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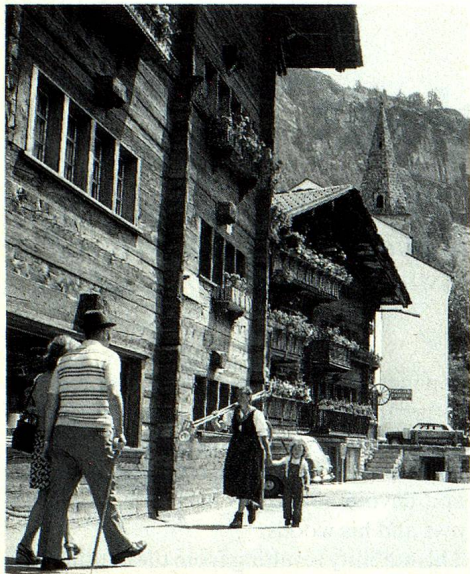
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kers have done little to disturb the traditions. The visitors have, as real connoisseurs, shown great admiration for the taste and skill of the craftsmen of Evolène, courageous and robust mountain dwellers that they are. Their talents are evident in the original exterior decorations of the houses, in their wood carvings, in the charm and beauty of their woven textiles and costumes, their delicate wrought-iron products. Writers, painters, musicians are attracted by the region, and many like to work there. A play by René Morax "La Servante d'Evolène" is famous, and greatly enjoyed in all parts of "French" Switzerland.

Children of the Future

In Evolène, children have to begin their "apprenticeship" to the French language as soon as they start going to school. The aim is to give them a thorough knowledge of both the written and the spoken language. And they have to learn it according to all the rules. The result is that quite often, the inhabi-

tants of this mountain valley speak a purer French than do other "francophone" neighbours in the Valais, whose language is often peppered with regional expressions and the sort of errors that one meets with in a language that has not yet been properly assimilated!

As long as the children continue to talk to one another in "patois", the Evolène dialect will have a future. The members of the Ru-

ral District Council use the dialect in their debates – but the minutes of their meetings have to be written in French.

European unity is highly topical nowadays, and a community such as Evolène will by its unique character make its contribution towards enriching the "Europe of the Regions" just as it already enriches Switzerland by its authentic Alpine culture.

Alain-R. Zuffery

Colloquium at Schloss Lenzburg

Swiss Living in EEC Countries

The fact that Switzerland is not a member of the European Economic Community is causing problems for Swiss who live abroad in EEC countries as non-EEC citizens. These problems were listed and attempts to find solutions to them were discussed at a colloquium arranged by the New Helvetic Society (NHS), the Organisation of the Swiss Abroad (OSA) and the Service for the Swiss Abroad of the Department of Foreign Affairs at Schloss Lenzburg between 9th and 10th June 1989.

At the forefront of these talks, held over two days among representatives from the fields of administration and politics, as well as Swiss people living in EEC countries, were the issues of education and recognition of professional qualifications and study courses, freedom of movement of people, social insurance payments and integration into the political system (political rights and citizenship).

As a result of the creation of the single European market in 1992 and the improved status of EEC foreigners in other EEC states which will result from this, non-EEC foreigners – and among them the Swiss abroad – are now experiencing a form of "passive discrimination" and a deterioration in their situation. One definite problem, which is partially discernible even today, is for example, in the sphere of education (with the recognition of professional qualifications and study courses).

In all the attempts made to find solutions to such problems, it was quite plain to be seen that one of the main problems was that of reciprocity. Nevertheless, it was felt that the Swiss were in no position to address their demands to the EEC but that they should instead examine some of the fundamental stances of their own country. Among the key factors to be considered here are the policy towards foreigners and federalism in education.

Those present also expressed concrete demands in favour of making dual nationality easier to obtain and requested more detailed information about social insurance payments.

A limited edition of the final report of this conference has been published, and copies may be obtained from the Secretariat for the Swiss Abroad. JM



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