1st August Swiss National Day

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peared more azure than ever and the inhabitants still full of the " joie de vivre."

Wherever I went the British Prime Minister was exceedingly popular — even more so than in his own country.

In Paris non-stop varieties featured Mr. Chamberlain and his umbrella, in certain ball-rooms " la Chamberlain " was danced and in Nice I had coffee in la rue Chamberlain.

I did not meet a single person who did not express his pleasure at the introduction of conscription in Great Britain. In Switzerland where the same pleasure was manifest it was pertinently remarked that compulsory military service should have been introduced a long time ago in England and on a far more important scale.

On the Riviera I found a profound contempt for Mussolini and the fighting powers of the Italian army. Nowhere did I find any aggressiveness but simply self-confidence. The prevailing opinion was expressed in a nut-shell in a little sketch I saw at a casino. This depicted a Corsican gendarme chatting with a tourist. Their conversation is interrupted by a terrific noise. The Corsican leaves his companion to find out the cause of this vacarme only to return a few seconds later with the words " Ce n'est rien — ce ne sont que les Italiens " ... This was loudly cheered by the audience which comprised many people of Italian origin.

Despite the self-confidence all along the Southern French coast, one meets pickets of French Colonial troops bent on an eternal vigil.

Several times I tried to take a photograph of a Senagalese soldier but every one of them refused to pose for a snapshot and looked with deep misgivings at my camera.

In Switzerland, where up to a few months ago, I was told, Berlin was the principal focus of interest, London has become the chief centre of attraction. Significant remarks are heard about the strength of Switzerland's precautionary measures on " one " of her frontiers. There again confidence seemed to reign. In Berne I had a very interesting conversation with Docteur Ludi, President of the Agence Telegraphique Suisse, who told me of the continual efforts of the Swiss authorities to counteract dangerous foreign propaganda in Switzerland. It seems that Switzerland is a favourite hunting-ground for the spreading by alien sources of news known as " kite balloons," (ballons d'essai), this, explained Docteur Ludi, is due to the excellent reputation of the Swiss press abroad where it is widely quoted.

After reviewing everything I heard and saw during my little sejour abroad, it appears to me that people in this country are much more gloomy and given to jitters than either in France or Switzerland.

Is it because the English masses have suddenly become political-minded? On my arrival at Victoria Station, I was met by a gloomy looking porter who complained at the poor tourist traffic for the Continent this year.

I must admit at the time of writing, even here people are brightening up and perhaps by the time this article is published (it it is) readers will complain that it is out of date and that there never was a " crisis." Events, no sooner they are enacted nowadays, become ancient history.

(GERALD MEYER).

LEMBO TICINESE.

Primavera. La montagna, color di viola, alla base, ha un chiarore di madreperla in cima. La sua più alta vetta è d'oro ... illuminata tutta com'è dal sole nascente, dietro ad un arrabattarsi di nuvole, che vorrebbero non lasciarlo passare ... Una rondine fende l'aria, stride, e poi vola via, silenziosa, si perde lassù ove il sole nasce. Dalla terra bagnata di fresco da ricca pioggia, s'alza una fraganza caratteristica. Sotto pulsa tutta una vegetazione nuova che fa appena appena capolino.

Osservo. Penso. E. chissà per quale motivo, penso non al travagliare odierno; non alla vita intensa d'oggi, piena di elettricità, di sgomento, satura di avvenimenti politici che rendono perplessi gli animi. Penso invece al buon tempo andato. Forse è la calma dell'ora, la bellezza della natura che si sveglia, che mi inclina a volgermi indietro, a quando la vita era quieta e schietta, scevra di prepotenza e d'ingordigia ...

E ne ho nostalgia. In questo mattino, chiaro di sole e di rugiada, un tempo sarebbe apparso ...

... Un " magnan " lanciando la sua canzone " L'è scià ul magnan, l'è scià ul magnan, donnett vegnii " ... E sarebbe stato un affaccendarsi di pentole e pentolini, in rame scintillante, anneriti quà e la dal buon fuoco del camino. Le donnette, le nosre soavi ave dal sorriso aperto e la parola arguta e generosa, le affidavano al ramaio per stagnarle, per ribatterle. E lui prometteva " ma si che le avrebbe fatte come nuove, si proprio bene e per un nonnulla quasi." Cantando se le portava via quelle pentole, cantando le riportava, qualche giorno dopo, accomodate per bene ...

