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Stories from Switzerland: original short stories for intermediate grade children

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Thesis

STORIES FROM SWITZERLAND

Original Short Stories for Intermediate Grade Children

Submitted by

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

LIST OF TABLES

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to present a realistic approach to life in Switzerland through a series of original short stories designed as supplementary material for intermediate grade children, and by so doing to make a faraway land become more meaningful. The study was concerned with the following problems:

1. To make learning material meaningful and easy to remember by including it within the framework of a fiction story
2. To create real rather than artificially contrived plots
3. To determine how well the stories are liked by intermediate grade children.

Scope of the Study

One hundred and twelve intermediate grade children, two classes of each of the three grades, in a suburban Boston community participated in the experiment.

CHAPTER II

PROCEDURE OF THE STUDY

The purpose of this study was to present a realistic approach to life in Switzerland through a series of original short stories designed as supplementary material for intermediate grade children, and by so doing to make a faraway land become more meaningful. The study was concerned with the following problems:

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2. To create real rather than artificially contrived plots
3. To determine how well the stories are liked by intermediate grade children.

Before attempting to write original short stories about life in Switzerland, it was first necessary to determine what had already been accomplished in this area. It was found that the field of children's stories dealing with Switzerland was relatively limited. The writer of this thesis has included a list of the major published works in this area as a separate section of the bibliography.

A second step was to determine the general attitude expressed by intermediate grade children toward stories of foreign lands. To do this, the writer selected three studies dealing with children's read-

ing preferences at the desired grade levels. McManus,[1] Purcell,[2] and Roberts[3] all state that interest in stories of foreign lands is low. The writer has concluded that at least a partial reason for this is that the writing of stories about foreign lands is unrealistic and erroneous in terms of present-day living. Consequently, such stories are remote and meaningless to children.

The writer then gathered the necessary information to write original and realistic stories. The information came from four primary sources, in the following order of importance:

1. The writer's own living experience in Switzerland
2. Private correspondence with a Swiss friend
3. Data published by the consulate of Switzerland
4. Other--books, magazines, newspapers.

With the information gathered from the above sources, the writer was able to design and write detailed plot summaries from which the actual stories were later written. Each story is preceded by an introduction with the purpose of creating interest in the story. A similar type of introduction precedes the entire series of eight stories.

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[1]R. McManus, "Measurement of Pupil Interest in Types of Stories at Grade Five Level by Ballot Method to Determine Child Preference" (unpublished Master's thesis, Boston University, 1947), pp. 28, 34.

[2]E. Purcell, "The Leisure Reading Interests of the Nine-Year-Old" (unpublished Master's thesis, Boston University, 1949), pp. 40, 47.

[3]P. Roberts, "An Investigation of the Reading Interests of Middle-Grade Children" (unpublished Master's thesis, Boston University, 1949), pp. 43, 45-47.

The stories were typed on stencils and seventy copies were made of each complete set. Five evaluation sheets were drawn up, one for each set of two stories, and one final over-all evaluation sheet. These were designed as follows: (1) to determine the extent to which the stories were liked; (2) to determine what was liked and disliked in each story; and (3) to determine whether or not the vocabulary was difficult. The final over-all evaluation sheet was designed to measure attitudes toward Switzerland as a result of the stories. The evaluation sheets were stenciled and one hundred eighty copies were made of each. Copies of the evaluation sheets are included in the appendix.

The stories were distributed among two classes of each of the three intermediate grades within two schools in a suburban Boston community. A total of one hundred twelve children participated. The stories were packaged in sets of two, the children reading two stories a day for four consecutive days. A schedule of rotation of story copies was made up and given to the cooperating teachers, as well as directions for administering the stories and directions to be read to the children. Copies of these may be found in the appendix. After reading each set of two stories, the children received an evaluation sheet corresponding to the stories they read each day. The final over-all evaluation sheet was distributed along with the evaluation sheet for the last set of two stories. Total time for story reading and completion of the evaluation sheets was approximately 30 to 45 minutes each day.

Evaluation sheets were analyzed and data computed.

CHAPTER III

Stories From Switzerland

INTRODUCTION

Here are some stories for you about a beautiful little country called Switzerland, a land of bluebells and buttercups, of cowbells and snow covered alps. Switzerland is a tiny wonderland no bigger than the states of Vermont, New Hampshire, and Massachusetts put together. And yet, Switzerland has states too----twenty two of them. Only the Swiss call them cantons. Switzerland is surrounded by four countries, Austria, Germany, France, and Italy, and the Swiss speak four languages----French, German, Italian, and Romanch. Can you imagine that! But more important are the wonders you'll soon behold. If you open up the doors of your eyes you'll see what I mean. Are they open? Do you see what I see? Look! Look! Over there! A parade of children carrying lanterns! Do you see them! And what's this---is that Santa Claus? But he's carrying switches! Listen, I hear guns firing and crowds cheering! And look at all those children hiking! Oh, and around that corner----I see four black horses with red roses!

Yes, Switzerland is, indeed, a wonderland! But let's not wait any longer to take a look!

THE BURNING OF THE SNOWMAN

Each Spring the people of Zurich burn a snowman. Oops, I caught you! You're going to say, "Don't be silly, you can't burn a snowman." You don't think so, huh! Well, the Swiss can! Here's how!

"Bri--git--te, Bri--git--te," Mrs. Hofer called. "Are you almost ready?"

"Not quite, Mamma," Brigitt called back. It was Sechselauten Monday, Zurich's biggest festival day. Every year three weeks after Easter on Sechselauten Monday the townspeople of Zurich burn a life-size snowman at the climax of a big parade. The burning of the snowman signifies the passing of Winter and the coming of Spring. Brigitt was in her room, dressing very quickly for she was impatient to take part in the big parade. It was a special day for Brigitt, and she had been looking forward to it for weeks. Today, for the first time, she would be marching with her father in the parade. For years she had stood on the street with her mother watching the colorful costumes pass by. Now she, too, would be wearing a costume. Excitedly she tied the flowered apron on to her light blue dress. Then she put the pretty lace scarf around her neck and pinned it in place. Sitting down on the bed, she pulled on her knee socks and tied her black shoes.

"Brigitt, your hat!" her mother said as she entered the room carrying a broad-brimmed straw hat.

"Oh," said Brigitt jumping up from the bed, "I almost forgot." Brigitt stood in front of the mirror as her mother helped her tie the hat into place. "How do I look, Mamma?" she said, suddenly turning around.

"Just like a little girl of Zurich long ago," the mother replied. "Your father will be very proud when he sees you. Hurry now, Brigitt, or you'll be late!" Brigitt hurried out of the room to the front door.

"Good-by, Mamma," she said when she reached the door.

"Good-by, Brigitt, good-by," her mother called, and the door closed. Brigitt was hardly outside the door when she rushed in again.

"Mamma," Brigitt called.

"What is it, Brigitt? What's the matter?"

"Mamma," she cried out, "don't forget the flowers!"

"No, Brigitt, I won't. Good-by!" Later when the parade was about to begin, Mrs. Hofer and crowds of spectators would line the streets ready to throw bouquets of flowers as their friends and relatives marched by.

Brigitt boarded a tram for the main railroad station where the parade was going to begin. Many of the parade members had already gathered when Brigitt arrived. Brigitt spotted her father talking with a group of men and ran toward him. Mr. Hofer had been in town since noon, lunching with his friends. "Well Brigitt," Mr. Hofer said as she approached. "Don't you look like the young lady!" He proudly introduced his daughter to his friends.

"Gruetzi fraulein," (hello miss) they said, and each shook hands with her according to custom. Mr. Hofer and his friends were wearing military costumes of Napoleon's time----light blue trousers, dark blue coats, black two pointed hats with long white feathers, white gloves, and swords. They were all members of the same club or guild, called "The Three Kings." Most of the members of Mr. Hofer's guild, however, would be wearing black gowns and the traditional blue caps. The guilds played a very important part in the life of Zurich during the Middle Ages. At that time all the men of one profession joined to form associations. There

were guilds of blacksmiths, guilds of fishermen, guilds of bakers—— in fact, there were guilds of every profession you could conceive of. Now on Sechselauten Monday the guilds perform their most important activity by bringing Zurich's past history to life in the big parade, each guild wearing a different historical costume.

Suddenly Brigitt noticed some of her friends, and she ran over to join them. The children were beginning to line up, the guild members began mounting their horses, and the parade was just about ready to begin. At four o'clock the bugles blew, the Sechselauten March began, and the parade started down Zurich's flag lined boulevard. First came Brigitt and the school children escorting a beautiful float representing Spring and her attendant maidens. Following Spring came the snowman, Boog, mounted on a platform and drawn by jeering clowns. Then came the guild members on horseback with their colorful costumes. On they came——there were guilds of bakers, blacksmiths, and sword makers, guilds of near by districts dressed as country folk of the eighteenth century and accompanied by their geese, chickens, pigs, and cows, guilds of knights, noblemen and scientists, guilds of fishermen, huntsmen, carpenters, boatsmen, shoemakers, and weavers. And what a sight it was! All Zurich was there to see it. Crowds cheered, bouquets of flowers flew through the air, and flags waved in the breeze.

