

Geneva : a tale of two cities

Autor(en): **[s.n.]**

Objektyp: **Article**

Zeitschrift: **The Swiss observer : the journal of the Federation of Swiss Societies in the UK**

Band (Jahr): - **(1933)**

Heft 600

PDF erstellt am: **21.07.2024**

Persistenter Link: <https://doi.org/10.5169/seals-690976>

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The Swiss Observer

FOUNDED BY MR. P. F. BOEHRINGER.

The Official Organ of the Swiss Colony in Great Britain.

EDITED WITH THE CO-OPERATION OF MEMBERS OF THE LONDON COLONY.

Published every Friday at 23, LEONARD STREET, LONDON, E.C.2.

Telegrams: FREPRINCO. LONDON.

Telephone: CLERKENWELL 9595

VOL. 13—No. 600

LONDON, APRIL 22, 1933.

PRICE 3d.

PREPAID SUBSCRIPTION RATES

UNITED KINGDOM AND COLONIES	3 Months (13 issues, post free)	3/6
	6 Months (26 issues, post free)	6/6
SWITZERLAND	3 Months (13 issues, post free)	Fr. 1.50
	6 Months (26 issues, post free)	Fr. 2.80

(Swiss subscriptions may be paid into Postcheck-Konto Basle V 5718).



HOME NEWS

(Compiled by courtesy of the following contemporaries: National Zeitung, Neue Zürcher Zeitung, St. Galler Tagblatt, Vaterland and Tribune de Genève).

FEDERAL.

M. MOTTA IN ROME.

Federal Councillor Motta arrived in Rome last week on a private visit; during which he was received by the Pope and M. Mussolini.

SWISS CUSTOMS RECEIPTS.

The customs receipts for the 1st quarter 1933, amount to 61,063,942f., the figures for the same period in 1932 were 69,031,282f., or 7,967,340f. less than in 1932.

PICTURES IN TRAINS.

Train travelling in Switzerland is now being lightened by a new arrangement which projects pictures on to screens above the doorways connecting the coaches.

The screen is one foot square and made of glass, and it is connected to a small machine which projects still pictures on to it, showing about thirty-five different pictures in ten minutes. The pictures show views of Switzerland, as well as advertising matter, and the machine works only while the train is in motion. This is to prevent any crowding in the corridors by people stopping to look at the pictures while the train is in a station. At present only a small number of Swiss trains are fitted with this device, but it will be embodied in all new coaches.

LOCAL.

BERNE.

The new roman-catholic church, (Marienkirche) on the Breitenrain was consecrated on Easter Sunday by the Bishop of Basle and Augustin, Dr. Josephus Ambühl.

LUCERNE.

The Park Hotel Bürgenstock was partly destroyed by fire, the damage is believed to be considerable.

BASLE.

Sixteen people who took part in the demonstration at Basle, when the Nazi emblem was removed from a station building, were fined with an amount of 30f. each, four of the accused were acquitted.

GENEVA.

No rain has fallen in Switzerland for three weeks, and water is already scarce in some districts. Forest fires are numerous, and on Sunday night six fires could be seen raging on the flanks of Mont Salève, above Geneva.

Two foreigners, who, in broad daylight entered a Jewellery shop in Geneva and decamped with goods worth 8,000f., were caught by the police; the goods were restored to the firm.

AARGAU.

A motion by the community of Rheinfelden to grant a credit of 200,000f. for the erection of a Municipal theatre was defeated by a large majority.

THURGAU.

The premises of the firm Tanner and Co., oil and grease merchants at Frauenfeld, were totally destroyed by fire.

W. Hasenfratz from Kesswil, was killed on Good-Friday at Güttingen when his motor-cycle hit a wall.

SCHAFFHAUSEN.

The late senior-partner of the firm Chessex & Co., has left an amount of 100,000f., to be distributed amongst the staff.

OBWALDEN.

The building of the "Landwirtschaftliche Genossenschaft" in Sachseln was destroyed by fire, the damage caused is considered heavy.

GRISONS.

M. Balestreri, President of the academic Alpine Club in Turin fell into a crevasse when ascending the Bellavista; a rescue party consisting of five guides managed to locate M. Balestreri, but he was then dead, owing to exposure.

VAUD.

The death is reported from Lausanne of Professor Jules Piccard at the age of 93; the deceased was for 40 years Professor of Chemistry at the University of Basle. Professor Piccard was the father of Prof. A. Piccard, who made the successful ascent in the stratosphere.

Two people were killed when a motor-cycle with side-car overturned near Ouchy, one of the victims was M. A. Maillard, father of four children. M. Léon Boccard domiciled at Chêne-Bourg, was killed near Nyon when his motor-cycle collided with a motor car. An Italian who sat on the pillion was seriously injured.

FOOTBALL.

As of old, many friendly matches at home and abroad were arranged for the Easter Holidays and we would record some of the results hereafter. On balance Switzerland did quite well.

