

A beard and a smile

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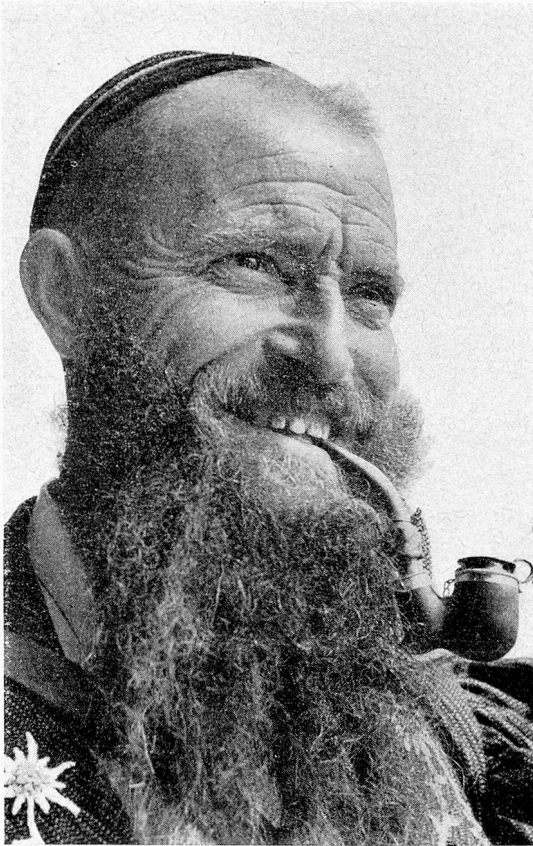
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A BEARD AND A SMILE

By courtesy Swiss National
Tourist Office.

The picture of the cheese-making, yodelling folkloristic Switzerland is not one we like to foster — it is vastly misleading. On the other hand, Swiss cheese export is considerable, and “Emmental”, “Appenzeller” and “Gruyère” enjoy a justifiable reputation for excellence. Modern improved methods of production are constantly introduced in order to balance the reduction in livestock. The number of cows on 1st April stood at nearly 908,000, 2.3% lower than in the previous year.

On the other hand, there was a glut of milk and butter, and the Government had to take measures to reduce milk production in order to reduce the “Milkflood” and the “Butter Mountain”. They have succeeded in this by voluntary agreement of the milk producers, and no control had to be introduced. Clever propaganda helped, too, to increase milk consumption in 1968 from 384 to 422 kg. *per capita* of the population. Butter consumption last year was a record, too, no doubt partly thanks to *Butterverbilligungsaktionen*. It amounted to 7.4 kg. per head as against only 5.8 kg. in 1967. It is an all-time record.

The Agricultural Information Service has recently published some surprising news — 40,000 kg. of “Appenzeller” cheese was exported to U.S.A. last year. Even Austria imported 25,000, France 105,000 and Germany 210,000 kg. With rising exports, it was planned to produce “Appenzeller” from 28 million litres of milk this year.

But back now to La Gruyère, the lovely part in the Canton of Fribourg, which has given its name to the much-liked brand of Swiss cheese. The countryside is of the most unspoilt in Switzerland, and its people are a happy, sturdy race. The photograph is that of a Fribourg herdsman, an *Armailli*. Below the little town of Gruyères, a model cheesemaking centre has been erected, an attraction for tourists, yet no gimmick — it is a real working dairy, the only difference being that from a gallery, visitors may watch the complete production process. In four languages, the spectators are informed of the intricacies of cheese making, and they are able to see modern machinery in use. A TV system enables them to understand the whole process also outside of working hours. Large glass windows allow them to see the so-

called salting and maturing rooms, as well as the store rooms where 1,000 loaves can be stored. In a refreshment room the visitors may enjoy cheese specialities, and a shop completes the centre.

The *Schaukäserei* was opened by Federal Councillor Schaffner on 24th June. It is capable of processing 1.5 million kg. milk. The 35 milk producers of Gruyères-Epagny deliver about 1.2m. at the moment, of which only a fraction is consumed as fresh milk. Some of it is being used to produce such specialities as “Vacherin”.

To finance the project, 1.4 million francs was budgeted, and it is hoped that, with the help of federal and cantonal subsidies, the scheme can be extended.

(Based on information received by courtesy of Agence Télégraphique Suisse.)

SWITZERLAND AND UNITED NATIONS

The Federal Council has decided that the moment has not yet come for Switzerland to join United Nations Organisation. But the Swiss Government considers it its duty to take some concrete measures to extend co-operation, without prejudice to a possible entry later on.

The attitude of the Government is explained in a 170-page document on Switzerland's relationship to United Nations. This report has been submitted to Parliament. The situation has been studied following a postulate by National Councillor Bretscher in 1967. Whilst neither he nor the public in general have had time to study the document, he has expressed satisfaction at the care and detailed study the Government has put into the report. No doubt, it will help in the general discussion about Switzerland's relation with this world organisation and confirm Switzerland's attitude of strict neutrality, but of willing co-operation in non-political fields. This is in the tradition established and adhered to for decades by the Swiss Government. Switzerland will continue to support UNO, also financially; as Federal Councillor Spuehler explained at a Press Conference, she contributed 210 million francs up to the end of 1968 and 37 million towards peace-keeping campaigns.

(A.T.S)