Brigitt loved to see the flowers flying through the air. It was one of the things she liked best about Sechselauten. She scanned the crowd now for her mother. But the parade was moving too quickly, and she was unable to spot her. Suddenly a horrible thought came to her mind. What if her mother couldn't find HER among all the marching school children!

Flowers were coming from all sides now, but none of them were for Brigitt. What if her mother was late! Or if she missed the tram! Tears quickly sprang to her eyes. But as Brigitt passed the next corner, Mrs. Hofer squeezed through the crowd and onto the street. Brigitt smiled and waved excitedly, and suddenly two bouquets of flowers flew over her head.

The parade came to an end at the lake where the Boog, a wooden structure covered with white cotton wool and stuffed with firecrackers and gun powder, would be burned. Guild members on horseback circled the swaying snowman while piles of straw beneath him were ignited. Soon the Boog burst into flames setting off the firecrackers and gun powder inside him. As the bells of the town rung out the official passing of winter, the crowds yelled and cheered. Brigitt watched in fascination and cheered until she was hoarse. Then suddenly the snowman collapsed and old man winter was dead.

A POEM FOR SAINT NICHOLAS

Hanging on the wall of Margrit's room is a Christmas calendar consisting of a picture of St. Nicholas, beneath which are twenty four small windows, one to be opened each day before Christmas. Each day as Margrit opened a new window, a small picture significant of the day, came into view. Let's take a peak into Margrit's room now! Today is December Sixth, St. Nicholas Day, and Margrit is opening the sixth window on the calendar. Do you see what she sees? A picture of oranges, candy, and long sticks! Whatever could this mean? Let's see, shall we?

It was the evening of December Sixth, St. Nicholas day, and Margrit and the rest of her school class were dressed in long white night gowns and tall white cardboard hats in which artistic designs were cut and covered with colored paper. In the center of the hats stood lighted candles making the colored shapes glow in the dark. The hats extended down over their faces so that their heads were completely covered except for their eyes, nose, and mouth. Margrit carried a cowbell along with several of the other girls. Some of the boys carried horns, while others slashed whips against the street. Thus they paraded in the dark cold night hoping to drive away demons and ghosts that might be lurking about. Margrit never believed that there were demons and ghosts, but it was an old tradition yearly celebrated on December sixth.

When the parade was over, the children blew out the candles and hurried home. This was the night that St. Nicholas visited the homes of all the boys and girls. Margrit thought of St. Nicholas and wondered if he had arrived yet. Last year St. Nicholas had been waiting for Margrit. This year she wanted to be sure to be home before he arrived. She held up her gown and ran through the streets. When she reached her home, she threw open the door and breathlessly asked, "Is he here yet?"

"No Margrit, not yet," replied her mother who was in the kitchen baking Christmas cakes.

"Where's Father?" asked Margrit now entering the kitchen.

"He went to the parade just after you left. Didn't you see him?" the Mother asked.

"No," replied Margrit.

"Well, he must have stopped to talk to some of his

guild members then," said the Mother. "He'll be home soon though."

Margrit left the kitchen, passed through the living room, and opened the door of her bedroom. Her five year old brother, Martin, had been sitting in the living room, dressed, ready, and waiting. In his hands he held a small book. Now Margrit turned around and walked over to her brother. "What are you doing?" she asked.

"I'm memorizing a poem for St. Nicholas," he said.

"Haven't you learned a poem yet?" she asked.

"No," he said rather sheepishly. "Have you?"

"Of course, silly," she said, "I memorized two last year, one for last year, and one for this year."

"How do you know you can remember it?" he questioned. "Have you tried saying it?"

"No, but I'm sure I know it," she answered.

Martin didn't say any thing more, so Margrit hurried back to her room. She took off her white night gown and changed into her good blue dress. She had just finished dressing when she heard the door bell ring. She ran out into the living room to join Martin who had jumped up from his chair in such a hurry that his book had fallen to the floor. Their Mother answered the door, and in walked the children's father along with St. Nicholas and his two helpers. "Well, look what I brought home with me!" the father said.

"Ho! Ho! Ho!" laughed St. Nicholas. "Well," he said rubbing his hands and stamping the snow off his boots, "if it isn't my friends, Margrit and Martin. Have you been good children all year?"

"Oh yes," they answered simultaneously. St. Nicholas then slung his sack over his shoulder, and entered the living room with his two helpers. The two children ran in after him, and their mother and father followed. St. Nicholas had a merry round face and a long white beard. On his head was a tall white hat similar to the one Margrit wore in the parade. He wore a long white robe which trailed to the ground, and in his hand he carried a staff. His helpers were similarly dressed in long robes, and they, too, carried staffs. One held a pile of birch twigs tied with a pink bow. The other held a large black book.

St. Nicholas sat down in the big armchair, and called the children before him one by one. "Martin," he called, and Martin came forth. "Martin," he asked, "have you been a good boy all year?"

"Yes," replied Martin. St. Nicholas then asked for his black book, and turned the pages until he came to Martin's name.

"A blank page, Martin," he said with obvious delight. "Indeed you have been a good boy. St. Nicholas is very pleased with you." Martin beamed. "And now," asked St. Nicholas, what promises do you have for the future?"

"I will try not to slam doors," said Martin, "and to eat everything on my plate at dinner."

"Those are good resolutions," said St. Nicholas, "and now Martin, can you recite a poem for St. Nicholas?"

Martin began, "Jolly old St. Nicholas.....," and when he had finished St. Nicholas looked very pleased for Martin had recited his poem perfectly.

"Very good, Martin," commended St. Nicholas, "and now, look

what we have here for you." St. Nicholas laid his book aside and opened his sack. Martin stood wide-eyed for there in his sack were oranges, apples, nuts, candies, and cakes. He gave Martin a generous helping of each. "Keep up the good work, Martin," he said.

Martin was overcome with joy. "Danke vie mal St. Nicholas," (thank you very much) he said as he walked off with his loot. His mother and father who had been standing by watching the whole procedure looked very proud.

"And now Margrit," called St. Nicholas, "have you been a good girl all year?"

"Yes," replied Margrit a little hesitantly. She wasn't quite sure she could top Martin's performance. Martin had, indeed, tried hard to be good all year. St. Nicholas now looked through his book for Margrit's name. It was an agonizing wait for Margrit. She was beginning to get the feeling that St. Nicholas might have something listed for her in his little black book.

"Oh dear, oh dear, oh dear," sighed St. Nicholas when he had, at last, found the proper page. "Margrit," said St. Nicholas, "there's something listed here. Do you know what it is?" Margrit thought and thought, but she just couldn't think of anything serious enough for St. Nicholas to record in his little black book.

"Well," said St. Nicholas, "if you can't remember now, maybe you'll remember after you recite a poem." Margrit was just about ready to recite her poem when her mind suddenly went blank. She couldn't even remember the first line. Tears came to her eyes as she looked at the helper who carried the switches.

"Margrit," said St. Nicholas, "why do you suppose you can't remember the poem?"

"Because," said Margrit now realizing what was in St. Nicholas's book, "I thought I could remember it from last year but I can't."

"But Martin remembered his, didn't he?" said St. Nicholas.

"Yes," said Margrit.

"And what did you say to him this afternoon when he was practicing?" asked St. Nicholas.

"I made fun of him and called him silly," confessed Margrit. But I'm sorry St. Nicholas, really I am, I didn't mean anything by it."

St. Nicholas could see that she was telling the truth. "Well Margrit," he asked, "what are your promises for next year?"

"I'll make sure that I know a poem," replied Margrit, "and I promise never to tease my little brother."

And so St. Nicholas decided that Margrit's humilation had been punishment enough. He quickly forgave her, reached into his sack, and gave Margrit a whole armful of apples, candies, and nuts. She perked up immediately, her eyes sparkled, and she thanked St. Nicholas over and over again.

St. Nicholas then congratulated Margrit and Martin's parents. "They're good children," he said. "The Christ Child will reward you all on Christmas day.". With that St. Nicholas picked up his sack, beckoned to his helpers, and with much tinkling of bells took his leave of Margrit and Martin.

WHEN CHURCH BELLS RING

When Wollishofen, the neighborhood in which Ursi lives, was a village, the bells from the little church used to sound out the hour. Now Wollishofen has become a part of Zurich, and a large modern church has been built to replace the small one. Every hour the bells from the large church can be heard all over Wollishofen. And now when the bells from the little church ring children from everywhere run to the spot. Listen, the bells are ringing now! Come on, let's go!

Ursi walked along side of her mother. In one hand she held a small basket filled with the day's groceries. The other hand tugged gently at her mother's arm. "Mother," she said, "there's the fruit stand. Are we going to stop there too?"

"Goodness Ursi," her mother replied. "You certainly are excited today. One would think you had never been shopping with your mother before. Yes indeed we are," she said in answer to Ursi's question. "I need some cherries and apricots for tomorrow's pies.

"I'll pick them out, Mother," Ursi exclaimed and ran on ahead. Ursi had, of course, been shopping with her mother before. The last time, however, had been during her two week school vacation in July. It was now late autumn, and Ursi along with the rest of her class had a week's vacation. This was the first day of Ursi's vacation. Ursi had asked if she could accompany her mother to the super market this morning, and Mrs. Weber had promised to take Ursi with her. Mrs. Weber went shopping every morning at 7:30, the time Ursi left for school. This morning, however, Mrs. Weber postponed her shopping two hours so that Ursi could sleep later. It was ten o'clock by the time they reached the fruit stand.

