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

Herausgeber: Federation of Swiss Societies in the United Kingdom

Band: - (1938)

Heft: 877

Rubrik: Notes and gleanings

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The Swiss Observer

FOUNDED BY MR. P. F. BOEHRINGER.

The Official Organ of the Swiss Colony in Great Britain.

EDITED WITH THE CO-OPERATION OF MEMBERS OF THE LONDON COLONY.

Telephone: CLERKENWELL 2321/2. *Published every Friday at* 23, LEONARD STREET, LONDON, E.C.2. Telegrams: FREPRINCO, LONDON.

VOL. 15—No. 877 LONDON, 3 SEPTEMBER, 1938 PRICE 3d.

PREPAID SUBSCRIPTION RATES.

UNITED KINGDOM AND COLONIES	3 Months (13 issues, post free)	3/6
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SWITZERLAND	6 Months (26 issues, post free)	Frs. 7.50
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(Swiss subscriptions may be paid into Postscheck-Konto Basle V 5718).

HOME NEWS

(Compiled by courtesy of the following contemporaries: National Zeitung, Neue Zürcher Zeitung, St. Galler Tagblatt, Vaterland, Tribune de Genève and Schweizerische Verkehrszentrale.)

FEDERAL.

AT OUR LEGATION.

The members of our Colony will learn with regret that popular Dr. Rezzonico, Counsellor at our Legation, will leave us shortly to take up a diplomatic appointment at Berne.

M. Alexandre Girardet, at present a vice-director of "Adolf Saurer" in Arbon, has been appointed Secretary of Legation and "Chargé d'Affaires économiques" and will in due course join the London Legation as Commercial Attaché. M. Girardet was born in 1889 in Pully (Vaud) and has already been attached to the Political Department from 1917 to 1929 in whose service he spent some considerable time in Warsaw and Washington.

DIRECTOR BLAU RETIRES.

Director Hans Blau, in charge of the Federal Excise Administration is retiring at the end of this year. He has occupied the present post since 1918 and started his career in the Post Office; he is now 69.

A GRAVE AVIATION ACCIDENT.

On their way to the International Aviation meeting at Lugano, six officers of the Swiss Air Force lost their lives when their machines crashed into the mountain side of the Drusberg and Heuberg in the canton Schwyz. Of the five war-planes which left Dübendorf last Saturday, in beautiful weather, only one reached Lugano, the burned remains of the other four being recovered on Sunday morning after prolonged searching. It is said that the five machines which were flying at an altitude of about 2,500 metres got into a heavy cloud bank when reaching the Muotatal.

The following are the names of the five victims: Lieut. O. E. Stäuble, age 24, from Basle; Lieut. C. A. Ponetti, age 29, from Zurich; Lieut. S. W. Mumenthaler, age 32, living at Heerbrugg (St. Gall); Hans Schlegel, age 27, from Dübendorf; Lieut. F. Delgrande, from Dübendorf and Lieut. G. Romegialli, age 29, from Winterthur.

Two other officers suffered serious though not fatal injuries and are lying in the hospital of Einsiedeln; they are Capt. D. Bacilieri from Locarno and Lieut. H. Sommerhalder from Olten.

PENSION SCHEME OF THE FEDERAL RAILWAYS.

The special commission of the States Council to report on the reorganisation of the Pension Scheme of the Federal Railways has been unable to make any recommendations on account of the non-attendance of its members.

DENMARK RETALIATES ON SWITZERLAND.

Switzerland has recently made a great effort to increase production of milk. The result of this was naturally a falling-off in the imports of milk products, particularly butter.

Denmark, which was one of the largest suppliers of butter to Switzerland, has decided to retaliate by forbidding the import of Swiss watches into Denmark.

LOCAL.

ZURICH.

The late Director Oskar Wagner, of Winterthur, has left 50,000 Francs to charitable institutions.

* * *

After nearly five years' fighting in the courts a member of a local trade union has won his claim against his union; the latter took exception of his joining a political party opposed to the tenets of socialism and blacklisted him, i.e., prevented him from obtaining employment in his particular trade. In a judgment reasoned in about fifty pages the Union is mulcted into the payment of Frs. 1,600 unemployment benefit and Frs. 6,000 damages apart from the considerable costs.

LUCERNE.

