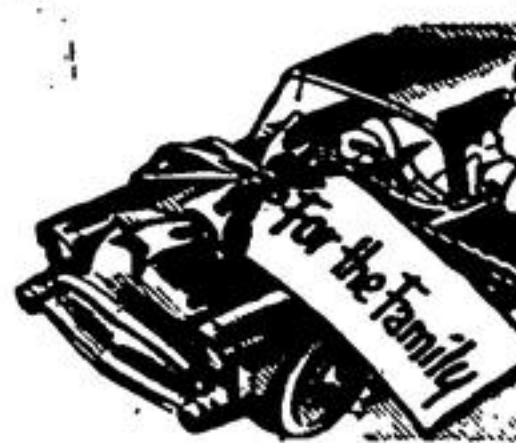


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Chatting

M. H. B.

IF I EVER HAVE the opportunity to see some of Europe, and here's hoping — I don't want to miss Bavaria in Germany. I had formed this conviction long ago from pictures and articles in various magazines, but I have it more firmly entrenched than ever now, since chatting with Mrs. E. R. Robinson, 22 James Street, who, with her husband, has recently returned from a three month trip abroad. The prime reason for Mr. and Mrs. Robinson's European trip was to visit with their son-in-law and daughter, Mr. and Mrs. Gunther Frey, who have been living in Munich for the past two years — Brenda, Mrs. Frey was a member of the Royal bank staff before her marriage to Gunther, an engineer, whose family resides in Munich.

The Frey's met Mr. and Mrs. Robinson in northern Germany, where the boat docked, and drove them to Munich, a 700-mile trip. They took their time, enjoying the scenery and points of interest. Most impressive of all, perhaps, were the many ancient castles sitting high on the wooded hills, looking just like illustrations from a fairy tale.

THE MAJORITY of women in Bavaria wear the Bavarian national costume which consists of a full skirt of brightly hued cotton over which is tied a full white apron trimmed with embroidery, topped with a white blouse under a snugly laced black over-bodice. The men wear Tyrolean suits of red piped with green and leather hats with feathers in the band. As you can imagine, this adds to the quaintly beautiful atmosphere of this country. And the countryside itself is beautiful with many mountains,

valleys, small rivers and lakes. The grass is very green, and the people seem especially fond of growing flowers. They grow them everywhere, even sometimes among the plants in the fields. Driving thru' Bavaria, many lovely villages open up from the mountain roads. From one vantage point, you can see no less than 15 church spires in the valley.

Most of the houses have red roofs and the homes and surroundings are models of neatness and cleanliness. The reason there are so very many of these picturesque little villages, dates back hundreds of years. The farmers do not live on farms as we know them, but have their homes in the villages, and go out to work their land from there. In olden days the people had to keep close together to protect themselves against marauders, and the custom has continued and apparently works out very well.

Mr. and Mrs. Robinson found it fascinating to visit the scene of Hitler's Bavarian mountain retreat at Berchtesgarden. There is just part of 1 house left standing, but from it you could see his "tea house" on the peak of the next mountain.

Even the forests in Bavaria are beautiful. The people love and care for their trees zealously. It is very seldom anyone is allowed to cut one down. Driving thru' the forest you can see right thru' the trees, if you know what I mean, because all the brush has been cleared away, and it is as neatly kept as a park.

IN THE CITY of Munich, especially, this fondness for trees is noticeable, there being a great many right in the downtown area of the city. Also in the heart of the city, in front of the big buildings there are frequently large lawns with flowers. And in spite of the fact that next year Munich celebrates its 800th anniversary, streets are very broad. This I thought rather surprising. The streets in most ancient cities are usually narrow. However, the trees, beautifully kept lawns and flowers, together with the wide streets, all contribute to the effect of spaciousness and charm, which is Munich's special appeal.

Just as in England they say "Everything stops for tea" — in Munich "Everything stops for coffee". At four o'clock every afternoon, the restaurants are crowded with people enjoying the coffee break. As you enter these restaurants, invariably there is a large display of delectable pastries. You make your choice of these and the attendant sees that it is served to you when you sit down for your coffee. Mrs. Robinson describes these pastries as wonderful works of art. They too, are a specialty in Munich.