Ursi picked out four baskets of apricots and four baskets of cherries and emptied them into her mother's shopping bag. Now with their baskets filled they turned to go home.

"Oh Ursi," Mrs. Weber cried out after they had walked for some time. "I forgot the bread! I must hurry back to make the dinner before your father comes home at noon. Will you go back to Mrs. Huber's for me? Here's five centimes for the bread." Ursi was only too happy to go. She turned away and skipped down the street.

"Ursi," her mother called after her, "come right back!"

"I will, Mother," she called. Ursi liked Mrs. Huber's small store better than the big super market. She liked Mrs. Huber too. Mrs. Huber was a big, kindly woman who loved to talk, and Ursi always liked to listen to her. She usually knew everything that was going on in Wollishofen.

A bell jingled as Ursi opened the door of the shop and walked in. At the sound of the bell Mrs. Huber appeared from the back room. "Well, Ursi," she said, "how are you? And what can I do for you today?"

"I'm just fine, Mrs. Huber," Ursi replied to Mrs. Huber's first question. "I'd like five centimes worth of black bread please." As Mrs. Huber cut the bread, Ursi wondered what news she would have to relate to her today. Just as Mrs. Huber finished wrapping the bread, the church bells rang. Ursi anxiously looked at her watch expecting it to be eleven o'clock. Instead it was only 10:30. "Why Mrs. Huber," she said, "it's the bells from the small church. There must be a wedding!"

"Well for goodness sakes," said Mrs. Huber. "I had forgotten all about it. And I heard it was to be a carriage wedding too."

"A carriage wedding!" Ursi exclaimed. "Oh Mrs. Huber, are you sure? A carriage wedding!" she exclaimed again. "Mrs. Huber, I've never seen one! Oh, I must go!" Ursi immediately turned toward the door.

"Wait Ursi. You forgot your package," Mrs. Huber called after her. Ursi ran back to the counter and grabbed the bread.

"Thank you. Good-by, Mrs. Huber." The door opened, and the bell jingled behind her as she left. When she reached the street

she had to wait for a tram to pass by before she could cross. When the tram left, she raced across the street and down the hill on the other side. Suddenly she remembered her mother's last words. Come right home she had said. Ursi stopped short. No, she thought, I can't go home, not now. Mother will understand. I just can't miss the wedding, I just can't. She ran on down the hill. As she neared the church she began to see other children running as she was. I'll bet they don't know it's a carriage wedding she thought to herself. Wait until I tell them!!

A small crowd had already gathered at the church by the time Ursi arrived. Ursi saw her best friend and next door neighbor, Susi, and pushed through the crowd to meet her. "Hi, Sisi!" she said as she approached her friend. "Susi," she whispered, by this time she was very much out of breath, "you'll never guess what! It's going to be a carriage wedding!"

"Ursi," Susi exclaimed, "really? I've never seen a carriage wedding before!"

"Neither have I," exclaimed Ursi. "Susi, I'm so excited." And they both jumped up and down and clapped their hands.

Suddenly the bells from the big church rang. It was eleven o'clock. The carriages would be along any minute. Ursi then thought of her mother home in the kitchen. That was where she, Ursi, should be also. Mother should be here she suddenly thought. I might still have time to run home and get her before the carriages come. No, she said to herself on second thought. Mother would never come. She has to prepare the dinner before Father comes home. As long as Ursi could remember her mother had always prepared dinner on time. When her father entered the house,

dinner was always ready to serve. "Mother is a good housewife," Ursi thought. I hope I can be like her some day. Her father always said that the highest compliment that could be paid to a Swiss girl is that she's a devoted mother and housewife.

Her thoughts were interrupted by the sudden clatter of hoof beats. "Susi," she cried out, "they're coming!" Four beautiful black horses decked with red roses and drawing a carriage covered with flowers appeared first from around the corner. "Look! Look!" the girls shouted to each other. A second carriage followed. This one was drawn by four magnificent white horses decked with white roses. The girls stood in awe of the splendor of the carriages for very few families could afford such a wedding.

The first carriage stopped now in front of the church. The door was opened, and the bridegroom, best man, and ushers stepped out and stood before Ursi and Susi. As the first carriage moved away, the second took its place in front of the church. The bridegroom opened the door, and three pretty girls dressed in pink stepped out. Then came the bride! The groom took her out stretched hand and helped her down from the carriage. Ursi immediately recognized her as the daughter of her father's guild master (guild president). Her long white train trailed behind her as she entered the church. "Isn't she beautiful," Susi whispered. The crowd waited until the whole party had entered the church. Excited whispers were heard among the children as they began to leave. "Wait until I tell Mother this!" Ursi exclaimed to Susi. "I can hardly wait!"

Meantime Mrs. Weber looked out the kitchen window of their second floor apartment to the clock on the tower of the big church. 11:30!

"Where could Ursi be," she thought. Then suddenly she saw Ursi and Susi racing around the bend and down the narrow windy street toward their homes.

MORNING AT A "GYMNASIUM"

Would you like to visit a Swiss high school? The Swiss have a special name for a high school. They call it a "gymnasium." Trudi, a Swiss girl about your own age, is going to accompany her sister this morning to a gymnasium. Let's go with her and see what happens!

Trudi's alarm went off at 6:30. "Get up, Trudi," said Anne Marie, Trudi's older sister. "We mustn't be late today." Trudi sat up on the edge of her bed. She was beginning to wonder if she really liked the idea of attending Anne Marie's gymnasium. She had to get up so early. Her own grammar school was only a block from her home, and she always got up later than Anne Marie.

"Good morning," said their mother as she entered their room. As soon as the girls were up, she stripped the beds, threw open the shutters, and hung the big fluffy coverlets out the open window to air. "Hurry now, or you'll both be late," she said, and then left them to dress.

Trudi was a very good sixth level grammar school student. Because of her excellent notes (grades), she had been selected to attend a gymnasium for one morning. Many of the sixth level grammar school students would be attending the gymnasium next year, and it would be Trudi's job to report to her class what she had seen at the gymnasium.

Now she walked over to the window and looked out. Below on the street a horse and buggy passed slowly by. She watched until the clip clop of the horses hoofs could no longer be heard. Then she quickly got dressed, and she and Anne Marie together hurried into the kitchen. There they sat down to a breakfast of strawberry yogart, black bread, and hot milk.

"Well," said their mother, "I have two gymnasium students today." Trudi beamed. "Would you like me to fix you some bread and cheese, Trudi, as I do for Anne Marie's snack?" asked her mother.

"Oh yes," said Trudi. She was anxious to do everything just the way Anne Marie did if she was going to be a real gymnasium student.

Having finished breakfast, they jumped up from the table, kissed their mother good-by and then were off. Down the street they ran to the tram stop where Anne Marie met one of her classmates. Anne Marie introduced her sister and explained that Trudi would be visiting their classroom today. The girl smiled kindly and said that she was glad to have Trudi with them. Anne Marie's friends are nice, Trudi thought.

The big gymnasium was located on a hill on the other side of the city. When they got off the tram, hundreds of girls were rushing up the hill. At the door of the school Anne Marie met several more of her friends and together they all walked in. Inside, the halls were filled with students talking in groups, hanging up coats, and selling newspapers.

When the seven fifteen bell rang, everyone scurried into their classrooms. Anne Marie and Trudi sat down next to each other. There were three rows of desks, and all the desks in each row were attached. Everyone looked around at Trudi and smiled. She was obviously the center of attraction. When the teacher walked in everyone stood up. "You may be seated now," he said once he had entered. Anne Marie had previously asked him if her sister could attend the class. He told Anne Marie that he would be pleased to have Trudi come to visit. He now spotted Anne Marie in the second row, and a young girl sitting beside her.

"We have a young visiter with us today," he said. "She's Anne Marie's sister, and she has been selected to come to the gymnasium to observe. We shall naturally want her to go back with a good report." The class smiled, and Trudi felt very important. Anne Marie was now called on to give an oral book

report in English, and Trudi had some difficulty understanding her. At the end of the hour, the bell rang and two hours of German began. This was followed by a short snack period in which Anne Marie and Trudi ate their bread and cheese.

In the last class of the morning, geography, the students were studying the United States. Throughout the hour the geography teacher called on various students to answer questions. Trudi was stunned when she suddenly heard her name being called. Anne Marie seemed equally amazed.

"Miss Trudi Burkhardt," said the teacher.

"Sir," Trudi responded.

"Perhaps you would like to answer the next question for us," said the teacher.

"I'll try, Sir," answered Trudi nervously.

"What is the largest state in population?" asked the teacher.

Trudi breathed easier now, and so did Anne Marie for she knew that Trudi could answer the question. Trudi stood up. "California, Sir," Trudi replied and then sat down again. Trudi knew the answer because she had an aunt living in California who often wrote the Burkhardt family about her state.

"Why, that's very good, Trudi," the teacher said. And Trudi felt very pleased that she had been able to answer the question. When the teacher suggested making Trudi an honorary gymnasium student, the class showed their agreement by applause. Trudi was so delighted she could hardly speak. Oh, will I have a lot to tell my class, she thought. And Mamma and Papa will be so proud.

