

# Roundabout Switzerland

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## E A S T E R 1 9 5 2 .

And as they were afraid, and bowed down their heads to the earth, they said unto them, why seek you the living among the dead?

(Luke XXIV/5.)

We are afraid. With heads bowed down to the earth we listen to the rumblings of hideous spectres. We look into the future with fearsome misgivings.

The whole world, it seems to us, is bent on piling up once again the means of destruction, pestilence, war.

As before 1939, so now. Armaments rising everywhere. Nations trying hard to conclude alliances, defensive ones, of course. Manœuvring for position on the gigantic international political chessboard. Trying to out-build each other, out-arm each other, out-finance each other, *out-last* each other.

Governments striving for peace, but impotent of achieving it. Feverishly preparing, exhorting their people to still more and heavier sacrifices in order to ward off the evil day or to be ready for it when it does come.

And yet, on Sunday we celebrate the Resurrection of Jesus Christ, the *Living*, the Prince of *Peace*.

Should not this Festival of *Easter* revive our hopes and give us renewed courage to grapple with the seemingly unending terror that besets us?

Let us, therefore, cease being afraid and let us raise our heads towards the Prince of *Peace* whose resurrection we celebrate this Easter Day, and whose teachings, if only we follow them, will yet lead us safely through the present dark valley of fear into the golden sunlight of *Peace*.

ST.

# ROUNDAABOUT SWITZERLAND

by Derek Meakin

Jump on the Roundabout for an up-to-the-minute tour of Switzerland. As befits the new Elizabethan Age in which Britons now find themselves, we are going to do our exploring the modern way — first of all, by one of the sleek silver monsters with which Swissair spans the skies; then by a snub-nosed electric express as it whines its way through the land of the Alps, and finally by the fastest funicular in the world that has succeeded in making a molehill out of a mountain.

Among the people we are going to meet on this trip are the first patients to go to Switzerland under the British National Health Service, children from different parts of Europe who are spending a six-months holiday in an Alpine chalet, a famous Alpinist who is now on his way to make an attempt on Mount Everest, and one of the most romantic personages living in Switzerland to-day, an English mystery-man who has done magnificent work for both the Swiss and British Governments as a counter-espionage agent.

Let us start our journey at Manchester — a city that in this cold and dismal winter's morning crouches miserably under leaden skies, its wet roofs glistening dully in the half-light that can only just manage to break through the heavy atmosphere.

Ringway airport . . . where British red-tape and typical Northern stubbornness go hand-in-hand. To-day is no exception. The British immigration officer arrives half an hour late to check passengers — a severe setback to the Swiss precision machine which makes no allowance for human forgetfulness.

As we wait we listen to the voice of an eight-year-old girl in pigtails who is a seasoned air traveller and wants to tell everyone of her opinions.

"I hate aeroplanes — they are so stuffy", she tells us as we line up to pass through the customs.

Then out on to the tarmac where 24-year-old Rita Lehner is waiting to greet us.

She is the stewardess and comes from Sion, that old-world market town in the rugged Valais, dominated by the two hill-top castles that go well back into history. Not so long ago her ancestors would have looked on light-coloured stockings as a badge of sin — yet here she is wearing gossamer-like nylons and a trim blue-grey uniform, ushering us into one of Swiss-air's streamlined Douglas airliners.

Rita has her share of that restless instinct that has made many Valaisans before her seek fame and fortune in the outside world. Her yearning for adventure first came when she was working for her father



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in an engineering office. She spent two and a half years in London to learn English, and now goes on regular flights to places like Rome and Barcelona and Copenhagen.

She envies the senior hostesses who go on the transatlantic runs. "My one aim in life is to go to New York", she sighs. "I am so longing for it". I hope her wish will someday come true.

In the plane Miss Pigtails makes no effort to control her excitement. She turns to her companion, a boy just a year younger — who, strangely enough, is clutching a copy of the highbrow "Sunday Times" — holds up a brown paper bag and announces proudly: "I know what this is for. It is for when you are sick".

The boy blanches at the thought and turns to look out of the window. There is a sudden roar, and in a few minutes we are in the air.

NEXT — The Flight to Zurich.

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