

Swiss Panorama - a new Classic

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AN ELECTRONIC CLOCK IN GENEVA

A public electronic clock has just been installed on the Quai des Bergues in Geneva (Switzerland). It is only the third clock of this kind to be installed in the world; the first was on show at the New York World Fair and the second at the Swiss National Exhibition in Lausanne. This electronic clock, manufactured by a well-known watch-making firm in Geneva, has four dials indicating the time to the nearest tenth of a second, by means of neon tubes operated electronically; the mechanism is controlled by a quartz clock, with a daily precision exceeding one hundredth of a second. The system in itself is not new, but the clock set up in Geneva is the first ever to be used to indicate the time to the public.

[O.S.E.C.]

THE SWISS GENERAL POST OFFICE AND TECHNICAL CO-OPERATION

For the second time the Swiss General Post Office has organized, under the auspices of the Confederation's Technical Co-operation Scheme, a special five months course attended by fourteen postal supervisors and officials from the Republics of Congo-Leopoldville, Guinea, Mali and Togo. After eleven weeks' theoretical instruction, the African post office officials were initiated into organization and working methods in various post offices and the three district head offices of French-speaking Switzerland, as well as the head office of the Swiss General Post Office in Berne. They returned to their own countries at the end of September.

[S.N.T.O.]

SWISS WATCHMAKING IN SOUTH-EAST ASIA

The Federation of Swiss Watchmakers Associations in Bienne has decided to open a Centre for Watchmaking Vocational Training in Hong Kong in the very near future. The setting up of this centre answers an urgent need for close co-operation between the watchmaking trade in South-East Asia and the Swiss Watchmaking Industry. The main aim of this new school will be to ensure proper after-sales service of Swiss watches, first of all by enabling watch repairers resident in Hong Kong to brush up their technical knowledge by means of evening courses, and second by training new recruits who will later take over from their elders. In addition, as from this autumn, a permanent commercial representative of the Swiss watchmaking industry will be domiciled in Hong Kong to provide information about the watchmaking industry and promote Swiss watches on this market.

[O.S.E.C.]

THE SWISS CHEMICAL INDUSTRY IN ARGENTINA

The Argentina subsidiary of Ciba Ltd., the well-known Basle chemical and pharmaceutical products factory, has for several years now been producing various resins as well as a range of products for textile uses in its factory "km. 37". This factory has just started operating with its new plant for the manufacture of epoxide resins known as Araldite; the present annual output is in the neighbourhood of 300 tons a year. In this way, the Swiss firm will be in an even better position to satisfy the demands of a big South American market.

[O.S.E.C.]

SWISS PANORAMA — A NEW CLASSIC

In the last issue of the "Swiss Observer", a new book was advertised which I have found so fascinating that it is with the greatest pleasure I wish to recommend it most heartily once again.

The original idea of the book was conceived by Hans Kasser, and it was first published in 1963. There is also a German, French and an Italian edition. The book is published by the Artemis Company, Zurich, and edited by Hans Kasser and the Swiss National Tourist Office. Hans Kasser took the largest number of photographs, other contributors were Philipp Giegel and Friedrich Engesser, and the pictures of a further fifty photographers were used. Museums, too, provided material.

The English edition has all the captions in four languages, and there are seven and a half pages of most instructive comments to the photos. Translations are by John P. Robertson and R. A. Langford.

In his introduction "The View from the Heart of Things", Werner Kämpfen, General Manager of the Swiss National Tourist Office, said that when he first heard the original title of the book "Panorama Schweiz", his emotional and mental reaction had been quite un-Swiss: instead of the usual shying away from eloquent language and distrust of anything unduly poetic there had arisen an inordinate urge to enlist a word or real stature for the introduction. "Let us for once be effusive, audacious, rhapsodic and even extravagant instead of dry, dispassionate or realistic."

And so the book became an exceptional work which will be a valuable addition to any well-stocked library. The authors, French-, Italian- and German-speaking, include such famous names as C. F. Landry, Guido Calgari and Andri Peer. There are two German-speaking contributions from abroad, one from Paris and one from Rome, each from a different slant, each interesting and of a high standard. The two English contributions are Gottlieb Heinrich Heer's "Switzerland — Host to the World" which describes the history of Swiss spa, sanatorium and hotel. It is an article full of information, perhaps slightly on the verbose side, possibly due to the fact that it was translated.

George Soloveytchik, London, is no stranger to the Swiss in Great Britain. His book on Switzerland published a few years ago made him well known, though the book had a somewhat mixed reception. In my humble opinion, his article in "Panorama" called "How Switzerland is really governed", is brilliantly written and lacks some of his former sarcasm and asperity. It shows Mr. Soloveytchik's remarkable intimate knowledge of and the shrewd appraisal of Swiss democracy. There is a wealth of information in the ten large pages, and the article makes exceedingly interesting reading for the novice and the expert alike, for the foreign visitor and the Swiss citizen.

Some of the value of the articles lies in the fact that some of them were written by non-Swiss. Things have been said which would either never strike a Swiss from within or could not be said by a Swiss without blowing his own trumpet.

Apart from the photographs, the book contains reproductions of paintings, drawings, manuscripts, maps (the oldest one in existence of present Switzerland by Aegidius Tschudi of Glarus, 1505-1572), Roman bronzes, celtic ornaments, pottery, wood carvings, etc.