The noon bell rang, and the students were dismissed for lunch. When they returned again at two o'clock, Trudi would be back

in her own school. As they left the school, many of Anne Marie's classmates stopped to congratulate Trudi. Trudi was now more anxious than ever to attend the gymnasium next year.

The girls' father was just returning home from work when they reached their home. "Papa, Papa," shouted Trudi running up to him. "Papa, you'll never guess what happened to me today," she cried.

"Well," he said as he took her hand and walked toward the door, "what happened to you today?" He turned to wink at Anne Marie.

"Well," said Trudi excitedly, "I.....," and the three of them entered the house.

THE SHOOTING KING

"Strike three!" yells an American boy on a Saturday afternoon in Spring. "Bull's eye!" yells a boy in Switzerland on the same afternoon.

Shooting matches are as popular in Switzerland as baseball is in America. Every Swiss boy, by the time he reaches eighteen, is a member of the army. The Swiss are proud of their army and their system of neutrality. This means that the Swiss will not take part in wars. But the Swiss need every able man to help them defend this position. Once a week the younger men in the army must attend a shooting practice, usually on Saturdays. Often there are shooting matches for the boys who are not yet old enough to be members of the army. On practice days, the streets are crowded with young men in uniform riding either motor scooters or bicycles with their rifles firmly attached to their backs.

"Hey, there goes one now! Look, he's beckoning to you! Hop on!"

It was the day of the annual "Knabenschiessen" or "boy shooting," and Christian Gruner was going to take part. Last year he had been runner-up in the event, and this year he just had to win. Though Christian was too young for the army, he was not too young to show his skill at the shooting match for boys his own age.

Christian was anxious to become a member of the army for he knew that the Swiss army was a good one. His father had often said that the Swiss army was the only army in the world that could be dressed and assembled in a minute's notice. This is because Swiss men keep their uniforms and rifles home with them. When Steve, an American exchange student living with the Gruners, first arrived at the Gruner home, Mr. Gruner proudly showed him his rifle and uniform. "Our army is not a war making army," he told Steve. "The Swiss army merely guards Swiss neutrality."

Steve had been living with the Gruners for six months now. Though he was three years older than Christian, he and Christian had become good friends. Steve had been watching Christian practice for the past few weeks, and he hoped that Christian would win. Steve knew that to be shooting king of Zurich was, indeed, a high honor for a Swiss boy.

As the Gruners and Steve were getting ready to leave for the big event, Mari, Christian's younger sister, asked, "Can I come too?" Last year Mari had stayed home with her grandmother.

"Yes, Mari, you may come with us this year," answered Mrs. Gruner knowing that Mari would be very disappointed otherwise.

"Does she have to come?" pleaded Christian. "She'll only get in the way." Mari looked so hurt that Christian quickly

changed his mind. "Sure Mari, you come too," Christian said. "I'll need you to cheer for me."

"O.K." said Mari, now smiling and looking very pleased.

The shooting grounds were located near the tennis courts where the Gruner family often played tennis. Steve had been surprised to find that his Swiss family played tennis. It was one of his favorite sports. So far, however, the Gruners had been able to beat him. Christian and Steve could always hear the gun firing from the shooting practices whenever they played tennis on Saturday mornings. Christian often told Steve that he longed for the day when he too could shoot in the practices. Today, at least, he would be shooting in the annual boys' match.

The blue and white flags of Zurich were waving in the breeze when the Gruners arrived at the shooting grounds. Mari immediately ran off to ride on the merry-go-round. Soon she returned eating a grilled sausage in one hand, and a piece of hard bread in the other. "Can I have a bite?" asked Christian.

"First Steve has to have a bite, then you can," replied Mari. So Steve took a bite of the sausage and a bite of the bread, and then Christian did the same. The grilled sausage was one of his favorites. Steve often wondered why the Swiss didn't combine the sausage and the bread like the Americans did with hot dogs.

"Gruetzi," said someone suddenly from behind, and the Gruners turned around to see their friend, Mr. Peter, approaching. Mr. Peter's son, Hans, had been the champion last year. Hans, however, was not with Mr. Peter now.

"Where's Hans?" exclaimed Christian. Mr. Peter explained that Hans was ill and would be unable to participate in the match this

year. Christian was sorry to hear that his friend wouldn't be shooting with him, but then suddenly it occurred to him that Hans was really his only competition. Now, thought Christian, he was sure to win.

The Gruners then introduced Steve to Mr. Peter. "This is Steve from California, our new son," said Mr. Gruner. He always introduced Steve like that.

"Ah, an Amerikaner (American)!" exclaimed Mr. Peter. "How do you like Switzerland?" he asked Steve. Steve told Mr. Peter how much he liked the Swiss people and their country.

"Gee, he must like it here," interrupted Mari, "he's always taking pictures." Steve blushed and laughed, and everyone laughed with him.

"Steve," Mr. Peter suddenly asked," can you shoot?"

"Yes," answered Steve.

"How would you like to take my son's place in the match today?" asked Mr. Peter. Everyone, including Steve, looked at Mr. Peter in amazement. It was certainly a good idea, but it was also highly irregular.

"Do you think it will be allowed?" asked Mr. Gruner.

"Let's find out," Mr. Peter replied, and the Gruners, Mr. Peter, and Steve all walked toward the officials who were gathered at the judging stand. Mr. Peter explained the situation —— that his son would be unable to participate, that someone was needed to take his place, and that a visitor to the country should be allowed to show his skill.

"Besides, he's not really a visitor," said Christian, "he's living with us for a year so that makes him a Swiss."

After much persuasion, the judges finally gave their consent, and Christian and Steve together entered the preliminaries. After an hour of shooting, Christian and Steve found themselves in competition with one another for the big title. Christian was amazed. He had no idea Steve would be so good. Since Christian was a better tennis player and a better hiker than Steve, he assumed that he would be a better marksman. He knew that Steve could shoot, but he had never thought of Steve as a threat to the title.

After the preliminaries Christian and Steve joined the Gruners and Mr. Peter for coffee and pastry before the final match began. Mr. and Mrs. Gruner congratulated the two boys. Both expressed their surprise at Steve's ability. "Well," said Mr. Gruner, "may the best man win!"

Steve now found himself in a difficult situation. He had wanted to win the preliminaries, along with Christian, to show the Swiss that he could do something as well as they if not better. But now there was a good possibility of his winning the final match. It would, no doubt, be close, but what if he should win? The match really didn't mean that much to him, but it did to Christian. For years Christian had longed for the title. Christian was not the type of person who would hold a grudge if Steve won, but, nevertheless, Steve felt the title rightfully belonged to a Swiss. On the other hand, if Steve should purposely miss his aim, Christian would not feel as though he had won the title fairly. Steve now decided that he would shoot as well as he could.

The final match was ready to begin. The bugles blew, and the officials announced the two semi-titlists. The boys shook hands, and Christian commenced shooting. He was glad that Steve had entered

the match for now the competition was keener. Had he won without Steve's entry, he wouldn't have felt like a real shooting king. He took careful aim on each shot, his hands were steady, and his eyes never left the target. When he was finished, the crowd cheered. He had accumulated thirty-five points out of a possible high of thirty-six. He lifted the gun down from his shoulder and then sat down to watch his opponent. He was exhausted after such intense concentration. The crowd was still cheering, but he was only partially aware of them. He felt dazed, hardly realizing that no one had ever reached a score as high as thirty-five.

Steve now began shooting, and everyone wondered if the American boy could top Christian's score. "Thirty-two," the scorers yelled, "thirty-three.....THIRTY-FOUR!" And the last shot had been fired. Steve dropped the gun on the ground and breathed a sigh of relief. Christian had won! Steve ran over to congratulate him, and soon the rest of the crowd gathered around. Mari pushed through the crowd yelling, "You won Christian, you won!" Christian stood up now hardly believing his ears. Two officials escorted him to the judges' stand. "The shooting king," the announcer yelled as he held up Christian's hand, "Christian Gruner !" Crowds cheered, and cameras clicked as Christian was presented the grand prize of three hundred francs!

THE HIKERS

Fi-di-ri, Fi-di-ra, Fi-di-ra-la-la-la-la.

Listen! Do you hear it too?

Fi-di-ri-, Fi-di-ra, Fi-di-ra-la-la-la-la.

There it is again!

The hikers are returning! Here they come!

A group of school children sang softly as they hiked along a dusty trail. The girls were dressed in skirts, knee socks, and head scarfs. The latter covered their long braids and protected their heads from the sun and dust. The boys, wearing shorts, sweaters, and sandals, carried knapsacks on their backs. All the children had ruddy complexions after their long hike to the Gonergrat, a spot which offers a breathtaking view of the Matterhorn. Now they were returning, leaving the snow covered majestic peak of the Matterhorn behind them. Hans, the young leader of the group, poked his hiking stick into the ground as he walked along. His knickers were covered with dust after the long trip. Hans's greatest ambition was to climb the Matterhorn. He had been taught to hike when he was three years old, and he had been hiking ever since. The children, with Hans in the lead, were now descending through the wooded area, and the most difficult part of the hike was over. Soon they would be on the road leading to the town of Zermatt. As the first weathered chalets of the village came into view, the children began singing in louder and more vigorous voices. In the distance ahead of them two hikers could be seen returning to town. Hans noticed the ropes and picks attached to their belts and wondered if they had climbed the Matterhorn. "Oh, if only I could talk to them," he thought. "If only I could talk to someone who has climbed the Matterhorn."