Matches played in Switzerland.

Montreux	.....3	S.C. Freiburg i Br.	....4
Lausanne	.....1	F.C. Prozachheim	.....1
Servette	.....1	S.K. Nachod	.....2
Biel	.....1	V.f.R. Mannheim	.....0
Racing	.....5	F.C. St. Etienne	.....3
Zurich/Blue Stars	.....3	F.C. Torino	.....2
Nordstern	.....5	Racing Strassburg	.....0
Brühl	.....0	Budau (Budapest)	.....0

Matches played abroad.

Cologne S.C. 99	.....0	Grasshoppers	.....1
S.R. Colmar	.....1	Young Fellows	.....3
Olympique Marseille	.....3	Young Boys	.....2
East Holland	.....1	Grasshoppers	.....3
Mulhouse	.....2	Young Fellows	.....2
U.S. Annemasse	.....0	Servette	.....6
Stade Rennais	.....6	Cantonal	.....1
Olympique Lille	.....1	Urania	.....3
Union Luxemburg	.....2	Basel	.....13
Zaandam	.....2	St. Gallen	.....3
Zwaluwen	.....1	Grasshoppers	.....3
Havre A.C.	.....2	Cantonal	.....3
Boulogne	.....0	Urania	.....4
Bordeaux	.....1	Stade Lausanne	.....4
Libertas (Wien)	.....2	Basel	.....0
R.C. Lens	.....4	St. Gallen	.....2
F.C. Alès	.....1	Servette	.....2

M.G.

FIN DE LA SESSION DES CHAMBRES. FEUX D'ARTIFICE ORATOIRES.

La session a pris fin, au Conseil national, par de brillantes joutes oratoires. D'abord à propos de la motion Walthier, qui réclame du Conseil fédéral la présentation d'un projet de loi sur la sauvegarde de l'ordre public, contre les menées révolutionnaires et l'activité des agents provocateurs étrangers. Le Conseil fédéral, par l'organe de M. Haerberlin, a accepté cette motion en annonçant qu'il présenterait prochainement, sur cet objet, un projet de loi; celui-ci se limiterait à quelques dispositions essentielles, peu différentes de celles qui figurent dans le Code pénal vaudois, qu'ont approuvé les députés socialistes au Grand Conseil de ce canton.

An fond, ce n'est pas du tout ce projet qui a été discuté par l'assemblée, le débat ayant deviné en des passes d'armes sur le régime démocratique et ses adversaires de gauche et de droite. On a assisté à une lutte d'idées, beaucoup plus intéressante, en somme, que l'objet restreint de la motion.

Cette tournure inattendue de la discussion a été provoquée par la suggestion, formulée par M. Graber, de former un "front unique de la démocratie" contre les assauts du fascisme international. Le congrès socialiste de Bienne montre que les chefs socialistes sont pris d'un certain malaise en constatant que la Suisse démocratique est entourée de trois puissances vouées à des régimes dictatoriaux. Mais ils oublient le diction que veut que l'on ne prenne pas des mouches avec du vinaigre. Au Conseil national, ils n'ont cessé de multiplier les suspensions contre les partis qu'il convient à former avec eux un front unique, et qu'ils suspectent d'éprouver des sympathies plus ou moins avouées pour le fascisme.

Ces méfiances ne sont peut-être pas entièrement injustifiées en ce qui concerne certains chefs de l'artisanat, qui siègent dans le parti des paysans, artisans et bourgeois, et visent à former un parti de classe économique. Mais les autres partis nationaux semblent être tout à fait à l'abri de ce reproche. Tout au contraire, ce n'est pas sans crainte qu'ils assistent au développement de la propagande menée par les nationaux-socialistes et par les nazis camouflés des divers "fronts."

Par ailleurs, une contre-attaque s'est déclenchée sur toute la ligne. On s'est demandé si les marxistes, protagonistes de la lutte des classes, étaient particulièrement qualifiés pour se poser en champions de la démocratie. On a exhumé la dictature du prolétariat, le mémorial Grimm et d'autres souvenirs d'une orthodoxie démocratique fort discutable. Une grande partie des socialistes suisses ne se donnent-ils pas pour programme de travailler à la fusion des deux Internationales? Le communiste Muller s'est fait un plaisir d'évoquer l'attitude équivoque et louvoyante de certains chefs socialistes sur ce point essentiel.

Mais le plus grand succès oratoire a été obtenu par M. Bixio Bossi, qui, dans un magnifique discours, a versé dans ce débat fulgurant un peu de clarté latine, ce qui à vrai dire n'était pas de trop. En fin de compte, les collectivistes des deux observances furent seuls, avec le démocrate d'extrême-gauche Gadiet, à combattre la motion Walthier. Du choc des idées ont jailli quelques étincelles de lumière. Ce débat, sans aucun doute, se renouvellera en maintes occasions.

