

Comptoir Suisse

Autor(en): **Stefan, Uli / Bossard, Paul**

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COMPTOIR SUISSE

For the 51st time, the Swiss National Autumn Fair will be opening its gates at the Palais de Beaulieu in Lausanne from September 12th to 27th 1970.

Fundamentally national in structure, a vivid reflection in its 38 sectors of the country's creative activities with its industrial, commercial, agricultural and craft exhibitions, this important economic event prides itself on being at the same time a link between Switzerland and her various trade partners.

Welcomed as guests of honour by the Fair and the Authorities, two official foreign pavilions—those of Chile and Ghana—and an official Swiss guest, the canton of Solothurn, illustrate another role devolving on the Lausanne Fair: that of informing over a million visitors about other activities, other customs, other forms of craft and trades.

Visitors from abroad may obtain all necessary information from Switzerland's official representatives in their country of residence.

"FREE AND SWISS", A NEW SWISS HISTORY IN ENGLISH

The Cultural Attaché at the Swiss Embassy, Dr. Franz Birrer, recently held a reception to mark the edition of a new Swiss history in English. The well-known Swiss history written by Professor Georg Thürer in 1948 on the occasion of the centenary of the first Constitution has been translated into English and its original title of "*Bundesspiegel*" has been changed to the cavalier title of "*Swiss and Free*", (Oswald Wolff, 50s.). This popular work, probably the most widely-read Swiss history besides William Martin's "*Histoire de la Suisse*" now appears in this country as an attractively produced, glossy-jacketed tome with two excellent maps and a complete index.

When one passes a judgment on a translated work, one obviously has to separate the merits of the original author and those of his translators. Saying that a "translation is good" not only spreads the glory on the translators, but also on the author, as a bad book cannot be turned into a good translation, however genial the translators may be.

In this case the worthy translators of Georg Thürer's book, Mr. R. P. Heller and Mr. E. Long have made a truly excellent job and may well have improved on the original. They have drawn on additional sources to fill in the background of Swiss history and have actually had to modernise the style of the book.

As Mr. Heller explained to me, Thürer's work was a somewhat didactic and nationalistic tone. This feature, which was warranted by the circum-

stances in which the book was originally written, had to be toned down in the English edition and this provided the most tricky single difficulty in the work of translation. This rather nationalistic style (reminiscent of official pamphlets on Swiss Democracy) which the translators did their best to avoid does in fact recur in the final chapters of the book. But in the main it is impeccably written and it is impossible to sense the underlying German of the work. The main virtue of this history of Switzerland lies in its conciseness and the judicious choice of facts. This is a book that leaves a clear memory of Swiss history and not just impression or a jumble of unrelated facts.

I was pleased to learn from Mr. Heller, who happens to be a reader of the Swiss Observer, that a piece on "Napoleon and Switzerland" of mine, actually proved useful to him! Speaking of the plunder of Bern by French troops in 1798, Thürer wrote that they took away the "*Wappentiere*". This, our translators would have understood as the city shields bearing the heraldic Bernese bears, whereas it was, as pointed out in the said article, the actual bears which the French took away from their pit to send to Paris!

"*Free and Swiss*" is then a very readable and recommendable work which is certain to please anyone intent on brushing up his Swiss history.

(PMB)

ECUMENICAL GYPSY CAMP IN IRELAND

"7 killed in Belfast—Catholics fight against Protestants in Ireland".

These are the kind of headlines that we have been accustomed to seeing lately, as the world pointed its finger at Northern Ireland and its "religious hypocrites".

The story ran somewhat differently on the 9th page of the *Cork Examiner*, one day in June.

"Swiss tourists show unique Spirit of Ecumenism" read the heading of a report on a holiday camp by the youth of the Swiss Churches in London and the appended photo.

Tourists only? Judge for yourselves. Sixty young Christians—Catholic and Protestants—with their Ministers from the Swiss Church Association in London decided, having passed their English examinations, to spend a holiday in Ireland, to meet its people, to see the country and to prove in a friendly way how ecumenism could work.