Music-lovers had a rare opportunity to hear the renowned Signor Arturo Toscanini conduct his first open-air concert, in the historic garden of the Villa Tribschen, on Thursday and Saturday afternoons 25th and 27th August.

The Villa is famous in music history, for it was there that Richard Wagner composed three of his operas — "Meistersinger," "Siegfried," and "Gotterdämmerung," between 1866-72. Curiously enough, Wagner received the King of Bavaria and Nietzsche on the day when the "Siegfried Idyll" was first performed.

The Concert opened brightly with Rossini's Overture to the Opera "La Scala di Seta." Following this came Mozart's G-minor Symphony; the Prelude to the Third Act of "Meistersinger" and also the "Siegfried Idyll." After a short interval, Beethoven's Second Symphony was performed.

This Concert is of outstanding interest because in addition to the fact that the best soloists in Switzerland were taking part, they were using really valuable old Italian instruments. Among the violins were:— 4 Stradivarius, 1 Guarnerius, 1 Amati, 2 Guadagnini, 3 Gagliano, and 5 Ruggieri instruments.

The combination of a skilled conductor in the highest sense of the word who had a well-trained orchestra at his finger-tips, and the delightful open-air surroundings of the Villa Tribschen on a brilliantly sunny afternoon — offered an exceptionally beautiful treat to all those who were lucky enough to secure admission. All the tickets were sold out before the performances which formed part of the local musical festival.

BASEL.

The socialist party has collected 15,300 signatures in their efforts to induce the town council to prohibit foreign fascist organisations in the canton.

SCHAFFHAUSEN.

Regierungsrat Dr. Otto Schärrer died at the age of 62 after a lengthy illness. Studying for law, he was appointed District-Attorney in Zürich. In 1914 he returned to Schaffhausen where he became interested in municipal administration. At the end of 1928 Dr. Schärrer was elected to the Regierungsrat.

LAUSANNE.

Germany has appointed an honorary consul for the cantons of Vaud and Neuchâtel, with residence in Lausanne.

NOTES AND GLEANINGS.

By KYBURG.

Storm clouds over Europe: While I am writing these lines, the paper boys are selling their "thrillers" and exhibiting placards with more than usually lurid lines, such as "Hitler on the French Frontier," "German Ambassador at the Foreign Office," "Czech Minister seeing Halifax," etc., all tending to stir up that feeling of anxiety which is so good for our souls and our business!

It seems a good time to think of holidays. To make preparations enabling one to leave everything connected with the daily business routine behind for a while, to get away from the daily newspapers, the fantastical headlines, the one-sided articles, which slowly but surely instil the poison of war psychology into man's heart until he is not in the least surprised when one fine morning he wakes up and reads that war has actually started over night.

Millions and millions would be able to tell each other "I told you so" and gather what consolation they could from the fact that their reading of events to come had been correct.

I dare say, it has nearly always been something like this. Even the niggers in darkest Africa are able, through their drums, to exhibit a tendency in scattering information among their brethren and so prepare them, psychologically for the "inevitable." Inevitable my hat!

It is the ordinary man, you and I, who prepare for war, because we have not got the guts to prepare for peace. War is always the result of taking the line of least resistance, however paradoxical this may seem. Think it out and tell me if I am wrong!

Enough. I do not believe that war will come, in any case not for a long time yet and meanwhile I am going to have a week's rest somewhere in a very remote and to most people quite unknown spot on the wildest part of the coast of Norfolk and there I shall look over the Sea if it's fine, do a spot of fishing, but mostly dream away the idle hours and think what a wonderful, lovely world this might be, but for man, the Lord of the Creation! sez you!! Nay, not even Golf during that blessed week. Nothing but idle, lazy hours, light food, light beer and, I hope, deep dreamless sleep.

Storm Clouds of another character gave rise to the following article in the "Evening Times" of Glasgow, on August 20th, entitled:

A Storm in the Alps:

"You will be foolish," said the proprietor of the gasthaus, "to travel to-day — and over the Splugen Pass. . . !" He shrugged and pointed to the window. "It will be like that for 12 hours more."

For 12 hours already the rain had descended over, surely, the whole of Switzerland. Nothing was to be seen but rain — rain in sweeping, drenching curtains; rain roaring down the roads, cataracting from the chalet eaves, bursting from the unseen mountains in vertical rivers.