The photographs are most unusual, both as regards objects and technical perfection. Maybe, the rather large preponderance of wintry pictures may make the country

appear too snowy and cold to an absolute newcomer. A double page of the alpine panorama from the dark-green Jura over the green-blue Midlands to the icy splendour of the Alps, taken by an aerial photographer, shows a panorama in the true sense of the word. A coloured view of the gabled roofs of Steckborn and one taken over the roofs of the medieval town of Murten stand out in my mind from amongst the coloured pictures.

My personal preference still is for black and white photography. And the book holds its promise in these perhaps even more than in colour. Many aspects of Swiss life are covered — children at play, men at work, sports ranging from boccia in the Ticino, golf in the Grisons to rowing on the Rotsee, "Hornussen", ice-hockey, mountaineering. What a remarkable likeness between the face of a modern ski racer and the ancient mask from Ems on the opposite page! A similar double appears in the ox-drawn farmer's wagon from the Vaud and the Roman floor mosaic depicting the same man and beasts of centuries ago. The swearing of the oath by the herdsmen before driving the cattle up to the summer pastures in Uri is one of the customs and ceremonies shown, the carnival in Basle and the "Schlittedas" in the Grisons are others.

One of the most interesting pictures of a "Landsgemeinde" I have even seen is a double page aerial view of the open air parliament at Hundwil. Many are the photographs of churches inside and out. The quaint picture of the thatched roof cottage in the Wynental of the Aargau is as attractive as the wintry Cathedral Square of Basle in all its quiet dignity. From the Roman amphitheatre of the great military camp of Vindonissa and the St. Urben-bastion in Solothurn, we are taken to a modern car park in Lucerne by night and the CERN building in Geneva. The ancient mule track is shown side by side with the modern pass road, the up-to-date Halen housing estate in Berne contrast with the primitive stone dwellings of the Vergeletto, the eerie picture of an All Souls candle-light service at Buerglen with the efficient hustle of the assembly of locomotives for the Swiss Federal Railways at Oerlikon.

It is inevitable that a book of this kind should include a large number of mountain pictures, most of them out of the ordinary — just to mention one: the Glarus and Uri Alps above the clouds, a magnificent and striking picture.

If criticism I have to offer it would be regarding the captions. They are not always easy to connect with the respective picture; some come in front, some at the back of a photograph and often confuse the reader. If the comments at the back of the volume were printed on the second half of double pages to be pulled out whilst one looks at the pictures, it would eliminate a lot of unnecessary turning of pages from photos to comments and back. If this book is also meant as an introduction to Switzerland, some of the comments should be more explicit; the vitally important Rhine harbour of Basle is represented by a symbolic reproduction of an anchor with a hazy background and given no more than a scanty line or two in the comments. Most of these, however, are extremely informative and an excellent complement to the photographs.

The book has been compiled with great skill and artistry, but also with care and affection. In the Epilogue of "Swiss Panorama", the publisher Bruno Mariacher expresses his hopes that all those who have contributed so splendidly may feel satisfaction at having helped to produce a work of enduring value as a living image of Switzerland of our time.

Mariann.

40 pages of full colour (size 9½" x 12½" = 24.5 x 51.2 cm.), 128 pages of black and white illustrations with captions in English, French, Italian, German and supported by 80 pages text in the four Swiss national languages. "Swiss Panorama" is offered as a special New Year bargain to readers of the "Swiss Observer" for 5 guineas (instead of £6). Please place your order now with

Dr. Erik Wiget,
1 Umbria Street,
Roehampton,
London S.W.15,

or ring Putney 3338.

CHILDREN LEARN TO KNOW WILD ANIMALS

Where does the jaguar live and where is the home of the leopard? What is the difference between a camel and a dromedary? Such and other questions are answered by "Wild Life", a game something like "Monopoly", originated by Peter Ryhiner, the Swiss big game specialist, in co-operation with the publishing house "Edition Carlit". The "World Wildlife Fund" and the director of the Zurich Zoo welcome this new game as a very appropriate means of implanting in the young generation the idea of worldwide protection of nature and wild life. Peter Ryhiner who has supplied a great number of zoos with the rarest of animals also wrote a book on his thrilling profession. Due to the increasing danger of wild life being exterminated by organized safaris, catching wild animals alive has taken on a new and important significance. Today, animals about to be extinct can find a haven in the zoo where they feel quite at home, as has been repeatedly proven, and thus be preserved for future generations.

[S.N.T.O.]

BEAUTY AT ONE'S FINGER TIPS

The human hand is not only the most wonderful tool, it is also a symbol used in a great many expressions: for example, of someone who is generous, we say he is open-handed, just as one who is over-casual is called offhand, while someone who knows anything perfectly has it at his finger tips. The part played by the hand is not limited to manual work, it has social importance too; often enough a person's character is judged by the appearance of his hands. In order to enable all — particularly women — who attach special importance to the appearance of their nails to procure the products required to strengthen and look after them, a manufacturer in Lausanne recently put on the market two complementary liquids, "Dinalon-Lilac" and "Dinalon-Orange". The first strengthens soft, brittle or split nails without any harmful or unaesthetic effects, i.e. without harming or irritating the skin and without stopping the use of nail polish or any similar product. "Dinalon-Orange" is not only an oil for softening the cuticle but also a tonic rapidly penetrating the matrix of the nail to strengthen and revitalize it at the same time stimulating the growth of the nail. It gives the nail new life and combats inflammation and damage to the cuticle. These two products were tested from the point of view of their effectiveness and innocuousness for a long time before being put on the market. With these two new products the preparations required for everyday care of the nails are always "at hand"!

[O.S.E.C.]