As they neared the chalets Hans noticed a young girl dressed in slacks and a sweater sitting on the fence before her home. Her short black hair hung straight. She was strumming a guitar and singing softly.

Her music had attracted a number of the returning hikers, and they paused before moving on. The children ceased their own singing as they

neared her. Two returning hikers were still listening to her when the children arrived. They were wearing high boots, bold red shirts, and old weather-beaten hats. "Are you coming from the Matterhorn?" Hans asked.

The two men smiled. "No son, I'm afraid not," they replied. "We only got as far as the first hut." Then the two men moved on.

The children hadn't noticed that the girl had stopped singing. Now she spoke for the first time. "Most people climb the Matterhorn in two days," she explained. "They climb to the hut at the foot of the Matterhorn the first day, sleep over night there, and then start the real climb at six o'clock the next morning. That way," she continued, "they can reach the top by noon and still have time to return before the sun sets. Those men you were just talking to were probably forced to return because of poor weather conditions."

Hans looked at her in amazement. "How do you know so much about it?" he asked.

"Well," said the girl, "I've lived here all my life, and besides I've climbed the Matterhorn myself."

"YOU climbed the Matterhorn!" Hans exclaimed. He could scarcely believe it. He had heard stories of girls climbing the Matterhorn before, but he didn't think they were true. "Surely," he thought to himself, "if she climbed the Matterhorn, I should be able to some day." "How old are you?" Hans now asked her.

"Eighteen," she replied. The children were fascinated by this young girl, and they all gathered around her.

"Do you want to climb it again?" one of the children asked.

"Oh yes, I think so," the girl replied. "Maybe next year." Just then an older man wearing hiking boots came out of the house and walked toward the girl.

"Anna," her father called, "invite the children in. I'm sure they're thirsty after their long hike." Not only were the children thirsty, but they were anxious to hear more about Anna. Once they were inside, Anna and her father served them cold drinks of water. Then Hans began to question Anna once again.

"Who taught you how to climb, Anna?" he asked.

"My father did," Anna replied. "He was a guide once and one of the best in Zermatt." Hans and the children now turned their attention toward the father. It had never occurred to Hans that this gray-haired man might have been a guide. Though now that Hans was looking at him closely, he could see that for an aging man he was still in good condition.

"Gee," Hans said, "you certainly must be good."

"Not as good as my daughter," said the man.

"Your daughter's better than you!" Hans exclaimed.

"Sure," said the man. "She's young and limber. You have to be young to climb well."

"How many times have you climbed the Matterhorn?" Hans asked.

"Oh," replied the man," I've lost track by now." Hans couldn't imagine anyone climbing the Matterhorn so many times that he'd loose count.

"You know," said Hans, "I'm going to climb the Matterhorn someday."

"You are, are you," said the man. "Well, I don't doubt it. Are you the leader of this group?" he asked.

"Yes, I am," said Hans proudly.

"Why," said the man, "you're not much older than the rest of these children, are you?"

"Two years," replied Hans.

"And where did you go?" asked the man.

"To the Gonergrat and back," Hans answered.

It was now the man's turn to be surprised. "That's quite an undertaking for a young boy!" he exclaimed. "You must know the trails very well."

"Yes," said Hans, "I've climbed it many times before with my father."

"Well," said the man, "I'm sure you will climb the Matterhorn some day."

"Do you really think so!" Hans exclaimed.

"Yes, I do," said the man, "I'd say you were a born climber!" Hans was thrilled. The man left the room now, but returned in a moment. "Before you leave," he said to the children, "here's something for all of you." He gave them each a piece of edelweiss, the Swiss national flower. The children were delighted, for edelweiss grows at very high altitudes, and some of the children had never seen the small fuzzy white flower before. "I got them on my last climb," the man said.

After thanking him the children left. When they were back on the road one of the children asked, "Do you really want to climb the Matterhorn, Hans?"

"I sure do," replied Hans. "More than ever now," he thought.

It was getting late, now, and the streets were crowded. Horse and buggies were wheeling around corners, and more and more hikers were returning. As the children walked through the town, they passed by a small

cemetery. Hans knew that all those men had lost their lives climbing the Matterhorn. He turned his head away and began singing, "Fi-di-ri, Fi-di-ra." And the children joined in, "Fi-di-ra-la-la-la-la." It was a long time before their music died out.

DAY FOR THE BROOMS

"Sweep! Sweep!" they yell as a stone is slid across the ice. A broom and a stone! That's all the Swiss need for an exciting ice game called curling. Hey, there goes another stone! The players are yelling, and the crowds are cheering! Come on, let's watch!

Peter Bruner watched the snow covered Alps whiz by the train window. He and his family were on their way to St. Moritz for their winter holiday. Businessmen and school children alike were always allowed a week's vacation during the winter. Winter was Peter's favorite season. He loved skating and tobogganing. Another of his favorites was a game called curling, but at this he was a spectator rather than a participant. This was his father's favorite sport. Every year his father looked forward with enthusiasm to the annual curling matches at St. Moritz. Even now as Peter glanced at his father sitting opposite him, he could see him carefully figuring out various plans of attack on paper for tomorrow's game. His father was the captain or skipper of his team--skip for short. Peter secretly desired to be a skip himself. Often he would practice by himself on the frozen lake at home. He'd use his father's curling stones and a broom from his mother's closet. And that's all you need to play the game ----several stones and a broom. As Peter's thoughts turned to curling, he was suddenly reminded of his American uncle who had come to visit his family last year. Mr. Bruner had been telling the uncle how much he liked curling, and that it was his favorite sport. When the uncle asked what curling was, Mrs. Bruner got a large stone, placed it in the middle of the living room floor, and began sweeping in front of it.

The ~~poor uncle was completely~~ baffled. Peter had to laugh every time he thought of this.

Actually this was a very good way of explaining the game for this is precisely what happens. The game is played on an ice rink by two teams, each team consisting of four members. The object is to slide highly polished stones across the ice from one end of the rink to a target scratched into the ice at the other end of the rink. If a stone is going

too slowly to reach the target, team members may sweep the ice in front of the stone in order to make it move faster. Peter loved to watch the game as it usually became highly exciting.

Peter again looked out the window, and now he could see the little snow covered town of St. Moritz lying in a valley against the Alps. "Get ready, Peter," his mother said interrupting his thoughts. "We're almost there." Peter began to put on his coat. His father got up, reached for the suitcases above their seats, and placed them on the seat next to Peter's. A conductor opened the door to their car and called out, "St. Moritz, all out for St. Moritz!" The train came to a sudden stop, and Mr. Bruner leaped off and on to the station platform. Mrs. Bruner quickly opened the window by their seats, and Peter shoved the suitcases through the window to his father's waiting hands below. Then he and his mother jumped off the train, and the train chugged away. They had been just in time! Trains rarely allow enough time at each stop, and if one wants to get off in time, one had better throw his suitcases out the window.

Soon they heard their names being called, and turning around Peter saw his Uncle Karl running toward them. "Gruetzi," he said when he reached them. "Gruetzi," they returned, and all hugged and kissed one another. Uncle Karl picked up their suitcases and led the Bruners to his sleigh. Peter loved the sleigh ride and the jingling of the bells. Soon they would be at Uncle Karl's home where Aunt Katrin was preparing dinner, and Peter's cousins were awaiting his arrival.

The next morning Peter was up bright and early. It was a beautiful clear morning, but cold and bitter. Perfect weather for

a curling match! Peter's father and uncle had already been practicing for two hours when Peter, his mother, aunt and cousins arrived at the rink. There crowds were gathering, flags were waving, and loud speakers were blaring. There were many rinks and many games being played, but Peter quickly found his father. His father and the rest of his team members were wearing bulky sweaters, heavy pants, and rubber soled boots. Some were talking among themselves and smoking pipes. At one end of the rink were the stones. Mr. Bruner had tied ribbons around the handles of his team's stones in order to distinguish them from the opposing team's stones.

When the whistle blew, the crowds cheered, and the action began. Mr. Bruner and his opposing skip stood near the target at one end of the rink while the rest of the players remained at the other end. Each player would throw two stones before the skips took their turns. Peter's father started the game by calling out to his team how he wanted the stones played. As soon as he held his broom on the spot where he wanted the first stone to be placed, the first player threw his stone. "Well laid down," Peter's father yelled. "Not a touch" (not a touch of the broom needed). The crowd cheered. Now it was the opposing skips turn. He pointed to the spot where he wanted the stone laid, and his teammate threw. As soon as the skip perceived that it was going too slowly he yelled, "Sweep it, Sweep it!", whereupon the members of his team ran along side of the stone and swept in front of it. After they had swept for some time, the skip yelled, "Up brooms, up!" as a signal for his men to stop sweeping. When the stone landed just where the skip wanted it he congratulated his teammates with, "Well swept, well swept indeed!"

