

# Secret towns of Switzerland

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Objektyp: **Article**

Zeitschrift: **The Swiss observer : the journal of the Federation of Swiss Societies in the UK**

Band (Jahr): - **(1938)**

Heft 866

PDF erstellt am: **12.07.2024**

Persistenter Link: <https://doi.org/10.5169/seals-692505>

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**MAGGIOLATA.**

*Paesanelle, quando scendi dai tuoi monti  
ti sorridono le fonti, perché sei bella ...*  
bella e sana la nostra montanina dalle gonnelle  
corte, ricche, a fiori; un fiore lei stessa. Le fonti,  
diare, serene, sembrano davvero che al suo  
comparire, diventino più chiacchierine, sembrano  
cantino quasi. Cara creatura tanto simpatica  
quanto sei semplice, con quel profumo di polenta  
e di fieno che ti porti in giro. Peccato che tu  
pure, come tante altre cose buone, caratteristiche,  
vai scomparendo. Contadine schiette, sincere che  
solo vivono compresse nel loro arduo lavoro dei  
campi; che rallegrano, con il loro sorriso, quelle  
casine nostrane il cui unico ornamento è uno  
sfoggio di gerani e garofani, sulle finestre; e  
pannocchie dorate e candidi bucati che sono un  
piacere a vedersi. Il "modernismo" ha fatto  
capolino anche nei più remoti villaggi, sparsi in  
cima ai monti; posti negli angoli più isolati  
delle nostre valli. La contadina ora ben raramente  
s'accontenta dell'abbigliamento modesto  
che la sua ava portava, schiva di tutto ciò che  
sentisse di "cittadino." La vedi, invece, anche  
lei sfoggiare la moda delle damigelle di città.  
Forse è per questo motivo che nei negozi c'è tutto  
uno sfarzo di costumi ticinesi, e abiti di Valle  
Maggia, di Verzasca, di Onsernone, in miniature,  
per bambine, che attirano l'attenzione dei  
forastieri, e capiterà così, di vedere in qualche  
lontana città nordica ... paesanelle ticinesi, che  
di ticinesi non avranno che l'abito. Magari un emigrante  
nostrano incontrerà queste bimbe esotiche  
"alla ticinese" e con nostalgico stupore, quante  
reminiscenze dolci nasceranno in lui; crederà per  
un momento di essere ritornato tra i suoi monti,  
nella sua valle, sarà tentato di scambiare qualche  
frase nel suo caratteristico dialetto con quelle  
"ticinesi." Il fragore della città straniera lo  
toglierà dalla sua illusione ... e si chiederà,  
allora, perché, cosa è lì a fare quel costume  
nostro!

Maggio nei paeselli, maggio tra i campi,  
seminati di fresco, che esalano quel loro odore  
buono di terra appena smossa. Maggio nei prati  
che una lieve carezza, che un venticello mite fa  
ondeggiare! Margheritine, trifogli, ranuncoli,  
narcisi. E canto di contadinelle, di paesani;  
canti che son piuttosto delle melanconiche nenie,  
non sempre intonati, ma pur tanto belli. E risate  
schiette, sane. Festoso chicchiricchi di galline  
che, beate, ruzzolano nei cortili, indisturbate;  
guizzar di anitre nei ruscelletti quieti; micini, al  
sole, sonnecchianti ... Non è tutto questo poesia  
soave? Quadro indimenticabile? Che importa se  
l'arrare è pesante? Se il vangare è aspro? A,  
sera, la fatica non si sente più, e si canta ...  
Vita dura quella del contadino, sì; vita che è  
tutta un tessuto di lavoro continuo; lavoro non  
sempre ricompensato come dovrebbe esserlo.  
Annate difficili. La grandine. La siccità. Ma  
è pur quella che, sola, credo, rimane schiva di  
tante passioni umane che avvelenano le creature,  
smorzano ogni sentimento buono, sollevano tanti  
cataclismi.

Contadinelle nostre, riprendete i vostri bei  
costumi, portateli ancora intorno, assieme alla  
brava vostra gerla colma di verdura, di erba, di  
fiori. Rimanete così, per noi, delle città, che vi  
invidiamo spesso, che godiamo "un mondo" se  
possiamo vivere noi pure per qualche breve  
momento tra voi, nei vostri villaggi, respirare, con  
voi, quella buon'aria sana che sa di menta, di  
basilico, di resina ...  
Lugano, maggio 1938.

E.G.L..

**INNO ALLA PATRIA.**

Svizzera da cour t'salüd!  
Tü ferm friun e s-chüd da libertà.  
Vi sur il muond inter  
Glüsch' our dal fraid glatscher  
Tia bandiera cler,  
Elvezia.  
Odast eroic chant  
Fontana, Tell nommand e Winkelried!  
Sü tuots unids marchain  
Nos güramaints tegmain,  
La libertà salvain  
Nos vair salüd.  
Dals pizs nel cler azur  
Glüschast tü in splendor, o libertà!  
Lifers sco'ls antenats,  
Schlass sco in lur combats  
Sajan nos dits e fats,  
Elvezia!