"We have to be in Italy this afternoon," we explained.

The proprietor shrugged again. "To find the sun?" he inquired sardonically.

"Yes," we said, "just that."

And we set off.

At the best of times the Splugen Pass is a sombre journey, a route of hair-raising serpentines, twisting from the awful gorge of Viamala up, up, and up through desolate peaks and plateaux until nearly 8,000 feet above the sea it reaches that place where Switzerland and Italy meet in the snow and ice.

To-day it was a lugubrious prospect, given even two souls intent upon sunshine and a willing, stout-hearted little car which thought nothing of London to Land's End in the day.

Like End of World.

We entered the Viamala. Rock walls hemmed the road in, rose perpendicularly a thousand feet on either side. The rock walls were curtained with falling water. In the gorge itself the river, swollen with the onslaught from the sky, hurled itself valleywards with a thunder like the end of the world.

No other car passed. Only a great grey camion, laden with Alpine troops, came sloshing through the road which was a river in itself, sounding a horn like a bugle. It looked an unhappy load, and it at least was going down.

There was never so much rain in the world at once. Even the gloom of the Viamala seemed like a shelter when we had left it for the open pass, where the air smelled of ice and rock and the sparse pines streamed water from their finger ends and there was nothing to be seen but blue-grey cloud and two hundred yards of climbing, gushing, pot-holed road.

A finger-post announced "1500 metres," which was something, even if something meant over 3,000 feet yet to climb. There was a faint hope that we might get through the clouds into sunshine, but it vanished at 2,000 metres, where a torrent of water deluged over the road and two people from the window of a sodden chalet looked in gloomy amazement at obvious foolhardiness.

The village beyond seemed to crouch round its cobbled street and bridge, water cascading from its wooden eaves. Most amazing thing was to calculate that scarcely a house must hold its occupants, for a full hundred and fifty people sheltering as best they might under gigantic umbrellas, lined the

bridge itself and the banks of the shallow gorge it crosesd.

Right in the Thunder.

As we reached the bridge the world seemed to rock, the very Alps to split with the sudden bellow of thunder. It was not thunder from above, but thunder right alongside — we were in it. And with the thunder the rain came down as though a trap-door beneath a reservoir had been opened. Everything was blotted from sight but the waiting people, the bridge, a hundred yards of the gorge.

We stopped. A man, tapping on the window, gesticulated, pointed to the gorge. Everyone was craning toward it, and with the third thunder clap the thing hapened.

What had been a torrent flowing over a boulder strewn bed became in a fraction of a second a roaring chaos. It was not water alone which spouted down that gorge, but mud — it was pure mud, dark brown gobbets, spurts, cataracts of mud, and with the mud came stones, boulders, rocks large as henhouses, which jolted downwards, grinding and crashing in that filfthy flood.

We were, we understood, privileged to behold this horrid spectacle — it happened with such violence only once, perhaps, in three years.

On to the Miracle.

We left it. Within an hour we were within a quarter of a mile of the summit, still in blinding rain, driving up a veritable river bed, shivering with cold, to Splugen, on to the frontier, to the miracle.

It was a miracle, that abrupt cessation of the downpour, that positive demarcation of the elements that ocurred. For as we topped the very summit of the pass a sunbeam winked on our dripping radiator, the clouds swept back, ice-white peaks arose in flawless blue, and down below us basking in veritable sunshine, was Italy.

C. G. G.

I hope that the concluding sentence of the above is an omen for us all " Italy basking in the sunshine " and that Europe may enjoy such sunshine, politically speaking, without having to witness first the devastations of the Storm!

Among the Press Cuttings I find one which has slipped among the *Swiss* cuttings on a/c of the sorter not being very familiar with History or Geography, or, perhaps, because he feels like me that political frontiers are anachronisms and absurd. Anyhow, as I wrote about the perils of the Alps last week, this article:

Pigeons Help in Alpine Rescues, " The People," August 21st, is of interest:

Carrier pigeons are to be used in Alpine rescue work in Bavaria.

The birds will take news from rescue parties to other organisations in the valley. The pigeon is held to be superior in some circumstances to every other method of communication, whether by signal, telephone or short-wave radio.

