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THE "SWISS OBSERVER" THIRTY YEARS AGO

On 6th June 1936, the S.O. carried news of a gift of land the Swiss Government had made to the Belgian Royal Family to erect a Chapel in memory of Queen Astrid who had been killed on that spot in 1935. As much as a page of today's size was devoted in that and several following issues to the exploits in Swiss football. A letter from the Zurich Rowing Club was published, thanking the Swiss in G.B. for the collection amounting to over £106. This enabled them to travel to Henley where, as was reported a month later, they were triumphant.

On 13th June, the death was reported of Mrs. Marie Knie, mother of the Brothers Knie of the Swiss National Circus. The issue carried a detailed Swiss Defence Plan for which Parliament had voted £16 million.

The following issue brought news of the beginning of a Swiss Navy — with two new vessels to sail the high seas. In spite of the currency crisis, it was stated that the Swiss franc would not be devalued. The Swiss Salvation Army Band had given a concert in London, and Colony news included a report that Col. Anton Bon was to be the resident director of the Dorchester Hotel in London. The City Swiss Club had held a summer dinner and dance at Brent Bridge under the chairmanship of Mr. P. F. Boehringer. (Please note: inclusive price 6/6d.!)

The issue of 27th June carried the announcement that C. G. Jung had been awarded an honorary doctorate by Harvard University. At the 67th "Fête Suisse" in London, Monsieur Paravicini, Swiss Minister, had addressed a large gathering. Four more prominent Swiss who are no longer with us took an active part in the event, the Rev. Hoffmann-de Visme, the President Mr. A. F. Suter, Pastor Hahn at the organ and Mr. P. Dick conducting the Swiss Orchestral Society.

The first issue in July reported the 20th anniversary of the London Group of the Nouvelle Société Helvétique under their President Mr. A. F. Suter. It was held at the Foyer Suisse and was attended by the presidents of all the London Swiss societies and Monsieur de Jenner from the Legation. Mr. C. Campart gave historic reminiscences and was presented with a wallet as a token of appreciation of the valuable work he was doing for the N.S.H. Other men we like to remember took part in the proceedings: Mr. J. Pfaendler, Mr. T. Ritter and Messrs. Joss and Beckmann.

The following issue brought news of price control in Switzerland, of the Army re-organisation and of the gymnastic team selected for the Berlin Olympics. "Bridle Paths" was the latest book advertised by Tschiffley.

On 18th July we were able to read a long article about "Notre defense nationale". The old-age pensioners at the Swiss Home had been to a successful summer outing — for many weeks they had put 4d. aside to finance it. The birth of a second son to Madame Sophie Wyss was announced.

In the next issue we were informed that the cost of living index in Switzerland had gone up by another 3 points to 130 (100 in 1914). There was a picture of a presentation of a wedding gift on behalf of Swiss societies to Mr. Vincent Paravicini, son of the Minister, and Miss Liza Somerset Maugham. A report in French by Miss Alice Briod "Chronique Nationale" covered several columns of the paper which was twice the size in format from what it is today, though it consisted of only four pages.

A new Swiss-German trade agreement was reported in the first issue in August and a spy trial in Geneva at which three Communists, one of them Swiss, were sentenced. The death of the eminent Swiss veterinary scientist Sir Arnold Theiler was announced. The Editor of the S.O., our dear friend the late Fred Stauffer wrote a patriotic article on the occasion of the Swiss National Day which, in those days was not celebrated officially. The death of Madame de Bourg was announced. Her husband was Counsellor of Legation in London, later to become Minister, and still today one of our faithful subscribers.

On 8th August, we read of the 40th anniversary of the Jungfrau railway. The first results of the Olympic Games in Berlin were reported. A very flattering report "What others think of us" was reprinted from the "Hornsey Journal".

In the following issue we were informed of strict measures taken by the Swiss Government to protect the franc from speculation. Imports and exports had fallen in Switzerland, but the trade deficit had been reduced. The Swiss Federal Railways were cutting the numbers of their staff, and the embroidery industry was on the decline in spite of subsidies.


On 22nd July, a report was published about the arrest of a Swiss "Front" leader for having asked Dr. Goebbels to "Germanise" Switzerland. Three alleged German spies, one of them Swiss, had been arrested, too. Bomb-proof cellars were to be constructed in every Swiss house. More results of the Olympic Games included the defeat of Switzerland's gymnasts by Germany, a mere 3 points ahead out of nearly 700.

The copy of 29th July 1936 is missing in the bound volumes of "Swiss Observers", a previous one having been put in twice by mistake.

BURGLARY AT SHERLOCK HOLMES!

During the weekend, a stranger entered the *Château* of Lucens, housing a museum dedicated to Sir Conan Doyle, "Prince of the Detectives", owned by Sir Adrian Doyle, the son of the author of Sherlock Holmes adventures. Entry was gained by crossing the terrace of the building and breaking a window. However, the burglar was modest in his choice as he ignored the many rare objects and contented himself with forcing a small cash box containing approximately Frs.200.— (about £10.10.0). He was probably surprised to find himself in the sanctuary of the fight against crime and proceeded to a hearty compensation in the kitchen of the castle.

[S.N.T.O.]

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