The game had only been in progress for a half hour when it began to snow. The teams looked a bit glum, and the crowd looked doubtful. Peter knew what the snow meant all right. It made the game much more difficult to play. The ice would have to be swept constantly in order to clear the snow and keep the stones moving. Peter heard his father say, "Well, it will certainly be a day for the brooms!"

After another half hour of vigorous play, one of the sweepers on Mr. Bruner's team suddenly slipped and fell. Peter's father helped him to his feet, but he had sprained his ankle and would have to be eliminated from the game. "What will be done?" the crowd murmured. "Who will take his place?" It was up to Peter's father to decide this. If his team had been loosing he would have gladly stopped the game. But his team was winning even if only by a slight margin, and he wanted to continue play.

"Any of you men want to volunteer?" he asked of the men in the crowd. No one responded. "What's the matter with you men anyway?" he yelled. "No one wants to play?" Again silence. Suddenly a young voice was heard, and Peter stepped out onto the ice.

"I'll play!" he said. The crowd looked at Peter in astonishment.

"Why he's no bigger than one of them stones!" someone yelled, and everyone laughed. Peter burned with embarrassment.

"Maybe not," his father said coming to his aid, "but he can throw them!" The crowd was silenced by this remark. "Come on out here, son," Mr. Bruner called and Peter obeyed.

When the game began again, the stones were in a strategic position. Peter's team had one stone smack on the bull's eye and several stones guarding it. However, there was still a narrow opening leading to this stone, and it was, therefore, possible for an opposing stone to sail right

through knocking the winning stone out of place. It was now Mr. Bruner's turn to throw, and he decided on a shot that would close up the opening. But it was going to be a difficult play for his stone would have to curl around in order to reach the desired spot. "Sweepers, wake!" he yelled to his teammates. When the stone left his hand he watched its passage carefully, never letting his eyes leave the stone. Suddenly he yelled, "Sweep her! Sweep her! Don't leave her for a moment! Sweep! Sweep!". Peter began furiously sweeping, and when he had finished, the stone landed in the proper spot. "Well swept, Peter! Well swept!" yelled his father. And the crowds cheered for the narrow opening had been securely closed. "That boy's a good sweeper," said the opposing skip grimly. Peter's father lit his pipe and talked gaily to his teammates. Now it was the opposing skip's turn. If he could knock all the stones out of place he could still land on the winning spot. He played his shot amid dead silence. It soon became apparent that his stone was just not going to make it. The stone stopped, and there it was! The game was over, and Mr. Bruner's team had won. Peter knew that his sweeping was responsible. The winning team threw their brooms in the air, and Peter was carried off the ice as cheers and applause filled the air.

LANTERNS ON PARADE

A long time ago, the three cantons of Uri, Schwyz, and Unterwalden lived in peace and contentment until their aggressive neighbor, Austria, tried to bring them under Austrian rule. The men of the three cantons resolved, however, to be free, and on August First in the year twelve hundred ninety one, long before Columbus discovered America, they united for mutual protection. Meeting on a meadow called the Rutli in the canton of Schwyz, they raised right hands and pledged themselves to an oath of liberty while bonfires on nearby mountain tops proclaimed freedom throughout the land. Thus Switzerland came to be, taking its name from the canton Schwyz, the German word for Switzerland. Many wars were fought, however, before the Swiss actually achieved independence. It was during this time that the legend of William Tell originated. The story of William Tell is well known and loved by all Swiss children.

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A young girl named Dorli Muller is standing on the balcony of her home in the canton of Schwyz. It is August First, the Swiss National Independence Day. Dorli has been decorating her balcony with colorful paper lanterns. Some are plain yellow, but most are red with white crosses on them, the same as the Swiss flag. The lanterns are suspended on wooden sticks, and Dorli has placed them in the geranium flower boxes which hang from the balcony. Now after hanging the Swiss flag from the center of the balcony, Dorli is going into the house to hear her favorite story.

Dorli sat on her father's lap. Mr. Muller read from a large book as he always did on the afternoon of August First. Dorli loved hearing the same story every year.

"A short time after the men of Schwyz, Uri, and Unterwalden had taken the oath of liberty," read the father, " a mean Austrian governor named Gessler placed a hat upon a pole in a meadow in the canton of Schwyz. Since he was governor of the land, he made all those who passed by bow down to the hat. To bow to an Austrain hat was naturally an insult to the Swiss. But the hat was guarded by two soldiers, one on either side. Those who refused to bow to the hat were taken prisoners. Everyone bowed but one! This man was William Tell! When William Tell with his young son, Walter walked by the hat, he refused to take notice of it. 'Halt,' cried one of the soldiers, and grabbing Tell by the arm he threatened to take him prisoner. Suddenly hunting horns were heard, and the approach of Gessler was announced.

'What's the trouble here,' asked Gessler in a rough voice.

'This man refused to bow to the hat, Sir,' replied the soldier.

'What's your name?' asked Gessler directing his question to Tell.

'William Tell,' was the reply.

'You refused to bow to the hat, did you?' Gessler asked.

'I did,' answered Tell proudly.

Gessler was furious. To pay for his crime the governor ordered Tell to shoot an arrow through an apple placed on his son's head. If Tell missed his own head would be taken."

"What happened then, Daddy? What did William Tell do?" interrupted Dorli.

"Well," said the father, "poor William Tell implored the mercy of the governor, but it was no use. The apple was placed on Walter's head, and Tell was ordered to shoot. The crowd looked on in horror. But Tell's arrow hit the apple, and when it did so Tell fell to the ground exhausted. The crowd cheered, but Gessler was angered by Tell's astonishing feat. Suddenly Gessler, noticing a second arrow in Tell's belt, questioned him about it. Tell bravely replied, 'That arrow was meant for you in case the first one had hit my son.' Upon hearing that, Gessler immediately gave the order to seize Tell and take him as a prisoner on his ship.

Several days later Tell escaped from the ship during a storm. He was now determined to take Gessler's life. One day as Gessler rode through the forest, a crowd lay in wait for him at the pass. When Gessler reached the pass his way was blocked by the crowd demanding justice. Gessler ignored their pleas, and ordered the pass to be cleared. Suddenly an arrow pierced his heart, and he fell to the ground. William Tell leaped out from behind a rock and declared the country henceforth free. The cheering crowd cried out, 'The country is free! The country is free!' And William Tell had become Switzerland's hero."

Mr. Muller closed the book from which he was reading. "Daddy, was there really a William Tell?" Dorli asked.

"Well, Dorli," said the father, "we don't know if there really was a William Tell, but we do know that Switzerland is, indeed, a free country. And this we can attribute to all the brave men of Schwyz, Uri, and Unterwalden who pledged themselves to freedom on this very day in the year twelve hundred and ninety one. And tonight we will be going to the Rutli where the oath actually took place."

When the sun set, Dorli and her mother and father walked to

the historic meadow. All the families from the cantons of Schwyz, Uri, and Unterwalden were gathered to celebrate their independence. A platform and chairs were set up for the many speeches. In the center of the platform the Swiss national flag was hanging. It was a large red flag with a white cross. On either side of this flag were the flags of Uri, Schwyz, and Unterwalden. After the speeches, a group of men acted out the scene that had taken place there so many years before. Then everyone joined in the Swiss national anthem. Dorli sang out loud and clear. She felt good all over, and proud to be a Swiss, and prouder yet to be from the canton, Schwyz. On nearby mountain tops bonfires burst into flames, and fireworks boomed in the distant air. But it was the last part of the program that Dorli liked best. This was the childrens' lantern parade of which she was to be a part. As the children got ready, candle lights sprang from everywhere until the whole meadow was illuminated by the childrens' paper lanterns. Dorli had a red lantern with a white cross. Other children had lanterns with faces of rabbits, bears, and bulls on them. There were lanterns of every size, shape, and color. The children were called to order, the lights were assembled in one spot, and the procession began. The children walked single file down the path Gessler had, as legend tells us, taken to his death. Then they began singing the national anthem. And on they walked until they passed out of sight.

CHAPTER IV

ANALYSIS OF DATA

The purpose of this study was to present a realistic approach to life in Switzerland through a series of original short stories designed as supplementary material for intermediate grade children, and by so doing to make a faraway land become more meaningful. The study was concerned with the following problems:

1. To make learning material meaningful and easy to remember by including it within the framework of a fiction story
2. To create real rather than artificially contrived plots
3. To determine how well the stories are liked by intermediate grade children.

Evaluation proceedings consisted of four steps, as follows: (1) to determine the extent to which the stories were liked; (2) to determine through a series of questions what parts of the stories were liked and disliked, and whether or not the vocabulary was difficult; (3) to determine in the children's own words what was liked and disliked; and (4) to determine attitudes toward Switzerland as a result of the stories.

With the exception of the third step, the above required the counting and tabulating of individual responses. Each step will be dealt with individually.

The children at all grade levels represented a combination of bright, average, and slow learners. It was not considered necessary to determine which of the three ability groupings responded most favorably to the stories, but rather to determine a response based on the overall population.

Step one consisted of determining the extent to which the stories were liked by having the children rate the stories as follows: excellent, very good, good, fair, and poor. The above ratings were tabulated for each story on a one-to-five basis, where one was poor and five was excellent, and the mean rating determined. Mean ratings were calculated for each grade level totally, and for boys and girls separately. Table I shows the mean ratings at the fourth grade level.

