

Hans Gilgen reminiscences on his Swiss tour

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CAR RALLY

On a very nice October day a "Tour des Suisses" (rally of Swiss people) took place from Petone to Paraparaumu over Haywards and along the road which winds its way through the hilly country up to the summit, where you see Paekakariki and the west coast at your feet. Fifteen car loads of people took part, wondering where they were being led to and eager to answer the tricky questions; one example: "What distance do you observe by following a car which travels 75 miles per hour?" Not everybody remembered then that there is a speed limit! Observers could see people driving a scooter in Queen Elizabeth Park and collecting driftwood at the beach.

The final destination was reached at Tony Tresch's weekend house, which could be recognised by a large Swiss flag. Now the time had come to unpack everything that is needed for a barbeque, and very soon the smell of grilled sausages filled the air. Everybody had a marvelous time, except some committee members who were busy marking the questionnaires and finally handing out the prizes to the two lucky winners. Thank you Mr and Mrs Tresch for helping so much to make this event a very memorable one.

—M.K.

Hans Gilgen Reminiscences On His Swiss Tour

On our tour to Europe my wife and I had many highlights. One of the things that did particularly make me personally really happy was to meet a few of the Kiwi-Swiss in Bern. There was Mr Biland and Hans Fitzi at the mock battle in Schonbühl, were our infantry gave a fantastic demonstration of its much up-to-date readiness. Again the day after, a beautiful summer's day, Hans Fitzi, Hans Enzler, and his pretty wife, and I met at the Schützenfest organised for the Swiss abroad. It was wonderful to have this feeling of solidarity, to be for a few moments with compatriots from New Zealand. There was the comical instance at the Schützenfest when, after the military-style meal accompanied by the sound of a well conducted army band, the prizegiving time arrived and the official in charge gave a special prize to the Swiss who had travelled the furthest to the event. A Swiss from Melbourne received this trophy and of course the three Hans's from New Zealand had a giggle at the poor geographical knowledge of that official!

* * *

Before leaving New Zealand on our world trip, I read in the local press that an old Tahitian friend of mine in Auckland had received from the French government the much honoured gift of the Croix de la Legion d'Honneur. He was given this great distinction for the help he gave to his fellow compatriots from Tahiti here in New Zealand. My friend is a great humanist and I believe

he rightly deserves this honour. Now, if Switzerland would give such an honour to its citizens abroad for the same reason and I could do the giving for them, I would give it to a number of friends, Swiss and others, who helped me over the first difficulties when I first landed in New Zealand over 20 years ago.

★ HEDY'S CORNER

How expensive is life in Switzerland? I jotted down prices at Home and here are the results.—

Miscellaneous: Shower at Zurich railway station, 40c (plus 15% service charge); 3½ ozs fancy chocolates filled with cognac, 28c; hairdresser (shampoo, conditioner, set, plus 15% tip), \$4; men's barber (haircut and scalp massage, etc., with 15% tip), \$4; 1 litre thermos flask (high quality plastic, chrome), \$1.20.

Clothing at sale prices: Plain cotton dress, \$2.20; ladies wool-nylon white pants suit, \$20; smart nylon dress, fully lined, \$2.50; men's terrylin sports jacket and pants, \$23.50; 2 pairs panty hose, excellent cut, 90c; elegant ladies summer coat, fully lined, \$10.75; unusual ladies belt, \$1.

Victuals:

Lake Zurich restaurant boat: Pair frankfurters and bread 50c, omelette filled with ham \$1, large hot sandwich with asparagus 50c ½ litre bottled beer 30c.

Dinner plate portion of spaghetti and sausage, dinner plate of pizza pie, 4 dzl. wine, total \$3.10.

½ doz. eating eggs 30c, 1 litre top grade milk 25c, 100 gr. table butter 28c, 1 lb bread (mixed meal), subsidised, 13c, 2 lbs peaches (in season) 27c, 20 cigarettes 28c.

House Rents: Only rough idea can be given. Per room, per month, accommodation with bare necessities \$110, with every luxury \$440.

Wages: Unskilled labour per month (approx.), \$350; skilled labour per month (approx.), \$440; gardener, per hour (upkeep of grounds only and does not include meals), \$2.60.

Best Bargain: S.B.B. general season ticket, 2nd class carriage; first month \$67, succeeding months \$23.60.

With such a non-transferable ticket you eventually end up by travelling completely free, provided you buy the ticket immediately upon arrival and secondly that you use the S.B.B. extensively. Some of the most expensive mountain railways are half price (Jungfrauoch); some of the lakes shipping enterprises are completely free; and train connections all over Switzerland are so frequent that you will never be stuck for transport to your destination.

—H.B.