Poi? poi la vita moderna, lo snobbismo novecento, non volle più vedere queste pentole in rame, orgoglio e ricchezza delle nonne nostre, splendore di ogni cucina di allora. Alluminio invece, altre composizioni nuove ... e il buon rame scomparve, relegato in qualche oscuro angolo di solaio ...

Sarebbe apparso, un tempo ...

... L'ombrellaio, con il suo grido " ombrellat, ombrellat." E una schiera di ombrelle abbisognanti riparazioni sarebbe comparsa. Lui si sedeva in un angolo, un po' discosto dalla strada, apriva il suo fagotello con i pochi arnesi per la bisogna, e incominciava, fischiettando, il lavoro. Ombrelle logore proprio, dal lungo manico secco, nere, nerissime ... ombrelle che volevano avere un tantino di civetteria — ombrellone rosse ... tutte li allineate, pronte per la riparazione.

... Il cenciaiuolo. " Chi ha stracci? chi ha bottiglie, scatole, scarpe vecchie?" E alla luce compariva un reggimento di bottiglie, scatole, scarpe, stracci, che finivano tutti in un sacco che non si riempiva mai ... sembrava almeno così agli occhi degli osservatori ...

E il " muletta " — l'arrotino — sempre burlone, che per tutti aveva una barzelletta, affilava, affilava coltelli, forbici, sulla sua ruota svelta e lucida che ogni tanto bagnava d'acqua, e che strideva, girando rapida ...

Sarebbe apparsa una donnina, tutta timidezza, che offriva cestelli, sedie e tavolini in vimini, che non mancavano nelle nostre case allora, proprio forse al medesimo posto che ora è occupato trionfalmente, ostentatamente da una radio rumorosa ... E altre ancora di queste tipiche figure nostrane, di cui, oggi, non rimane neanche forse il ricordo. Mi passano accanto, leggere e come avvolte da un tenue velo che le rende invisibili quasi ... salgono, salgono, verso il più alto cielo, si lasciano prendere nelle spire delle nubi, scompaiono ... anche dalle mie rievocazioni ...

Un fremito ansioso. Rabbioso. Una raffica. Un torpendone rosso fiammante é filato via, quasi non visto tanta la velocità. Da esso una radio mandava, all'aria, le note di una canzonetta in voga. Altre automobili lo seguono. Altre ancora. E il pieno 900 che passa ... che vuol cancellare il lirismo del buon tempo che fu!

E. G. L.

1ST AUGUST SWISS NATIONAL DAY.

Arrangements are practically complete to celebrate this great day in a truly patriotic manner.

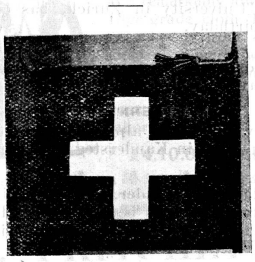
All good Swiss in or near London will no doubt make a point of taking part in the great rally at St. Paneras Town Hall, on Tuesday, August 1st next.

Tickets are free — obtainable from members of the committee and all Swiss Societies.

There will be Swiss music, Swiss songs, patriotic speeches. — Our esteemed Minister, M. C. R. Paravicini, will address his compatriots, — and there will be dancing till midnight. Buffet and bar open throughout the evening.

TELL YOUR FRIENDS ABOUT IT, AND MAKE SURE TO RESERVE THE FIRST OF AUGUST FOR ST. PANCRAS HALL.

LONDON SWISS RIFLE TEAM.



We regret to inform our readers that on going to Press, we had not received the result obtained by the London Swiss Rifle Team at the Federal Shooting Competition in Lucerne.

PERSONAL.

We extend heartiest congratulations to Mlle. Jacqueline Paravicini, younger daughter of the Swiss Minister, and to M. Eric de Schulthess-Rechberg, eldest son of Colonel and Mme. de Schulthess-Rechberg, of Schloss Au, Lake of Zurich, on the occasion of their engagement.

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