

New look

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NEW LOOK

A paper can perhaps be compared to a woman since we like to have them both around, and, in the sense that no woman likes to wear the same dress continually, so too must a paper occasionally change its fashion.

Since its foundation in 1919 the Swiss Observer has almost remained the same, with the exception of the change in size which took place in about 1940. One may, of course, venture to say that it is this insistent conservatism which is the basis of its long and successful life. However, as much as I am a conservative at heart, I still maintain that we must live with our times, although, of course, this does not imply that the 1961 way of life is at all superior to any period in history.

* * *

As the new editor, I was recently asked to write about my plans for the Swiss Observer. The reader has perhaps already noticed the ways in which I intend



The Swiss flag flies across the seas.

to carry on Mr. Stauffer's duties. Without pretending to the vast knowledge my predecessor possesses about the Swiss colony, I will try to give more importance in our columns to feature stories and reports of general interest. But, as in the past, the Swiss Observer will carry on its Home and Commercial News, and other regular features which we know to be much appreciated.

Of course, we can never make of this paper an organ of such large circulation as to be capable of competing with British magazines, but, nevertheless, by developing the editorial side we believe that more Swiss and English people will soon find the Swiss Observer an indispensable friend.

* * *

In this issue we publish a double-page feature about the Swiss Navy, a subject long ridiculed by many who thought a mountain country like ours could never send its boys on the high seas. This article is in French, and is based partly on a book recently published in Neuchâtel. We have on the other hand the regular and excellent Cronaca Nostrana in Italian. Well, to put all our four national languages "on the map", so to speak, we have still to include German and Romansch, and I hope to fill this gap soon.

There are quite a large number of aspects of the national life of Switzerland which are comparatively unknown to the British people — and only too often to the Swiss residing in Great Britain. At present, for instance, Mr. Bonvin is carrying on a welcome and sympathetic fight in favour of our wines, some of which are entirely unique. But how many people have heard of our young contemporary poets? And what about our literature — our great, immortal Ramuz for example? Who remembers that Albert Skira, the world-famous art book publisher, was born in Switzerland? Our watches are well known enough, but who knows about the daily life in a small watch-makers' community?

As you see, dear reader, we shall have plenty to talk about.

* * *

A paper such as ours strictly depends on the faithfulness of its readers; therefore, I hope readers will co-operate and let me know just how they like their paper as the new look begins to take shape. And I may add that all criticism, whether favourable or adverse, is very welcome.

P. H.