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A Bit About Switzerland

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A Bit About Switzerland

By CLEO FITZSIMMONS

THE people of Switzerland do not live in the super-refined atmosphere to which most Americans are accustomed but their lives are simple and happy, they read much, and both men and women are exceedingly well informed, according to Mrs. P. H. Elwood who spent the greater part of her girlhood in that country, receiving her education there and who has visited the small European republic several times since coming to Ames with her husband, Prof. P. H. Elwood, head of the Landscape Architecture Department of Iowa State College, to make their home.

"Everyone in Switzerland is educated," says Mrs. Elwood. "There is nothing which corresponds exactly to the instruction in child care and training which we have in America, if we except the little bit of such information which was brought over by the Red Cross during the War, but that small country is recognized as having schools which are among the best in the world. Many, many students from other countries come there to take their work. Co-education has not been the rule in Switzerland as it is here. Only recently has it been taken up. However, women formerly might enter the men's universities if they wished, and tho it was not the usual thing, a few young women who were ambitious to have the same education that the men received have entered the universities and have been graduated there.

"Many Swiss children of the better class are brought up at home receiving instruction from governesses and tutors often under the supervision of the parents. The "lycee" corresponds to the American public school. Here as in the universities boys and girls are kept in separate groups. When they graduate at the age of 17 or 18 years, they have received education which is equivalent to our second year of college. There is also an enormous number of private schools. Methods are more thoro and studies are more difficult in Switzerland than in America.

"As a rule, a graduate of the "lycee" has a better all-round education than

an American student of the same age. Boys and girls in the United States would consider the exacting Swiss professor a terrible person, but the children of Switzerland regard education as a serious business. They work more and play less and are willing to put more effort into acquiring something that will help them during their

their embroidery work being done while they rest and visit together.

"Tho not handsome, the Swiss are a wholesome, happy people. They are of rather stocky build, stolid and strong. Much of their time is spent out of doors. They are exceedingly fond of play and every Sunday when the weather is fine, whole families gather

at the little inns and dance to music furnished by a funny little old fiddle and a clarinet if one is available. At noon everyone lunches on sausages, black bread and beer. Americans would consider them childish but we, who know them, think them friendly and wholly delightful, the most truly democratic people in the world. The aristocracy of money, so commonly noticed here, is unknown to them, for the rich man in Switzerland is too well bred to make a show of his wealth.

"The men and women enjoy sing-

ing out of doors in the mountains. They group themselves into singing clubs and on long walks into the country, they sing as they go. In the fields, it is not unusual to hear the peasant singing with his wife as they work together. In all of their actions, the Swiss are natural and lacking in self-consciousness. Their simplicity of manner shows itself in their politics in strong contrast with ours. Their president is chosen every two years, but there is no ostentation about his inauguration. He has been elected to lead his people and he does it in the unassuming manner which they expect of him.

"The Swiss way of living would appeal to Americans who love tidiness and order. The life of the children follows that of their parents. They do not have the variety of games that we play, but they take part often with their elders in the charming folk games of the country. They, too, are fond of long walks. They dress simply and eat such plain, nourishing food as sausages, cheese, dark bread, milk and chocolate. For lunch at recess while in school, the Swiss child eats dark bread and chocolate. Butter is a luxury in Switzerland and no child

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A typical Swiss landscape.

whole life. Every student who desires to enter a university in Switzerland must pass the examinations of the "lycee".

"The Swiss people speak three languages, German, French and Italian and some of them also speak English. Since the country, tho so small, consists of three parts, Germany, French and Italian Switzerland, girls from the different provinces exchange homes for a time with girls of one of the other provinces so that each may become acquainted with the habits and home life of other parts of their country. Both families and daughters enjoy this exchange. Some of the girls enter English homes in the same way, living as a member of the family and helping with the house or children after the manner of a daughter.