TABLE I

MEAN RATINGS AT THE FOURTH GRADE LEVEL

Story	Total No. of Children	Rating	No. of Boys	Rating	No. of Girls	Rating
1. The Burning of the Snowman...	39	4.1	21	4.0	18	4.2
2. A Poem for St. Nicholas.....	39	4.5	21	4.3	18	4.7
3. When Church Bells Ring....	39	3.9	21	3.8	18	4.0
4. Morning at a Gymnasium.....	39	4.3	21	4.2	18	4.0
5. The Shooting King.....	39	4.5	21	4.5	18	4.3
6. The Hikers....	37	4.1	20	4.1	17	4.1
7. Day for the Brooms.....	39	4.3	21	4.4	18	4.2
8. Lanterns on Parade.....	39	4.1	21	4.2	18	4.1

The stories best liked at the fourth grade level were A Poem for St. Nicholas and The Shooting King, each with a mean rating of 4.5. The story least liked was When Church Bells Ring, with a mean rating of 3.9.

Stories 4, 5, 7, and 8 were liked best by boys. Stories 1, 2, and 3 were liked best by girls. Story 6 was liked equally by both boys and girls.

Table II shows the mean ratings at the fifth grade level.

TABLE II

MEAN RATINGS AT THE FIFTH GRADE LEVEL

Story	Total No. of Children	Rating	No. of Boys	Rating	No. of Girls	Rating
1. The Burning of the Snowman...	37	3.9	18	3.7	19	4.1
2. A Poem for St. Nicholas.....	37	4.4	18	4.5	19	4.4
3. When Church Bells Ring....	33	3.3	16	2.9	17	3.7
4. Morning at a Gymnasium.....	33	4.1	16	3.9	17	4.2
5. The Shooting King.....	37	4.2	18	4.3	19	4.1
6. The Hikers....	37	3.6	18	3.3	19	3.9
7. Day for the Brooms.....	36	4.2	18	4.2	18	4.2
8. Lanterns on Parade.....	36	3.6	18	3.1	18	4.1

The story best liked at the fifth grade level was A Poem for St. Nicholas, with a mean rating of 4.4. The story least liked was When Church Bells Ring, with a mean rating of 3.3. Stories 2 and 5 were liked best by boys. Stories 1, 3, 4, 6, and 8 were liked best by

girls. Story 7 was liked equally by both boys and girls.

Table III shows the mean ratings at the sixth grade level.

TABLE III

MEAN RATINGS AT THE SIXTH GRADE LEVEL

Story	Total No. of Children	Rating	No. of Boys	Rating	No. of Girls	Rating
1. The Burning of the Snowman...	35	3.3	16	2.9	19	3.7
2. A Poem for St. Nicholas.....	35	4.5	16	3.6	19	4.4
3. When Church Bells Ring....	33	3.1	16	2.7	17	3.5
4. Morning at a Gymnasium.....	33	4.1	16	4.0	17	4.2
5. The Shooting King.....	36	4.3	17	4.9	19	4.3
6. The Hikers....	36	3.8	17	3.5	19	4.1
7. Day for the Brooms.....	36	3.8	17	3.7	19	4.1
8. Lanterns on Parade.....	36	3.8	17	3.5	19	3.9

The story best liked at the sixth grade level was A Poem for St. Nicholas, with a mean rating of 4.5. The story least liked was When Church Bells Ring, with a mean rating of 3.1. All the stories were liked best by girls with the exception of story 5.

Step two consisted of determining through a series of questions what parts of the stories were liked and disliked, and whether or not the vocabulary was difficult. The number and percentage of negative responses were recorded for each question pertaining to each story.

Table IV shows the number and percentage of negative responses to questions concerning parts liked and disliked and vocabulary difficulty at the fourth grade level.

TABLE IV

NUMBER AND PERCENTAGE OF NEGATIVE RESPONSES TO QUESTIONS CONCERNING PARTS LIKED AND DISLIKED AND VOCABULARY DIFFICULTY AT THE FOURTH GRADE LEVEL

Story	Total Children	Children Who Found Words Hard		Children Who Disliked Title		Children Who Disliked Introduction		Children Who Disliked Ending		Children Who Thought Story Was Too Short	
		No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
1. The Burning of the Snowman.....	39	7	18.0	2	5.1	4	10.2	3	7.7	7	18.0
2. A Poem for St. Nicholas.....	39	1	2.6	2	5.1	8	20.4	3	7.7	8	20.4
3. When Church Bells Ring.....	39	4	10.2	8	20.4	7	18.0	18	46.0	9	23.0
4. Morning at a Gymnasium.....	39	0	0	4	10.2	4	10.2	12	30.8	11	28.1
5. The Shooting King.....	39	1	2.6	3	7.7	6	15.3	3	7.7	6	15.3
6. The Hikers.....	39	0	0	7	18.0	8	20.4	11	28.1	9	23.0
7. Day for the Brooms.....	39	0	0	6	15.3	4	10.2	4	10.2	6	15.3
8. Lanterns on Parade.....	39	3	7.7	15	38.4	5	12.9	7	18.0	8	20.4

The story having the most significant recording, as shown in Table IV, was When Church Bells Ring, with 46 per cent disliking the ending. Other significant responses were as follows: 30.8 per cent disliked the ending of story 4, and 38.4 per cent disliked the title of story 8.

Table V shows the number and percentage of negative responses to questions concerning parts liked and disliked and vocabulary difficulty at the fifth grade level. Differing totals are accounted for by daily absences.

TABLE V

NUMBER AND PERCENTAGE OF NEGATIVE RESPONSES TO QUESTIONS CONCERNING PARTS LIKED AND DISLIKED AND VOCABULARY DIFFICULTY AT THE FIFTH GRADE LEVEL

Story	Total Children	Children Who Found Words Hard		Children Who Disliked Title		Children Who Disliked Introduction		Children Who Disliked Ending		Children Who Thought Story Was Too Short	
		No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
1. The Burning of the Snowman.....	37	1	2.8	5	13.6	7	19.0	3	8.1	5	13.6
2. A Poem for St. Nicholas.....	37	1	2.8	2	5.4	2	5.4	2	5.4	4	10.8
3. When Church Bells Ring.....	33	2	6.0	11	33.3	10	30.3	17	51.6	9	27.2
4. Morning at a Gymnasium.....	33	1	3.0	4	12.1	1	3.0	10	30.3	5	15.1
5. The Shooting King.....	37	1	2.8	4	10.8	6	16.2	0	0	0	0
6. The Hikers.....	37	5	13.6	13	35.1	14	37.9	15	40.6	10	27.0
7. Day for the Brooms.....	36	0	0	5	13.9	3	8.3	1	2.8	2	5.6
8. Lanterns on Parade.....	36	5	13.9	17	47.0	17	47.0	6	16.7	4	11.0

As revealed by Table V, the story having the most significant recording was When Church Bells Ring, with 51.6 per cent disliking the ending. Other significant responses were as follows: 33.3 per cent and 30.3 per cent disliked the title and introduction, respectively, to story 3. The ending of story 4 was disliked by 30.3 per cent. The title, introduction, and ending of story 6 were disliked by 35.1, 37.9, and 40.6 per cent, respectively. Both the title and introduction to story 8 were disliked by 47 per cent.

Table VI shows the number and percentage of negative responses to questions concerning parts liked and disliked and vocabulary difficulty at the sixth grade level. Differing totals are accounted for by daily absences.

TABLE VI

NUMBER AND PERCENTAGE OF NEGATIVE RESPONSES TO QUESTIONS CONCERNING PARTS LIKED AND DISLIKED AND VOCABULARY DIFFICULTY AT THE SIXTH GRADE LEVEL

Story	Total Children	Children Who Found Words Hard		Children Who Disliked Title		Children Who Disliked Introduction		Children Who Disliked Ending		Children Who Thought Story Was Too Short	
		No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
1. The Burning of the Snowman.....	35	0	0	6	17.1	9	25.7	8	22.9	10	28.5
2. A Poem for St. Nicholas.....	35	0	0	7	20.0	7	20.0	3	8.6	3	8.6
3. When Church Bells Ring.....	33	1	3.0	11	33.3	12	36.3	23	69.7	13	39.3
4. Morning at a Gymnasium.....	33	0	0	4	12.1	3	9.0	12	36.3	8	24.2
5. The Shooting King.....	36	0	0	3	8.3	4	11.0	3	8.3	2	5.6
6. The Hikers.....	36	1	2.8	10	27.8	15	41.6	16	44.3	9	25.0
7. Day for the Brooms.....	36	0	0	7	19.3	7	19.3	1	2.8	2	5.6
8. Lanterns on Parade.....	36	3	8.3	16	44.3	13	36.0	6	16.7	3	8.3

The story having the most significant recording was When Church Bells Ring, with 69.7 per cent disliking the ending. Other significant responses were as follows: 33.3 per cent, 36.3 per cent, and 39.3 per cent disliked the title, introduction, and length, respectively, of story 3; 36.3 per cent disliked the ending of story 4; 41.6 per cent and 44.3 per cent disliked the introduction and ending, respectively, of story 6; 44.3 per cent and 36 per cent disliked the title and introduction, respectively, to story 8.