"G. BARBLAN."

**LINGUA MATERNA.**

Chara lingua della mamma,  
Tü sonor romantsch ladin,  
Tü favella dutcha, lamina,  
Oh co t'am en saünza fin!  
In teis suns cur eir'in chüna  
M'ha la mamma charezza,  
E chanzuns dell'Engiadina  
Nell'uraglia m'ha chantà.  
Millieras regordanzas  
S'vagl in mai teis plad sonor,  
S'vaglia saimper veglias spranzas,  
Chi ün di han moss meis cor.  
"G. BARBLAN."

**SECRET TOWNS OF SWITZERLAND.**

By ELISABETH KYLE.

The Switzerland everybody knows, with its  
towering peaks which remain white all summer,  
its huge glassy lakes and its palatial, ultra-  
modern hotels, conceals like a façade the Switzer-  
land few people know. That is, few of the  
tourists from other countries. The Swiss them-  
selves have always holidayed in it.

This hidden, secret Switzerland lies along  
the slopes of the Jura mountains. The mountains  
are not so dramatically peaked and snowed as are  
the High Alps; they are kindly green humps  
dotted with small coppices and woods and spring-  
ing with wild flowers almost to their tops. Their  
little lakes appear mere pools compared with the  
vast extent of Leman or Thun. But in recom-  
pense, if recompense is needed, the Juras hold in  
their heart four or five little mediaeval towns,  
most of them untouched by modern commerce or  
tourism, waiting to charm and enchant the way-  
farer who takes the trouble to seek them out.

Two of the most fascinating of these lie with-  
in a stone's throw of each other, not far from  
Lausanne. One leaves Paris in the morning,  
changes at Lausanne, and arrives at Neuchâtel  
that evening. Neuchâtel itself, though well  
known, has managed to retain an individual  
flavour, and its narrow mounting streets, its  
ancient doorways and its fascinating weekly  
market tempt one to linger a day or two before  
continuing the quest after the Jura's hidden  
mediaeval towns.

First, there is Morat, one of the finest and  
the least known, as completely walled and em-  
battled as Carcassone, and much less spoiled.  
The way to Morat, too, is an enchanted one, by  
little steamer from the quay at Neuchâtel. After  
traversing a part of the Lake of Neuchâtel, it  
passes between two long breakwaters which guard  
the entrance to the canal leading to Lake Morat.  
For more than half an hour the steamer paddles  
steadily between long rushes and floating carpets  
of water lilies which softly disappear in the surge  
of little waves behind the boat, to appear again in  
its wake. From the fields on either hand, so near  
that it seems as if one could touch them, butter-  
flies flicker and retire to safety. A farmhouse or  
so stands above the canal, screened by willows  
which tremble in the summer heat and drag their  
fingers slowly through the water.

And suddenly the steamer emerges from the  
mouth of the canal, entering Lake Morat. There,  
across the water, are the towers of the town; but  
on approaching them they seem to disappear, to  
be swallowed up in the nearing landscape, leaving  
in view only the small landing-place and the one

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tra' miei Meschini."  
Dante. Inferno. C. xxvii.

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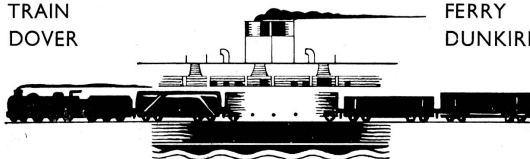
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steep street which apparently leads past nothing more exciting than a wall of rock, which is, in fact, the bastion of the old fortress. At the side of this wall is a narrow winding path which apparently disappears into a shadowed opening. Climb this and pass beneath the fortress walls, and, magically, you come out right in the heart of the market square.

There are few towns or cities to which one makes such sudden, miraculous entry. One moment there is the steep climb up an apparent mule track in silence broken only by the hum of insects in the ivy clinging to the rocks around. The next, a dramatic emergence into a street shaded by deep arcades, gay with baskets and tubs of flowers, glittering at intervals with gilded, painted fountains, and brought to a full stop a tone end by the main gateway of the castle and the arched, gilded Berne Tower at the other.

Should it be a Sunday morning the scene will be more dramatic still. For Morat lies just between the French Canton Vaud and the German Canton of Bern; and while the bells peal and clash over the town, the Vaudois peasants in their Sunday costumes will enter by the castle gate at the same moment that the Bernese, decorated with silver chains and wearing high white head-dresses, file through to church from under the great Bernese Tower. After church, there is a church parade, two-and-two round the old walls with their twisted tourelles which lead up and down from the street far below, under a tiled roof rose-red with age and propped up by huge ancient timbers.

