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Beloved Aromat

Aromat is impossible to get hold of here in Greece. For fifteen years my mother brought along Aromat for her grandson when she came in Greece, but for the past six years old age has prevented her from making the trip. My sister-in-law has now taken over the task and sends us our beloved Aromat, which by the way is also popular with many of the villagers.

Congratulations on "Swiss Review": it's an example of the "Swiss quality" of which I am very proud, despite having lived abroad for 22 years.

T. GIANNOU-LUSSI,
MOUSTHENI-KAVALA, GREECE

"Look before you leap"

Think what you like of Mr Blocher. Only a few people can still remember the time before 1940. Had we not had Federal Councillors like Messrs Etter and Motta (who were as unpopular in some circles as Blocher is now), Switzerland may well have ended up as part of a united Europe under Hitler. All too many businessmen, mainly operators of medium-sized companies, saw gold behind the swastika.

So, Mr Blocher, if you think it wise to look before you leap, you're in good company.

PAUL MERK,
WINFIELD, B.C. CANADA

Thank you, "Swiss Review"

We enjoy the "Swiss Review" so much and want to say a fervent "Thank you" to you and the staff! Your "Swiss Review" is lovely! We buy it here at "Chapters Book Store" at Bower Mall. The ad in the edition of June 2007 for the Canmore, Alberta, is charming and was a surprise. Canmore is approximately 130 miles southwest of Red Deer and west of Calgary. My friends in Wetaskiwin, Alberta are from Olten and came to Canada 45 years ago.

I have visited Switzerland 10 or 12 times during my 77 years of life. I especially enjoy visits to Geneva and that beautiful lake. Here in Alberta we have the Rocky Mountains and the famous Banff and Lake Louise. Well, thank you for your artistry, "Swiss Review"!

WALTER PRICE,
RED DEER, CANADA

The beloved countenance of the home country

I appreciate the high-quality content and layout of "Swiss Review". Within its covers the Swiss abroad are regularly able to look again upon "the beloved countenance of the home country", despite their cosmopolitan outlook and open-mindedness towards other cultures.

PAULETTE SCHILD,
CANNES, FRANCE

National languages

Since I've been living in Goa, I've been receiving "Swiss Review" from Mumbai exclusively in German; in a fresh, witty style. When I lived in Orissa, "Swiss Review" was sent mainly in English, which I had difficulty understanding and found somewhat alienating. The ability to understand Swiss national languages should be a must for Swiss nationals living abroad. Although there is an online version at www.revue.ch, I hope that you will continue printing "Swiss Review" for many years to come.

GIANCARLO ALBIZZATI,
GOA, INDIA

Forum on home page

It's great to receive "Swiss Review". That way you can stay informed about events back home. It would also be a good idea to have a forum on your homepage.

YOLANDA MARTIN,
BARCELONA, SPAIN

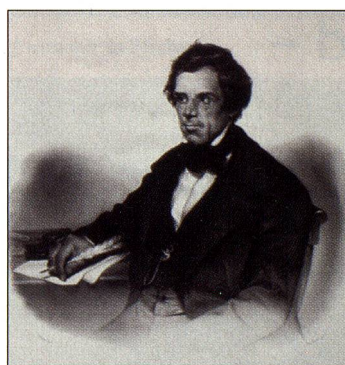
Federal Councillor Stefano Franscini

Stefano Franscini, the first Federal Councillor from Italian-speaking Switzerland, father of Swiss Statistics and founder of the elementary school in his canton, died 150 years ago. The canton of Ticino has organized an exhibition entitled "Stefano Franscini. Le vie alla modernità" (Paths to Modernity), documenting the life and work of this outstanding Ticinese statesman. The eponymous 350-page catalogue in Italian offers readers fascinating insight into 19th-century Ticino and Switzerland.

Born in Bodio in the lower Levantina in 1796, Stefano Franscini lived at a time of sweeping changes: his life began in a federal vassal state, he became a citizen of the central Helvetic Republic in 1798 and of the new canton of Ticino in 1803, and died a member of the federalist Swiss state. His lifetime spanned the conservative restoration (1815), the liberal regeneration (1830) and the civil war (1847), the last armed conflict on Swiss soil.

Due to his poor background, Franscini's only opportunity for higher education was to study for the priesthood, but he left the seminary in order to return to school and study science. In 1827 he published the first comprehensive set of statistics on Switzerland. This was followed shortly afterwards by his three-volume work on Italian-speaking Switzerland, which provided an accurate and still highly readable description of his canton's history and status. In 1847 his "Neue Statistik der Schweiz" (New Statistics on Switzerland) was published. In his anonymously published tract "On the reform of the Ticinese constitution", Franscini paved the way for the liberal movement of 1830. Ticino was the first canton to draw up a free, democratic constitution. Franscini subsequently became state registrar and state councillor for his canton. His educational reforms laid the foundations of the modern elementary school.

Following the foundation of the Swiss federal state, Franscini was elected to Parliament in 1848 and appointed a member of the first Federal Council. He took over the Ministry of Home Affairs, where he was also involved in building up the national statistical office and the education system. In 1854 he failed to be re-elected to Parliament – at that time a prerequisite for appointment to the Federal Council – but remained involved in government after being elected to the National Council by the voters of Schaffhausen.



In 1855 Franscini inaugurated the Federal Institute of Technology, to date the only federal university. Two years later he died unexpectedly in office.

Political and scientific activities were never an end in themselves for Franscini. He believed that statistics were an essential basis for political and economic decisions, and viewed the educa-

tion of the masses as a *sine qua non* of democracy, which relied on emancipated citizens. The exhibition and book provide an informative look at the life and work of this pioneer of liberal thinking.

RENE LENZIN

The exhibition "Stefano Franscini. Le vie alla modernità" is on show at the Villa Ciani in Lugano until 21 October. The catalogue can be ordered online from: www.ti.ch/DECS/dc/temi/franscini/ordinelibroonline.htm