"Women's clubs are unknown. The women of Switzerland spend most of their time in their homes or in helping their husband about his business. Some work in the hotels where they keep office or act as housekeepers. They are wonderful homemakers, neat, thrifty and very skillful with the needle. Their hand-made embroideries find a ready market in America and in other foreign markets. The Swiss women are seldom idle, much of

As the details are unimportant, and as the case might serve to suggest better methods or ideas, I am offering what I remember. In this instance there happened to be several children who consistently refused milk. The parents finally devised a nautical game in which buttered toast and milk played the principal parts. It is the other principals—Adam and Eve by name—whose identity escapes my memory. Perhaps, in fact I am sure, they were imaginary creatures and existed only by virtue of their spirit. The milk in the bowl was the sea and the toast the raft, and the game was called "Adam and Eve on a raft—*Wreck them!*" This consisted of the disappearance of the raft—and the sea followed the raft as a natural event. The popularity of

the game led to the use of whole wheat toast as the children's demand was principally for bread and milk from that time on. In the case of an only child, daddy and mother will have to enthusiastically join the "wrecking crew" if the venture is to be a success. I can even conceive that such a venture might be fun!

Whatever the means, the acceptance of milk naturally and happily is a priceless heritage for every child, and the child who does not like milk is beginning life under a physical and economical handicap.

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would expect to have it every day. 'Petting' is absolutely unknown.

"Travelers who stay at the large hotels do not see the Swiss people and learn very little of their life, for the native is retiring, tho friendly, and he does not often mix with the foreigners. Sports in winter and the mountains and scenery in summer draw great crowds of people into Switzerland. St. Moritz is especially well known for its skating, skiing and coasting but the whole country abounds with winter sports. The hotels are an important source of revenue for the people.

"The Swiss have given contributions of various sorts to the world. Geneva has always been a place of peacemaking. Swiss watches are world famous. The making of milk chocolate was discovered in the Peters' chocolate factories many years ago. Giuyere cheese is a product of Switzerland. The parcel post system was first adopted there and the United States has been the last to take it up. In Switzerland even trunks can be sent by mail.

"As a people, the Swiss are not particularly famous for their art altho they have a keen appreciation of beauty and have established a number of famous museums. They seem to see more beauty in every day things than does the average American. Their lives are less hurried. Perhaps, tho, as our country becomes older, we, too, will find time for the simpler, more beautiful things that are close at hand and, we like them, in spite of differences in habits and customs within our country will develop a wholesome love of home which will bind us in friendly unity."

Fine Ware Made of Iowa Clay

By Mary Yarcy

IN the department of Ceramic Engineering at Iowa State College, an effort is being made to produce a decorated pottery of high artistic merit. It is desired that this ware compare favorably with that of the Rookwood, Newcomb and Marblehead potteries, whose standards are highest in the United States.

The work is conducted in the manner of a research to prove that Iowa clays are suitable for making fine ware. Much manufacturing of heavy products is already being done in the state. Brick and the possibilities of succeeding in the making of potter are just as great. The work at Iowa State College is intended to stimulate the financier and manufacturing men and to arouse their interest in such an undertaking. The natural resources are here and only need developing.

In searching for the method of decoration of pottery to which the clays of this state would best lend themselves, every process was tried: slip-painted or pate-sur-pate incised pattern painted with underglaze colors over glaze painting, and lastly, and most successfully, painting on the raw unfired glaze.

Ames pottery is a faience and is similar in manufacture to many other wares, but in order to keep it individual and distinctive of Iowa, only Iowa materials are used. The body is a shale from Adel, the glazes are results of experiments worked out by Professor Paul E. Cox, head of the Department of Ceramic Engineering, and the ware is burned in the kilns of the department. The decoration also is derived from native materials. Indigenous plant and flower forms are used for the designs and no designs are duplicated. There are no two pieces alike and each bears the mark of the college, the potter and the decorator.

The first step, or rather the preliminary, to making a piece of pottery is the designing of the shape. According to the Greek method of geometric ratio as analyzed by Mr. Jay Hambidge in his book, "Dynamic Symmetry," there is an exact science of proportioning. Yet Chinese forms, which are second to none, cannot be analyzed by that method. The question is, therefore, open and debatable. It is safe to say, however, that design for pottery forms should be expressive of the character

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