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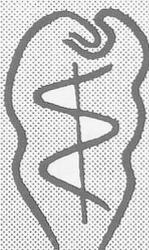
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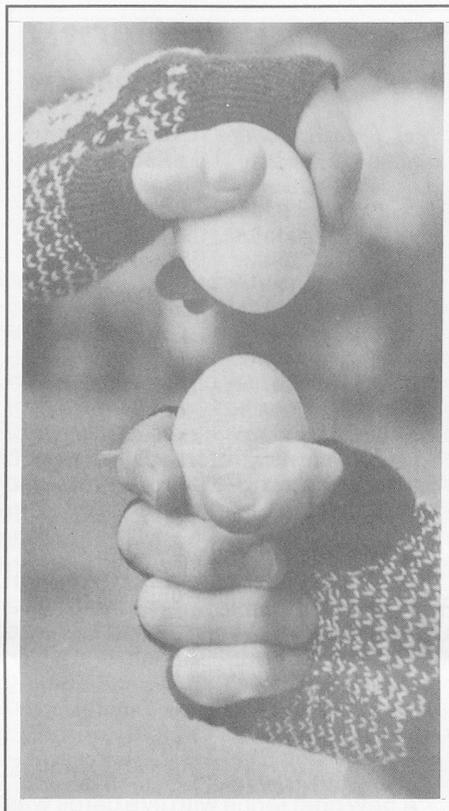
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EASTER EGGS

Each year on Easter Monday, hundreds of adults and children proceed to the "Rüdenplatz" in Zurich for the traditional yearly "Eiertütschen". A novelty amongst adults is not to hit someone's egg with your own but to break it with a coin, usually a 20 Rappen piece, so the game is called "Zwänzgerlen". The trick is to throw your coin in such a way as to hit the other person's egg and to remain stuck in it. If you succeed, you can keep your coin and get the egg as well. If you fail, the other person keeps your money.

LAST MANUALLY CONTROLLED RAILWAY CROSSING

The SBB/CFF have reached another milestone. In Wangen an der Aare (BE) the last manually operated railway crossing has just been closed down. The crossing was known as "zum grünen Papagei" because a wild green parrot had established its home in the vicinity for a while. In 1920 Switzerland had over 2000 manually controlled railway crossings, today there are none.



Pia Allemann, who operated the barriers "zum grünen Papagei" for the past 17 years salutes the very last train to speed through the crossing which has now been replaced by an underpass.

In the meantime, the children keep themselves amused with the old established custom of "Eiertütschen". That some children do not always enjoy having their own eggs broken was made clear when a tearful toddler told his mother: Next time I want a plasteregg".

SWISS CAVIAR?

Following a strange twist, some sturgeons have found their way into the Lake of Geneva. A small fish farm, situated in Brigue, had imported a few of these caviar producing fish as an experiment. The huge flood that devastated Brigue some two years ago allowed the fish to escape and, making their way down the Rhone, they finished eventually in the Lake of Geneva. Will Switzerland one day become a world centre of caviar production? Hardly. The sturgeons do not particularly like fresh water, their normal habitat being the sea, but somehow they managed to survive. However, it is unlikely that they will ever sufficiently grow in numbers and in size to make a Swiss caviar industry viable. Pity, we like the odd dab of caviar.

BRASS BAND COMPETITION

A record number of 44 bands took part in the 21st Swiss brass band competition held recently in Montreux. The winner was the "Bürgermusik Luzern", the second time this band won the title of the best brass band in Switzerland. In 1996 the "Bürgermusik Luzern" will represent Switzerland at the European championship to be held in Bergen, Norway.

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