In 12 gypsy caravans hired from the Cork Caravan Co. Ltd., displaying the Swiss flag and the flags of the 22 cantons, they wandered through a lovely and peaceful countryside, enjoying wind, rain and bright sunshine. Most of them knew nothing about horses but these well-trained animals showed great sympathy and understanding towards all the au pairs and students. They certainly played a few funny tricks on them and must have had a hearty horse's laugh when they met in the evening in their safely fenced-in pastures as they recounted their stories to each other! Jim, the kind-hearted horse of the "vicarage caravan" had a terrific sense of humour and managed to shake up the Ministers good and proper as he only liked to start off when nobody was expecting it. He would bolt off with a jump, putting the entire household—kettles, cups, plates and even the Ministers upside down. But these shaken men could always rely on the help of some kindly Irish farmer who, with a broad smile, would be ever ready to put things straight again. Neither were there any accidents. Did



*Father Bossard and Pastor Stefan pose in front of the Gypsy Camp.
(by courtesy of the "Cork Examiner")*

these farmers know that they were helping to put a Catholic and a Protestant Minister at their ease? We think they did and enjoyed it.

In the evening at the local pub, they usually came to meet the whole crowd of us. The guitars and happy sing-song in which everybody joined provided the foundations of a good understanding. "Guinness" and "Paddy" were not essential but often joined in as well! How the local population were always pleased when they realised that these young Swiss knew many Irish folksongs, and sometimes better than they themselves! And many accompanied us to our campfire, where the happy singing, enriched with improvised sketches, continued until midnight, to be concluded with a prayer for peace and unity.

The week was too soon over, but the happy memories continue to live deep in these ecumenical services and discussions, in the singing and dancing, in the rich adventure of gipsy life and in the encounter with an extremely friendly people and a country which has so much in common with Switzerland.

One song which expressed the basic feeling of the entire group, "We



Uli Stefan feeding his horse with wholesome oats

shall overcome one day . . . " still haunts the memories of both of us and has made a deep impact on all, as we have heard time and again.

*Pastor Uli Stefan and
Father Paul Bossard*

THE NATIONAL-DAY BEER PARTY AT THE NEW SWISS BIERKELLER

One of the most successful inns in the West End, the *Swiss Bierkeller*, was recently opened in Trafalgar Square. It replaces the former Nerone Lounge and the entrance to its sub-surface beer cave lies at the corner of Whitehall and Charing Cross.

The idea of creating this original kind of tavern, which has since been copied, came as a kind of brainwave to the owners of the Bierkeller's premises, the Shorts Ltd. group of hotels and inns. I spoke to one of its directors at a 1st August function offered to members of the Embassy, the Swiss Press and business—a function lavishly inundated with Swiss wine and fondue—and learnt that the Bierkeller was doing roaringly well and that Shorts had just opened a second Bierkeller in Bedford. Other Bierkellers had sprouted in Central London.

The Swiss Bierkeller in Trafalgar Square faithfully resembles the taverns which line the *Niederdorfstrasse* in Zurich. Beer and songs flow freely. Patrons sit on benches at long wooden tables and rollick in a high atmosphere of accordion music, shimmering lights and Germanic joviality. This is not to say that the Bierkeller is occupied only by continentals. The place has a great success among English youths who account for 70 per cent of business. But the bouncy waitresses are Swiss and German. This was not deliberate policy by the management, but it just happened that the girls flowed in for this employment after having dis-

covered the Bierkeller.

The beer, wine, meat and cheese are exclusively Swiss. Hürlimann, Dreikonigs and Sternbrau have exclusive right of entry. The pint sells at 7 shillings, which is expensive, but this price is well compensated for by the marvellous atmosphere of the Bierkeller. The management's prime aim is to make the place as entertaining and enjoyable as possible.