THERE IS A GREAT deal of building in progress in Munich, both of large buildings and private homes. Houses over there are nearly all three storeys with high peaked roofs and casement windows. They have no removable storm windows, but the windows are all double and being of the casement type, can be opened easily for cleaning inside and out. Mr. Robinson was especially interested in their different ideas of house construction, being a carpenter by trade.

A COUPLE OF IDEAS which appealed to Mrs. Robinson included the tiling of kitchen and bathroom floors. Instead of having a baseboard in these rooms, the tile was extended up the walls a short distance. It makes for easier cleaning and upkeep. Another idea, was having a special window sill designed for keeping potted plants on. I think I mentioned earlier how fond the Bavarian people are of flowers. The glass in this special window is opaque, and the window sill is especially deep, usually made of marble. In fact, in nearly all the houses, the window sills are marble. And frequently outside patios are also built of marble. This is not too expensive there, because the marble is easily accessible from the nearby mountains. The Bavarian people love their little celebrations which they have on every possible occasion. For instance, when a house is being built, after the walls are built and the rafters are up for the room, they put a little decorated tree on the peak of the roof, and invite their friends in for a party to celebrate.

AFTER THEIR VACATION in Bavaria, Brenda and Mrs. Robinson thru the Alps to Genoa, Italy. The scenery of course was magnificent, with a good part of the journey along roads cut right out of and in many cases, thru' the mountains. In spite of the fact that they are narrow and twisty, with no guard rails, there are very few accidents. This may be due in part to the fact that the European cars are much smaller than ours. The Robinsons arrived in Genoa at night, and the lights of this city set in the mountains

by the sea were an unforgettable sight. The next day, Mr. and Mrs. Robinson visited Naples, and later also took an expedition to see the ruins at Pompeii. I can imagine Mrs. Robinson is right when she says a person would have to spend a lot of time in Pompeii to fully appreciate them. In their short tour she remembered especially the dining room of an ancient house, with the parquet floor as beautifully preserved as the day it was built. The paintings on the walls looked quite bright. The many statues however, were replicas of the originals which have been removed to safekeeping in the national museums.

They saw the stepping stones so necessary in the extremely narrow streets of the long, long ago, when there was no such thing as proper drainage. On their return to the city, the Robinsons noticed men excavating in the lava all along the roadside. It is a back-breaking job, because the lava looked hard and black, like coal.

SETTING SAIL FOR home in an Italian liner, they passed close by Monaco. Mrs. Robinson tried very hard to pick out "Grace Kelly's" palace, but couldn't distinguish it from the elaborate buildings nearby. When they passed the Azores Islands, they saw a live volcano in eruption every three minutes or so. It was just a new one that had started erupting in October. Sailing thru the Mediterranean, it was quite a thrill to be able to see the coast of North Africa from the boat, and stopping briefly at Gibraltar, when men came aboard selling every imaginable type of article that might appeal to tourists. These men make a real art out of bargaining.

AND SO ACROSS the Atlantic to dock at New York, where Mr and Mrs. Robinson stayed for a few days before the trip back to Georgetown, and one of the best parts of even the most delightful vacations — returning home.

ALLIANCE STAFF ASSOCIATES PARTY AT HILLTOP LODGE

Fourteen members of the Alliance Paper Mills head office staff were the guests of the Merrittton branch head office at a Christmas party last Wednesday at the Leonard Hotel in St. Catharines. Staff members from Toronto and Don Valley mills were also in attendance at the annual gettogether.

Georgetown staff at the party included Jack Crichton, Stan Finlay, Jim Brandford, Ron Mendham, Frank O'Flaherty, Emery Thompson, John Cummins, Linda Mino, Joan Fiddler, Mrs. Norman Young, Marjorie Hunter, Olive Logan, Helen McGill and Mrs. George Grashy.

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