in travelling, but in exports, imports and so forth.

The first impression on Swiss soil is the lack of motors; there are almost no private cars, all that remains of the former intense traffic are taxis and trucks and even these are considerably fewer; but one sees a great number of bicycles. The next surprise you get at the hotel or restaurant; when ordering a meal you have first to produce a ration card, one coupon for breakfast, two for lunch or dinner. Rationing of many other products such as coal, clothes, several foodstuffs, soap, shaving cream, etc., is making daily life in Switzerland rather complicated. Most of my friends obtain only sufficient coal to heat two rooms in their house. A great inconvenience is caused by the blackout; you might smile when I mention this, but I can assure you that our blackout is considerably blacker than the one we are having **here**. Even small torches must have a dark blue light to be permitted.

As there are many fortifications, there are also a good many restricted areas; one sees lots of soldiers everywhere. The civil population is now intensely organised. In every family the different members do their bit, for instance Madame Paravicini is working for the prisoners of war and Mademoiselle Livia Paravicini belongs to an ambulance unit. The economic life of our country continues as best as it can. Unemployment is very small. This to a great extent thanks to the large orders our Government is placing with our factories and to the intensification and expanse of our agriculture. The allotment system is highly developed. The price control is far-reaching and strictly supervised. The Swiss National Bank is in a solid position. We try our utmost to keep up our exports and imports, but unfortunately find innumerable obstacles. The State is forced more and more to interfere with private enterprise as things have to be done on a big scale. In order to facilitate our international trade, we have created our own merchant marine. There are already a few ships sailing under the Swiss flag.