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SWITZERLAND

SO YOU have picked Switzerland as the goal of your Army-sponsored pleasure trips? Well, in Switzerland, you'll see Europe at its best. It's not only one of the world's most picturesque countries, but it is also an oasis of order, freedom and prosperity in an impoverished, chaotic, quarrelsome continent.

You'll find the Swiss a proud, self-assured little nation—and they really have many things to be proud of. They are proud of their freedom—theirs is indeed the oldest, most smoothly functioning democracy of modern civilization—and they are proud of their neutrality.

The Swiss Confederation is made of 22 small States or Cantons, differing from each other in nearly every point—religious, political, social, industrial, physical and linguistic; yet these various groups manage to live peacefully together—constituting a unique community which could serve as a miniature model for a future federative organization of Europe.

MAYBE YOU had intended to make a last-minute effort to learn the Swiss language. If so, you'd better drop the idea. For there is no such thing as a Swiss language; there are four different idioms recognized as "national

language" for the purposes of debates in the Federal parliament. The inhabitants of 16 Cantons—almost 72 percent of the total Swiss population—will address you in a guttural Germanic dialect which is known as "Swiss German." Berne, the capital of the Republic, belongs to the German-speaking area—as do Zurich, Basle, Lucerne, and many other major Swiss towns and cities.

When you get to Geneva or Lausanne, however, your German won't help you a bit. In those places, as in Fribourg and Neuchatel, you'll have to remember whatever French you may know, if you want to start a friendly chat with a native young lady. (Don't be too hopeful though!) However sparkling and eloquent you may be as a French conversationalist—your Geneva belle is likely to remain rather prim and reserved.

Your next stop may be at Locarno, on Lake Maggiore, the scene of many international conferences between World Wars I and II. There, a GI from Italy will feel almost at home. "*Come sta, Signorina?—Buon giorno, paesano!*" Now you are in Ticino—the part of Switzerland where the Italian-speaking minority (about 6 percent of the total population) is living.

As for the fourth official Swiss language, it's a quaint gibberish called "Romansh"—a survival of one of the Latin dialects of the old Roman Empire.

This peculiar idiom, however, is being spoken only in certain remote, mountainous regions.

NEVER MIND these linguistic problems! Switzerland is a hospitable, polyglot country: you'll get along all right with your own native tongue. The Swiss have a long experience and considerable training in the art of entertaining foreign visitors. They'll show you all the splendors of their beautiful land, and they'll see to it that you have a good time.

You'll see the most glorious sceneries—the great lakes on which so many of the Swiss cities are situated; the snow-covered summits of Elger, Monch, Jungfrau, Matterhorn, and other gigantic mountains profiled against the skyline; the idyllic villages and pastures of the Berner Oberland. You may have a chance to visit the Engadine, high up in the Swiss Alps, and to spend a day or so at St. Moritz, one of the most famous and most spectacular centers of international tourism. Maybe there will be time enough for you to visit Sils Maria in the Engadine—one of the loveliest spots in the world; situated on a mountain lake of incredible blueness—and to make excursions to the picturesque summer and winter resorts of Davos and Arosa.

—Cpl. KLAUS MANN