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THE "SWISS OBSERVER" THIRTY YEARS AGO

On 7th November 1936, we learned that the Swiss Government had decreed the confiscation of all Communist and revolutionary literature. There was a reprint from the "Field" of an article "Alpine Accidents of the Past Season" (Disasters due to Bad Luck and Bad Management).

The next issue carried a reprint from "Reynold News" about the new Swiss Navy — "end of the world's most famous joke". There was the announcement of Dr. H. W. Egli's marriage to the London actress Miss Selma Vaz Dias.

On 21st November, we read that the Swiss Government had banned two anti-Nazi books "which would have disturbed good international relations". There was also a report on the Golden Jubilee Dinner of the Union Helvetia under the chairmanship of its President, Mr. P. Lehrian (nearly 200 participants).

The last issue of the month contained a report on the "Gruetli" Celebration of the Swiss Club in Manchester, with Mr. E. Kuebler in the chair and the Swiss Minister and Madame Paravicini as guests of honour.

In the first issue in December, there was an advertisement by the Swiss Hotel Plan "All-in Winter Sports" for £8.9.0 and no extras, including rail fare, some meals on the journey, ski-ing lessons and hire of skis, insurance and a reduction of 6/- "if the daily bath is not required". The late Mr. P. F. Boehringer had chaired the eightieth Banquet and Ball of the City Swiss Club, and the report covered over four pages (twice today's size!) of the S.O., including a detailed list of everybody present. The striking thing on the by now somewhat faded photograph is that every man wore a dress suit with white tie. There was also an advert for a shave and brush up costing 6d. and a hair cut 9d., and the same Mr. Brun of Fraser's put three dressing rooms at the disposal for men who had to change for dinner — charge 1/-.

The new President of the Confederation had been elected for 1937 in the person of Federal Councillor Giuseppe Motta. Also on 19th December we read about the Annual Concert and Ball of the Unione Ticinese, the Escalade Dinner of the London Genevese and a lecture at the Swiss Mercantile Society by Prof. E. Allison Peers on "Spain today and the Civil War".

The last issue of 1936 carried a long report on the Swiss Mercantile Society's Students' Christmas Dinner and Ball at the Prince's Galleries. The report was accompanied by the picture of the Chairman, the late Mr. Walter Meier, one of the youngest Swiss chairing an important Colony event at that time — 29 years old. How well some of us remember!

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CHAPLAIN: Rev. Joseph Scherer, St. Ann's Church Abbey Orchard Street, S.W.1. Tel.: ABBey 2895.