Among the businessmen present at the Bierkeller's first August beer and fondue reception was Mr. Ken Platss, Hürlimann's man in Great Britain. He was very satisfied with the turn of his business. Hürlimann have now got a firm foothold in the British beer market, which is a remarkable thing considering the relatively high price of a pint of Hürlimann (4 shillings, as compared with a mere 2/6 for a pint of bitter) and the very strong control which the beer giants wield on this country's market. Other foreign beers such as Carlsberg and Tuborg, are well known in England. But they are long established and their position can hardly be compared to Hürlimann's, which stepped in this country as a virtual outsider only two years ago. No other foreign beer can boast such a rapid success. Among the outlets which Mr. Ken Platss has already secured for Hürlimann are the powerful Golden Egg group (which controls Shorts Ltd., Angus Steak House and others), the Playboy Club, the Norwich Mecca Dancing, the Grosvenor Court, The Dorchester, Associated Hotels (comprising the Kensington Palace and the Prince of Wales) the newly opened Inn of the Park in Park Lane, the Weymouth and Devon chain of pubs.

SWISS CHURCH

SERVICES EN FRANÇAIS: à l'Eglise Suisse, 79 Endell Street, W.C.2, tous les dimanches à 11h15 et 19h00.

SAINTE-CENE: le premier et troisième dimanche du mois, matin et soir.

PERMANENCE: chaque jeudi de 15h00 à 18h00.

REUNION DE QUARTIER: huit veillées en automne et au printemps: voir "Le Messager"

CLUB DES JEUNES: tous les dimanches de 12h00 à 22h30, tous les jeudis de 15h00 à 22h30.

REUNION DE COUTURE: le 2^e mardi du mois.

LUNCH: tous les dimanches à 13h00.

VISITES: sur demande.

PASTEUR: A. Nicod, 7 Park View Road, London N.3. Téléphone 01-346 5281.

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SERVICES IN GERMAN: at Eglise Suisse, 79 Endell Street, W.C.2, at 10 a.m. At St. Ann's Church, Abbey Orchard Street, S.W.1. at 7.30 p.m.

HOLY COMMUNION: every first Sunday of the month at evening service only. On major feasts at morning and evening services.

CONSULTATIONS: every Wednesday 4-6 p.m. at Eglise Suisse.

DISTRICT GROUPS (W.4 and S.E.21) and SERVICES OUTSIDE LONDON: see "Gemeindebote".

SERVICES IN ENGLISH: every fourth Sunday at 7.30 p.m.

"KONTAKT" (Youth Group): every Wednesday 4-10 p.m. at Eglise Suisse. Supper at 6.30 p.m. Programme at 8 p.m.

SWISS Y.M.C.A.: see Forthcoming Events.

WOMEN'S CIRCLE: every first Tuesday of the Month.

MOTHERS' REUNION: 1st Wednesday in the Month, 11 a.m. to 4 p.m.

VISITS: by request.

MINISTER: Pfr. M. Dietler, 1. Womersley Road, N.8. Telephone 01-340 6018.

SWISS CATHOLIC MISSION: at St. Ann's Church, Abbey Orchard Street (off No. 25 Victoria Street), S.W.1.

SATURDAYS: Ecumenical Service at 6.30 p.m.

SUNDAYS: Holy Mass at 9 and 11 a.m. (in English).

At 6.30 p.m. (mostly in German)

CONSULTATIONS AND CONFESSIONS: preferably on Wednesdays, Thursdays and Saturdays in the afternoon or by appointment.

SERVICES EN FRANCAIS: Notre Dame de France, 5 Leicester Place, W.C.2. on Suns. at 9, 10, 11 a.m. 12.15, 6, 7 p.m.

SWISS CATHOLIC YOUTH CLUB — Meeting every Sunday after Evening Mass (8-11 p.m.) at Westminster Ball Room, 30 Strutton Ground, S.W.1.

CHAPLAIN: Paul Bossard, St. Ann's Church, Abbey Orchard Street, S.W.1. Tel.: 01-222 2895.