The value of the pigeon in Alpine rescue work was demonstrated recently when a German soldier fell over a precipice in the Traunstein range. Within a few minutes of the discovery of his body a carrier pigeon released by the searchers flew to the military post, from which a stretcher party could be sent.

The new pigeon service has been organised by the " Deutsche Bergwacht," an unofficial Alpine rescue organisation. — B.U.P.

Some highly gifted " peacemongers " will surely realise at once that the above mentioned Alpine rescue organisation is preparing their pigeons for war purposes! Go and hide yourself!

It is difficult to get away from the Mountains when writing about Swiss affairs and the Via Mala storm description finds a worthy counterpart in the following:

Fall of Big Ice Wall in Switzerland," " The Times," 24th August:

It is announced that the pass leading to the Hüfi Hut (7,670ft.) in the Maderanertal (Canton Uri) has been partly destroyed by the fall of an ice wall. An overhanging part of the glacier situated between the western and north-western ridges of the Düssistock (10,703ft.), suddenly collapsed on a length of about 200 yards and fell down a rock wall 900ft. high. No great damage was done as the ice fell into a lonely glen and covered it to a depth of about 3ft. over an area of nearly 3,000 square yards.

Which, when reading it, reminded me of an ascent of the Guggi-Hütte I made, some 35 years ago, when our party was accompanied by two guides who, when we asked the risks of ice avalanches expressed themselves as very sceptical of one falling across our path. But we had hardly reached the Guggi-Hütte, when down below, exactly across the way we had come, a mighty ice avalanche fell. When, later on we re-passed the spot, ice blocks as large as bungalows were strewn right across it and our guides, protesting they had never heard of one falling there, were rather upset about it all. However, we thought it very interesting!

Most of us will know how eagerly we flock to the Cinema whenever there is a picture showing Alpine Scenery on view, such as the great film picturing the Piz Palu. A rather interesting bit of news is contained in the following:

Swiss Making Documentaries, " Cinema," 24th August:

The Swiss Office of the Development of Trade is producing a documentary " Les Richesses de la Terre " which is to be used as an agricultural and economic propaganda film in Switzerland and abroad.

In addition to " Fusilier Wipf " (Praesens-Film A.G. Zurich), which is an adaptation of a novel by the Swiss author Robert Fausi, and which has been produced in Switzerland, with Swiss artists in the various rôles, the Aktionskomittee Berg-und Heimatfilm has just finished a film the action of which takes place on the south face of the Diablerets, and which brings into contrast the simple native of this region and the foreign tourist.

Many special documentaries are being prepared for the 1939 National Exhibition to be held at Zurich .

It is hoped that the Arsenal F.C. will entertain the Swiss Eleven who beat them on that memorable occasion at Zurich, shortly. Whatever the result of the coming match at Highbury will be, I hope both sides will play their best and that luck will favour our men just a wee bit! But our men in Switzerland are gaining laurels in other sports as well and a great victory was won by Armand Hug, as you will read:

Swiss Driver Wins Prix de Berne:

The Swiss driver, Armand Hug, in a Maserati, won the Prix de Berne here to-day at an average speed of 131.024 kilometres an hour (80.139 miles an hour). His time was 1hr. 10min. 5/8sec. The Italian, Ettore Bianco, also driving a Maserati, was second in 1hr. 11min. 40sec. Third and fourth were the British drivers, John Wakefield and Lord Howe. Wakefield, in an E.R.A., covered the course in 1hr. 11min. 41 8-10sec., and Lord Howe, also in an E.R.A., took 1hr. 12min. 8-10sec.

From Motor-Racing to

Cleaniness in the Kitchen is a great step, you might think, although one could easily demonstrate the opposite, seeing that a Motor Racer must be fed very carefully if he is to withstand the enormous strain made on him during the race. However, says the " Irish Times " 19th August:

If cleanliness in the kitchen were the prerogative of those rich people who can afford the most expensive labour-saving devices, then we who cannot afford them would have occasion to be very sorry for ourselves! But, luckily for us, cleanliness and modesty of equipment can easily go hand in hand. I have had proof of this recently while travelling through Switzerland, where the kitchens of the little inns where I have stayed have been bright, with spotless lustre jugs and shining rows of pans, with gay tiled stoves, neat shelves and dazzling hearthstones.

