

The "Swiss Oberserver" thirty years ago

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THE "SWISS OBSERVER" THIRTY YEARS AGO

On 1st October 1932 it was reported that unemployment in Switzerland stood at 47,000, more than twice as high as in the previous year. There was also an article on the critical economic situation at home. The same issue reported unpleasant incidents which had occurred on the Italian-Swiss border which necessitated intervention by the Swiss Government. The description of the 20th Gordon-Bennett Balloon Race in Basle was given and a long report by Joan Woolcombe on "The Swiss Way with Criminals" (Scientific Police Institute). The speech given by Federal Councillor Pilet-Golaz at the banquet of the Journée Protestante Genevoise was reproduced *in extenso* (in French).

The issue of the following week had it that a new way up the Matterhorn had been discovered. It also told of the inauguration of the Handek Station on the Grimsel. Dr. P. Dinichert was to be the new Swiss Minister to Germany and would be presenting his credentials to President Hindenburg shortly. In the same number, Nicolas Wood, M.A., wrote an article, "Is Modern Education preparing for War?"

On 15th October it gave news of Federal Councillor Musy's appointment as member of the Commission of Experts for the World Economic Conference. A petition signed by 37 M.P.s and 170,000 electors had been sent to Federal President Motta to move the League of Nations Assembly on behalf of the "tens of thousands of Christians now enduring persecution, barbarism and slavery in Russia".

In a lighter vein, the issue gave statistics which had shown the average height of Swiss soldiers to have increased from 5 ft. 3 $\frac{3}{4}$ inches to 5 ft. 4 $\frac{1}{2}$ inches in a quarter of a century.

With nostalgia and with her mouth watering the Editor read an advert by Mr. O. Bartholdi of Charlotte Street that "Blut- und Leberwürste" would be on sale every Tuesday afternoon during the winter months. If only they still were!

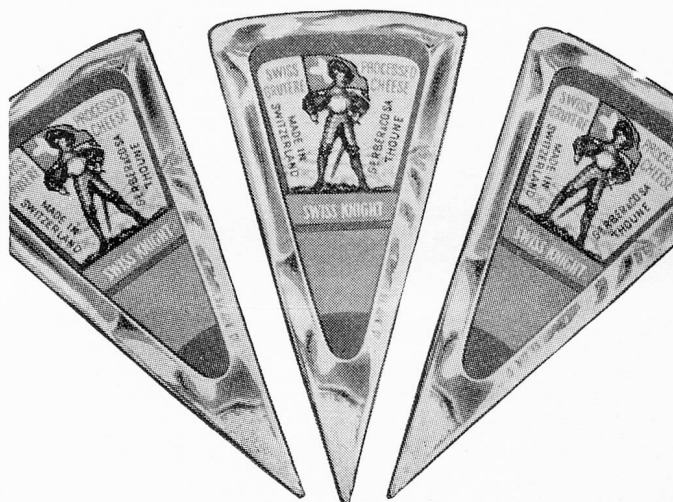
The issue of 22nd October reported a great achievement due to Swiss charitable initiative in the creation of "Le Home Internationale" at Alexandria.

The first regular Ticinese contributor Mrs. Elena Ghiringhelli-Lunghi wrote an article in Italian. It is gratifying to think that her family is keeping up the tradition—her brother-in-law took over when she gave up in March 1949. He is our regular contributor of the *Notiziario della Svizzera Italiana*, "Poncione di Vespero", known to us as Mr. J. Eusebio.

The last issue of October 1932 gave a reprint from the "Yorkshire Herald" called "The Spies in Switzerland". It also announced the death of Madame Hoffman-de Visme, wife of the well-remembered pastor of the Swiss Church in London. There was a report of the serious financial crisis of the Secretariat of the Swiss Abroad in Berne.

One of the advertisements announced a lantern lecture on "The Life of the Bees" at the Foyer Suisse in Upper Bedford Place, to which every Swiss girl was welcome. The Editor wonders how many attended, or perhaps in those days young Swiss girls in London had different interests from to-day!

Another advertisement which reminds us that times have changed is that of Pagani's Restaurant in Great Portland Street, where so many of the meetings of Swiss societies took place, where the food was superb and a sumptuous dinner cost 5/-.



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