Yes, Morat is a magic city. But there are others. There is, for example, Colombier, the City of Doves, which, considering it is only a tram-ride from Neuchâtel, is easy enough to discover. Again, on being set down at the wayside halt (inland this time), one climbs a hill shaded by age-old trees and terminating in a huge mediæval castle, now used as a barracks, where on Sunday mornings a military band discourses to all who care to stand there listening. The swallows, frightened by the noise, dart out from under the eaves. The Swiss flag, white cross on red ground, flaps overhead lazily in the warm air, and on the Overture to *William Tell* being brought to its exciting close the little crowd of Sunday pleasure-seekers drift through the opposite gateway into the town with its geranium-hung balconies, its ancient stone fountains, reading as they pass the quaint texts and rhymes above the doorways of the timbered houses. The streets of Colombier twist and turn so entrancingly, and contain so many charming flowered squares and corners, that it is hard to remember the awaiting tram below the castle hill and harder still to find the way out of this unspoiled maze—unless, indeed, one decides to put up at the spotless little hotel-restaurant for a night or two.

And lastly, there is Biel, even more get-at-able since it lies on the main Paris-Bern line. Biel is at first sight far from being one of the unknown towns of Switzerland. Unlike Morat or Colombier, it has moved with the times and possesses a modern industry of its own. Nowadays it is the centre of the watchmaking trade, having displaced Geneva many years ago. But that fact as much as any other has led tourists, thinking it a mere commercial centre, to neglect it.

They make a great mistake, since behind a modern façade of skyscrapers and factories (including the world-famous Omega watch factory) there lies, complete and untouched, a perfect little town of the Middle Ages. Again you pass under a narrow archway at a corner of one of the main streets, and here, fantastic as the setting for an opera, lies a cobbled square with a gilded statue of a man-at-arms in the centre. Round about it are the high-peaked gables of the ancient palace of the Prince-Bishops; the Lodge of the Company of Verderers; the little shops, each with its painted signboard still swinging before the door.

Let it not be forgotten, too, that the two healthful climatic stations of Leubringen and Magglingen, complete with comfortable hotels, stand on hills above the town and are reached by funicular.

(The Lady.)

#### SY SCHWYZERREIS.

Sit Jahre het er planget  
Und jede Rappe gspart,  
Bis d's Gältli endli glanget  
Het, für syni Schwyzerfahrt.

Er fühl't grad wie a Crösus,  
So glücklich, rich und froh,  
Doch leider, oft im Läbe,  
Zur Freud, muess z'Unglück cho.

Er wanderet i syr Fieberhascht,  
In eitler Träumerei,  
Bärg uf und ab, es git ke Rascht,  
I Fieber Eili, hei.

Zum Hei, wo uf em Hubel stoht,  
Mit em Brunne, vor em Hus  
Und der Schyterbygi näbe dra,  
Mit Gerania obe druf.

Chüeli weide uf der Alp,  
Saftig Matte, chan er gseh,  
Und düre dunkelgrüne Wald  
Sy liebe Himmelblaue See.

Näbem Hus, das klare Bächli,  
Mit de Bluemeli am Rand,  
Ghört, bätte still sy's Muetterli,  
Für sy's Wohl, im fremde Land.

Ihm rolle Träne über's Gesicht,  
Müed sehnt er sich nach Rued,  
Und z'friede, seit sy letzte Blick,  
Gortlob, i bi daheim.

H.E.

#### SWISS NATIONAL EXHIBITION 1939.

A Swiss National Exhibition will take place at Zurich from May to October 1939. The event is to place "Switzerland on parade" in all its phases and elaborate plans are also being made for the festive entertainment of the visitors. Attractions promised so far will include Gala Concerts by Folk Music Groups and Choirs; a Festival of the Guilds; a Peasants' Day; a Costumes Festival; a "Working-men's Day;" a "Railroad Workers' Day;" a Yodeling Fête; Athletic Contests; Wrestling and Alpine Festivals; Cattle Shows; Horse Shows, etc., also 20 performances of a Festival Play.

During the Exhibition period the beautiful city of Zurich will also be hostess to the following International Congresses, their respective dates still to be determined:

1. International Congress for Therapeutics.
2. International Union for Life Saving and First Aid in Accidents.
3. International Association of Skat-Clubs.
4. International Congress for Documentation.
5. International Congress for Animal Raising.
6. International Congress of Custom-Tailors.
7. International Federation of Scientific Agriculturists; International Congress for Chemical Fattening.
8. International Congress of Shoe Merchants.
9. International Amateur Film Congress.
10. Congress of Continental Advertising League.
11. General Assembly of International Pharmaceutical Federation.
12. International Conference of Retail Dealers in Foodstuffs.
13. International Congress for Psycho-technique.
14. International Congress for Horticultural Art.
15. Congress of Delegates of International Committee for the Uses of Timber.
16. Meeting of the Executive Committee of the International League of Women for Peace and Liberty.

The Exhibition will occupy two extensive park areas on both shores of the lake of Zurich, in closest vicinity to the centre of the city, and it has been planned in such a manner that visitors will always enjoy a view of the lake and the Alps.

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