I remember once touching the cover of a table in order to discover the secret of its snowy whiteness. " Why!" I exclaimed, " it is greaseproof paper."

" Yes," said my hostess, looking up from a delicious-looking preparation of vegetables, " do you know it at all in England?"

And when I told her that, although I used it a lot myself, it surprised me to find it in a little country inn in Switzerland, she was so amused that she proceeded to show me many other ways in which she used it to preserve the cleanliness of her kitchen. There was a fragrant line of wild herbs, hanging from a shelf, each bunch in a wrapping of greaseproof paper. A little larder with a network door had, in front of it, a sheet of wet greaseproof paper for coolness' sake: this was changed every day. " Oh, yes," said the mistress of this spotless domain, " in this country greaseproof paper is very important to the housewife."

And I proceeded to tell her, in exchange, how I use it in my kitchen in London. How my dustbin is lined with it, to save scrubbing. How I wrap all my fresh and cooked foods in it before putting them away in the larder. I told her, too, that when I have some pastry left over from baking day I wrap it in greaseproof paper, and it keeps quite fresh for a week or more.

So that when we parted we were both very much wiser than we had been when we met.

And, although I am not likely to suggest that any of my readers might learn something from the above, I confess I read it with interest. Anything that goes towards improvement in the catering business interests me and ought to interest you too.

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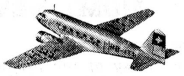
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Finally I have earmarked an article for publication if there is room, which might have come right at the beginning. I do not myself know much about the so-called "Oxford-Movement" of Dr. Frank Buchman, except that the Dons at Oxford dislike it being called after their University and, perhaps rightly so, if it is true that "Oxford is the home of lost causes" as has been said long ago. However, the article reads easily and somewhat leisurely and yet acquaints us with much that we ought to know.

The Way of the World: "Manchester Evening News," 20th August:

Two men who want to change the world sat at lunch with me in one of London's most pleasant summer-time restaurants, an awning-shaded terrace overlooking the Embankment and the sweep of the Thames at Westminster.

Basil Yates was once a university lecturer in ethics; Kenneth Belden, son of a famous Noncomformist preacher, came down from Oxford a few years ago with an M.A. degree and ideas of becoming a school-master. Now both are spending their whole time in carrying on the work of the Oxford Group.

Belden's particular field is the South Coast and Yates travels a good deal about the country, though at present he is busy with the Group's new publication, "Live Wires."

Both look upon Dr. Frank Buchman, who was once a Lutheran pastor in the United States, as the prophet of to-day. They believe with him that the only hope for mankind is "God-control." They want to see a world dictatorship.

Chemist Was "Changed."

It takes time to get used to the jargon of the Oxford Group. Yates talked of a chemist who had been "changed" and thereupon refused to fob off his customers with some other preparation on the grounds that it was "just as good."

Belden referred to Scandinavian statesmen having a "quiet time" before they made pronouncements of national importance.

John Wesley called it "conversion" and Bramwell Booth "being saved." Buchman has just put the idea into modern dress.

There is no more ardent spirit of nationalism, even in Germany, than in the Oxford Group, but the armies Buchman wants to create are what he calls "life-changers." You can't have war, he says, if you have complete honesty, love, and unselfishness between nations.

That is no new thought. The difference is that Buchman is putting it over with modern methods, with marching songs, banners flying, and propaganda on the grand scale.

Union Jack and Swastika.

Last year the Oxford Group rally in Holland was hailed as the biggest "spiritual front" demonstration in history. A hundred thousand people poured into Utrecht, the Union Jack flew side by side with the Swastika and Nazi storm-troopers marched with young men of France.

In the great market hall they held a midnight meeting for waiters and transport workers who could not get away during the day The place was crowded. It was a remarkable demonstration of a religious revival that is going on without dogma.

The Group is now established in 60 countries. Foreign Ministers of two or three European nations are among its supporters. "I see more hope for reconstruction and peace in international relationships through the Oxford Group than anywhere else in the world to-day." That was said by the Hon. C. J. Hambro, President of the Norwegian Parliament.

Mr. Ernest Brown our own Minister of Labour, has expressed similar views.

All on Equal Footing.

In the beautiful Alpine centre of Interlaken, high in the Bernese Oberland, leaders of the group from all parts of the world will gather in a fortnight for another conference. Statesmen, trade union leaders, mechanics, business men and clerks will meet on an equal footing. There will be a Manchester doctor in the party from England.

