

The "Swiss Oberserver" thirty years ago

Autor(en): **[s.n.]**

Objektyp: **Article**

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

Band (Jahr): - **(1962)**

Heft 1422

PDF erstellt am: **27.06.2024**

Persistenter Link: <https://doi.org/10.5169/seals-695012>

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THE "SWISS OBSERVER" THIRTY YEARS AGO

On 3rd December the 12th Anniversary Issue of the "Swiss Observer" appeared. On that occasion, "Kyburg" wrote an appeal, "Twelve Years Swiss Observer and Why". In it he quoted Lord Palmerston's words that if Switzerland did not exist it would have to be invented, and that the same thing applied to the Colony's paper. He said that with the birth of the S.O. a great void had been filled and that the Colony should be grateful. "But what of our readers?" he asked, "They, of course, pay a very small subscription which provides them with a weekly tonic for a whole year. Good value, to be sure, but why don't they, in their turn, *do something* for the Swiss Observer? Why do they not write articles for publication, letters to the Editor, etc." The writer goes on suggesting to the readers to find more subscribers as a birthday gift to the S.O.

In the same issue a report in French, covering six columns of the at that time much larger paper, was published on the 76th Banquet and Ball of the City Swiss Club. It gave detailed lists of the many guests and members present, and it was signed "J.Z.". The Editor lingered over that report rather more than is her custom, for on that occasion she herself attended the Banquet as the guest of Mr. Gustave Jenne many still remember so well. She has reason to be grateful, for at the same table she met her husband-to-be.

But back to the S.O. of 3rd December 1932. Monsieur Paravicini, the Swiss Minister, had a letter published which he had written to the "Daily Express" in which he rectified the statements, "Switzerland too rich — choking trade with gold". Also in that issue appeared a report on "Le Grand Bal des 22 Cantons" of the Union Helvetia.

On 10th December a decree by the Federal Council was reported according to which all Communists were to be dismissed from the Civil Service by the end of the year unless they left the party. It was announced that in future no more Communists would be employed in any Government Office.

It was reported that Dr. Armin Daeniker (our country's present Ambassador), who was then in Shanghai, had been appointed Chargé d'Affaires *ad interim* in Tokio.

The issue of 17th December brought a report of one of the worst railway accidents, that of a collision of express trains in the Guetsch Tunnel near Lucerne in which nine people were killed, amongst them a brother of Mr. F. G. Sommer.

A little poem also appeared on that date called "Boebachter — Swiss Observer". It was the present Editor's first contribution to the S.O. and it seems rather strange that she should have written at that time

"... Zeigt guete Gschmack, Ihr Eidgenosse,
Helft em Observer unverdrosse!
Ae vaterländischi Pflicht isch z'schrybe
Und neu Subscribers haere z'trybe.
Bald muess ae jede England-Schwyzler
Durch s'Band weg sy Observer-Bsitzer."

Little did she know that thirty years later she would be responsible for getting The "Swiss Observer" out herself!

On 24th December another annual function was reported which has since been discontinued: The Students' Christmas Dinner and Ball of the Swiss Mercantile Society's College. And again a week later, when a report

appeared on "Old Folks' Christmas Luncheon at the Foyer Suisse". Fifty-two veterans, ladies and gentlemen, were present, and Mr. Stauffer, who reported for the S.O., considered himself a mere youngster amongst them — hardly surprising, seeing how spruce he still is thirty years later!

The last issue of the year ended with the statement that Federal Councillor Motta was retiring after having been President of the Confederation for the fourth time.

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