

As others see us...

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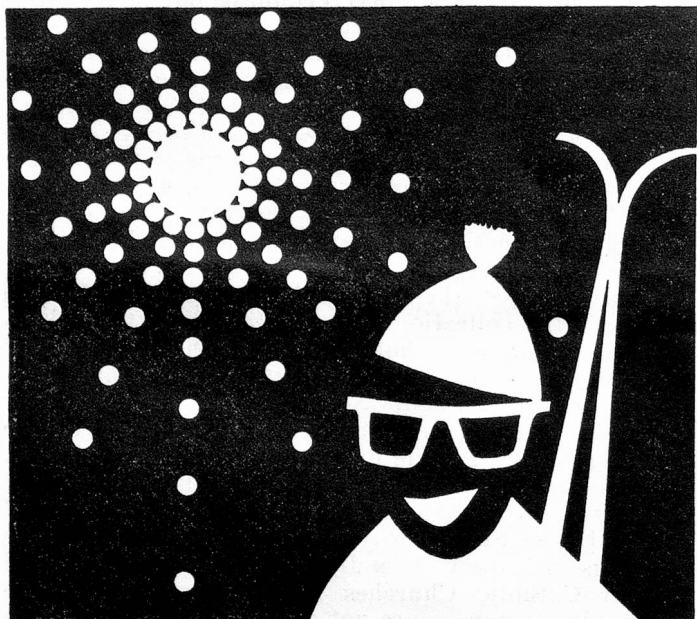
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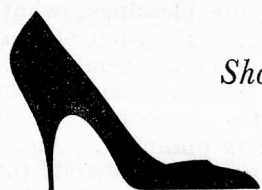
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AS OTHERS SEE US . . .

As it is part of my professional duty to read a good many English newspapers and periodicals, I often come across things said about Switzerland and the Swiss as a race. Most of these utterances contain praise, sometimes so much that it is almost embarrassing to quote it all back to Switzerland!

Occasionally I also come across bits and pieces which are not so flattering, as was the case recently when the "Sunday Times" published an article by Ian Fleming which has had quite considerable repercussions.

Very recently a new weekly magazine has come on to the market, called "Weekly Post", under the Chairmanship and Editorship of Sir John Hulton. One of the regular contributors is a well-known personality in Fleet Street, the Earl of Arran. During the second world war he served for about 15 months in the Press Department of the (then) British Legation in Berne and was widely known amongst journalists as Boofy Gore. He is, I should add, both a witty and a most likeable personality. But this week, he has, I would be inclined to say, gone a little too far, with the following paragraph:

"I have had many arguments in my life about which is the ugliest race. Nearly always the finalists have been the Czechs and the Swiss (the Dutch, who resemble their own cheeses, come next). Usually it has been a drawn game, but it is worth adding that the Swiss also reach the semi-finals at least in the competition for the most unwashed nation. English people tend to judge them by the whiteness of their snow and the greenness of their grass, but having lived among them for fifteen unhappy months I know that they hardly ever have a bath.

"When it comes to the cup for the ugliest women, I give the French a walk-over. As a divine compensation, they have been granted the gift of chic, and this with their brilliant sense of dress and make-up enables them to get by without anyone realising just how ill-favoured they are. Call me insular if you will, but after considerable experience of European countries I am sure that the British are the cleanest race and British girls the prettiest."

Of course, the author is entitled to his opinion. Nor would I disagree with him that British girls can be very pretty indeed. I feel extremely sorry for him if his 15 months in Switzerland were unhappy. But as for his assertion that the Swiss are an unwashed nation, I venture to say that this is arrant nonsense coming from the Earl of Arran. (Or should I have said: "Lord Arran, your nonsense is barren"?)

Gottfried Keller.

OUR NEXT ISSUE

Our next issue will be published on Friday, 25th November 1960. We take this opportunity of thanking the following subscribers for their kind and helpful donations over and above their subscription: G. Reubi, M. Heiling, W. Deutsch, J. J. Wetter, W. W. Landauer, H. Monney, Swiss Club Manchester, Adrien Rueff, L. S. R. Asch.