It has been suggested that they should later go to Geneva to have talks with the delegates to the League of Nations Assembly which opens on September 12. Unfortunately the nations which are at present causing most concern in Europe are not members of the League. They seem to prefer a more material form of dictatorship.

Harnessed Dogs.

Interlaken, set between the two lakes of Thun and Brienz and overshadowed by the ice-bound Jungfrau range — a refreshing sight on a hot day — is an ideal place for a conference. There are few lovelier resorts in Switzerland, and none with a more impressive background.

There you can see dogs harnessed to little milk carts, and wood-carvers following their ancient and still profitable craft. There is (though I do not suppose it will interest the groupers) a Casino with gardens that will compare with any of their kind in Europe.

Interlaken is so high that it upsets your sense of proportion. A popular afternoon outing is to ascend the Harder by the funicular railway.

You can get tea at the top (if you insist on taking the risk) and admire the grandest view of the Alps in the district. It is only when you look at the map afterwards that you realise you have been 800 feet higher than the summit of Snowdon.

A Scientific Story.

Some of the best scientific stories are not told at the British Association meeting. They have not time enough to tell them all, anyway, which is a pity, for people hear all too little of what science is doing to-day.

One day a woman walked into the consulting-room of a doctor friend of mine and complained that she had an intermittent noise in her ear which was keeping her awake at night.

"It is a tapping which stops for a time and then goes on again," was how she described it.

The doctor examined her ear and found it perfectly healthy. Then as he was peering down his auriscope he saw a tiny insect walking slowly across the drum. The noise that had been worrying the woman was the sound of the insect's footfalls.

The problem was how to get rid of the intruder. You can hardly try the swatting-the-fly method on such a delicate organ as the ear-drum. The doctor solved it by the use of surgical spirit, but to his disappointment the insect disapeared altogether.

He is still wondering what it was. His patient had no further curiosity.

Strange Sights of London.

Some of the strangest sights of London are not described in any guide book. Whether you ever see them is a matter of luck. The night the big new revue, "The Fleet's Lit Up," opened at the Hippodrome there was the usual crowd on the pavements at the corner of Cranbourn-street and Charing Cross Road to watch famous stars of the stage and screen arrive.

As each car drew up the people pressed forward to see if they could recgonise its occupants. Most of them missed the best sight of all.

While the commotion was going on a policeman waved past the theatre a battered saloon car which carried on its luggage rack, firmly secured by ropes, an old and obviously well-used garden wheel-barrow.

After the show, as I was walking up St. Martin's Lane, wondering whether it had been an enthusiastic gardener going on holiday, there came out of a darkened side-street a string of a dozen horses — circus horses they seemed to be. For some minutes they threaded their way through the homeward-bound theatre traffic and then disappeared into the outskirts of Bloomsbury.

The solitary rider behind them made no response to the curious glances of passers-by. He went on as imperturbably as one of the Four Horseman of the Apocalypse.

P.S. — I hope the last word of the above is not an omen of "things to come!"

Proposal to Change Ships' Names.

I have applied to the Board of Trade, under Section 47 of the Merchant Shipping Act, 1894, in respect of the undermentioned ships, namely:—

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Any objections to the proposed changes of names must be sent to the Registrar-General of Shipping and Seamen, Tower Hill, London, E.C.3, within seven days from the appearance of this advertisement.

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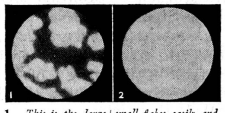
Managing Director.

"And make me a good boy"

When baby seems to be slipping backward instead of coming on, Nestlé's Milk will take him in hand when everything else has failed. Simply because it is milk in a form which a baby stomach can keep down and digest completely. The most delicate little system responds to Nestlé's Milk. Times without number a fretful wasting infant has turned into a picture of healthy contentment.

CURDS – *and why*



1. This is the large indigestible curd which fresh cow's milk forms in the baby stomach.
2. And this is the fine soft curd formed by Nestlé's Milk. Light, small flakes, easily and rapidly digested. All the cream and goodness of rich farm milk is changed into sturdy flesh and bone—without any trouble at all.

NESTLÉ'S MILK

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