Step three consisted of determining in the children's own words what was liked and disliked. This was accomplished by having the children write their own evaluations of each story on the reverse sides of the evaluation sheets. The children's written responses can hardly be evaluated in statistical terms. The author has, however, chosen a few sample responses which may be found reproduced in Chapter V of this thesis.

Step four consisted of determining through questions the children's attitudes toward Switzerland as a result of the stories. The number and percentage of positive responses (positive being the desired response) were recorded for each question at each grade level. This is shown in Table VII.

TABLE VII

NUMBER AND PERCENTAGE OF POSITIVE RESPONSES AT EACH GRADE LEVEL TO QUESTIONS CONCERNING ATTITUDE TOWARD SWITZERLAND AS A RESULT OF THE STORIES

Question	Grade 4 N = 39		Grade 5 N = 23		Grade 6 N = 20	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
1. Have you read stories about Switzerland before?	32	83	13	56	17	85
2. Are you more interested in Switzerland now than you were before?	29	75	20	86	18	90
3. Is life in Switzerland different from what you thought?	26	68	17	73	10	50
4. Do you think Swiss children are similar to children in the United States?	28	73	15	65	16	80
5. Would you like to visit or live in Switzerland?	31	81	22	95	20	100

Not all the children completed the final over-all evaluation sheet, but of those who did there were some significant findings for each grade level, as follows:

Grade four: 75 per cent expressed increased interest in Switzerland, 73 per cent felt that Swiss children were similar to children in the United States, and 81 per cent expressed a desire either to visit or live in Switzerland.

Grade five: 86 per cent expressed increased interest in Switzerland, 73 per cent felt life was different from what they had thought, and 95 per cent expressed a desire to visit or live in Switzerland.

Grade six: 90 per cent expressed increased interest in Switzerland, 80 per cent felt Swiss children were similar to children in the United States, and 100 per cent expressed a desire to visit or live in Switzerland.

CHAPTER V

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

The purpose of this study was to present a realistic approach to life in Switzerland through a series of original short stories designed as supplementary material for intermediate grade children, and by so doing to make a faraway land become more meaningful. The study was concerned with the following problems:

1. To make learning material meaningful and easy to remember by including it within the framework of a fiction story
2. To create real rather than artificially contrived plots
3. To determine how well the stories are liked by intermediate grade children.

A series of eight original short stories presenting a realistic approach to life in Switzerland were written by the author. It was hoped that such an approach would make a faraway land become more meaningful to children. The stories were read and evaluated by one hundred twelve intermediate grade children in a suburban Boston community. Their reaction may be summarized as follows:

1. The story best liked by all three grade levels was A Poem for St. Nicholas. The story least liked was When Church Bells Ring. The stories were rated on a one-to-five basis, as follows: excellent--5, very good--4, good--3, fair--2, and poor--1.

The highest total mean rating given a story was 4.5; the lowest total mean rating was 3.1. The stories were somewhat better liked at the fourth and fifth grade levels than at the sixth. The only appreciable difference in story appeal between boys and girls came at the sixth grade level, where only one story was liked best by boys.

2. In determining what parts of the stories were liked and disliked, all three grade levels agreed that it was the ending with which they found fault in When Church Bells Ring. The most significant recording was at the sixth grade level, with 69.7 per cent disliking the ending. All three grade levels disliked the title, Lanterns on Parade, for the eighth story. Here the most significant rating was 47 per cent at the fifth grade level. Vocabulary was not a problem at any of the grade levels.

3. In determining whether or not the stories were realistic and, therefore, meaningful to children, the following sample responses in the children's own words appear significant:

"It also showed that Switzerland's people are much like us."

"It gives you a good idea of the people of Switzerland."

"It also I think teaches you a lot about Swiss people. I know a lot more than I did before."

"I realized much more that Switzerland today is much like the United States."

"This story was more realistic than any other story I've read about Christmas."

"I learned more than I ever learned before. The people of Switzerland do a lot of different things that we do, but the people are not very different at all."

"I liked this story because it was different and because it tells something true but with fictional characters."

"I liked this story because it was realistic and it seemed as if it really happened."

"I liked the story because not only could it be true in Switzerland, but it could be true here too."

"I liked the stories just to read because it taught me things I didn't know."

4. In determining attitudes toward Switzerland as a result of the stories, significant ratings came at the fifth and sixth grade levels, with 86 per cent and 90 per cent, respectively, expressing increased interest in Switzerland; 73 per cent at the fifth grade level felt life was different from what they thought; 80 per cent at the sixth grade level felt Swiss children were similar to children in the United States; and from 81 to 100 per cent at all three grade levels expressed a desire to visit or live in Switzerland.

It would appear, then, that the stories accomplished their purpose, in that they were real, meaningful, and well liked by intermediate grade children.

APPENDIX

DIRECTIONS FOR TEACHER

Here are eight stories for children about Switzerland.

The purpose of this study is to present a realistic approach to life in Switzerland, and by so doing to make a far away land become more meaningful to children. Have the children read two stories each day for the next four days. The stories are not to be thought of as exercises nor the question sheets as tests. They are merely for enjoyment. You also have a package containing five different sets of question or evaluation sheets. There is one evaluation sheet for each set of two stories, and a final over-all evaluation sheet. Be sure that you give the children the evaluation sheet corresponding to the stories they read each day. After the children have finished reading the last set of two stories, you may distribute the final over-all evaluation sheet along with the evaluation sheet for the last two stories.

There is no time limit, but it shouldn't take the children any longer than a half hour to fourty-five minutes.

DIRECTIONS FOR CHILDREN(to be read by teacher)

Here are some stories for you about children in Switzerland. They are for you to read Just For Fun! You will be reading two stories each day for the next four days. After each set of two stories, there is a question sheet. The stories are not exercises, and the questions sheets are not tests. But please answer all the questions as thoughtfully as possible. There is no time limit. There will be five question sheets in all.

HAVE FUN!

DIRECTIONS SPECIFICALLY FOR QUESTION SHEET

First be sure to check whether you are a boy or girl, and then write in the number of your grade. In part one, you are to check whether you thought the story was excellent, very good, good, fair, or poor. In part two, read the directions! Then be sure to check either yes or no for BOTH stories. In part three, write briefly in four or five sentences why you liked or disliked the stories.

CHECK Boy ☐ Girl ☐ Grade ☐

Part I. Check your opinion of the following two stories.

	Excellent	Very Good	Good	Fair	Poor
The Burning of the Snowman					
A Poem For St. Nicholas					

Part II. Think over the two stories you have just read, and then answer the following questions checking yes or no.

	The Burning of The Snowman		A Poem For St. Nicholas	
	Yes	No	Yes	No
1. Were many of the words too hard?				
2. Did you like the title of the story?				
3. Did you like the introduction to the story?				
4. Did you like the way in which the story ended?				
5. Do you think the story is too short?				

Part III. On the back of this paper, write why you liked or disliked the stories.

CHECK Boy ☐ Girl ☐ Grade ☐

Part I. Check your opinion of the following two stories.

	Excellent	Very Good	Good	Fair	Poor
When Church Bells Ring					
Morning At A "Gymnasium"					

Part II. Think over the two stories you have just read, and then answer the following questions checking yes or no.

	When Church Bells Ring		Morning At A "Gymnasium"	
	Yes	No	Yes	No
1. Were many of the words too hard?				
2. Did you like the title of the story?				
3. Did you like the introduction to the story?				
4. Did you like the way in which the story ended?				
5. Do you think the story is too short?				

Part III. On the back of this paper, write why you liked or disliked the stories.

CHECK Boy ☐ Girl ☐ Grade ☐

Part I. Check your opinion of the following two stories.

	Excellent	Very Good	Good	Fair	Poor
The Shooting King					
The Hikers					

Part II. Think over the two stories you have just read, and then answer the following questions, checking yes or no.

	The Shooting King		The Hikers	
	Yes	No	Yes	No
1. Were many of the words too hard?				
2. Did you like the title of the story?				
3. Did you like the introduction of the story?				
4. Did you like the way in which the story ended?				
5. Do you think the story is too short?				

Part III. On the back of this paper, write why you liked or disliked the stories.

CHECK Boy ☐ Girl ☐ Grade ☐

Part I. Check your opinion of the following two stories.

	Excellent	Very Good	Good	Fair	Poor
Day For the Brooms					
Lanterns On Parade					

Part II. Think over the two stories you have just read, and then answer the following questions checking yes or no.

	Day For The Brooms		Lanterns On Parade	
	Yes	No	Yes	No
1. Were many of the words too hard?				
2. Did you like the title of the story?				
3. Did you like the introduction to the story?				
4. Did you like the way in which the story ended?				
5. Do you think the story is too short?				

Part III. On the back of this paper, write why you liked or disliked the stories.

Part IV Boy ☐ Girl ☐ Grade ☐

Now think over all the stories you have read about children in Switzerland, and then answer the following questions checking yes or no.

1. Have you read stories about Switzerland before?

yes ☐ no ☐

2. Are you more interested in Switzerland now than you were before?

yes ☐ no ☐

3. Is life in Switzerland different from what you thought?

yes ☐ no ☐

4. Do you think Swiss children are similar to children in the United States?

yes ☐ no ☐

5. Would you like to visit or live in Switzerland?

yes ☐ no ☐

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