Le projet d'aide de la Suisse à l'Autriche a été approuvé par les deux tiers des voix, non sans s'être heurté à une vive opposition de la part des socialistes et de quelques bourgeois germanophiles, qui ne voient pas de danger, pour la Suisse, à l'annexion de l'Autriche par l'Allemagne hitlérienne. Rappelons que la Suisse était certainement plus forte à l'époque — antérieure à l'unité de l'empire allemand — où elle était entourée de six voisins au lieu de quatre. Une réduction à trois du nombre de ses voisins aurait vraisemblablement pour effet de l'affaiblir encore davantage, notamment parce que cette fusion s'effectuerait sur des frontières à peu près ouvertes à toutes les influences, celles qui sont marquées par le Rhin supérieur, qui est davantage un collecteur qu'un obstacle.

M. Motta a évoqué ce péril avec une discrétion toute diplomatique, et M. Pfister, de Saint-Gall, en termes saisissants. La Chambre, avec eux, a compris que l'indépendance de l'Autriche méritait bien le sacrifice de quelques millions. C'est à une belle majorité qu'elle a approuvé le projet, donnant ainsi un bel exemple de sagesse.

R. Bovet-Grisel.

GENEVA — A TALE OF TWO CITIES.

One of these cities astride Rhone's vivid currents at the foot of Lac Leman is based on world hopes and efforts for international collaboration. Its doings blaze periodically in headlines of all tongues. Again, it plods alone over fields of un-realized political or economic projects.

This city has no country, but is designed to serve all countries. It is young — upward of a dozen years. Yet in name and location it coincides with a city whose present cathedral, made Protestant in the sixteenth century, was started by wandering medieval stone masons in the eleventh and twelfth. Behind that stretches the town known to Caesar, and a village of still dimmer antiquity, built on pilings in the lake.

When the League of Nations and the International Labor Office came to Geneva, they continued the city's historical trend as an international centre. The community brought by these organizations, however, was utterly unlike the original. Both cities exist to-day, not side by side, but intermingled until only residents can sense the depth of distinction between them.

Failure to recognize these differences leads critics of the League to spatter Geneva — and sometimes the Genevese — with misguided pens. Such quips have hardly made their way into print, in some instances, before most of the persons criticized have climbed on to trains bound for various nations. This transitory population of the "Geneva without a country" owes divided allegiances. Even the permanent League community — despite numerous links with the old city — cannot be mistaken for Geneva of the Genevese.

Somehow this people has preserved an intellectual and social flavor all its own. Genevese speak French and are surrounded by France within a few miles on all sides except the lake front, yet have not lost their individuality. A handful of people — the entire canton numbers only some 173,000, most of them in the city — have clung to their hill through centuries of struggle for political, religious and cultural independence.

Solidarity among such a people is natural, but Geneva's traditions go beyond solidarity. They include sturdy self-reliance and an open door into which refugees have poured from many lands.

Genuine Genevese — the type is clearly marked — combine conservative and progressive ideas in a rare way. Their faces are cast in strong lines. Like many peoples of stern fiber and introspection, they are sometimes dubbed "cold, unsympathetic," by those who fail to see beneath the surface.

More than casual acquaintance is required to understand the Genevese. Their existence is hardly sensed by many who come to see international organizations in action. Geneva in full blast of an arms conference or League Assembly obscures the Geneva of narrow, steep streets on the old hill at night, with fountains always "ker-chunking" into their basins, cathedral bells sounding the hour, and an occasional troupe of singing students on their way home from a soirée.

Summer visitors to the Wall of the Reformation come close to something fundamental in the original Geneva. After most tourists have gone, Geneva itself comes out of a Sunday morning in November to celebrate the Fête of the Reformation.

That night, Protestants without regard to denomination gather in the cathedral. Zwinglians, Lutherans, Calvinists — many sects from many nations — put aside differences of creed in a common service. The Reformation lives again. Calvin's strict, even harsh, rule of the first Protestant religious state seems less hard to understand. It is remembered that he underwent extreme provocation before resorting to extreme measures. Libertines insulted him in public, plotted for more than a decade to ruin plans he regarded as God-given, and finally raised an armed insurrection against his authority. His stern repression comes into perspective in a cathedral that changed hands during a major battle of the Reformation.

Geneva's hill — still the city's geographical centre — wears its age easily. Streets and buildings have been kept in repair. They are clean. Unlike ancient quarters in many cities, this one has no incrustations of soot. Crumbling stones are less frequent than might be expected. Walls are uniformly mellowed. Buildings bear sixteenth century dates as if that were yesterday. Streets twist, rise — break into flights of steps. Eaves project at rakish angles over courtyards. Cobblers bend over their work in half-basements. Their lamps light interiors that hint rude arched passageways leading back into the hill. Barred doors shut off steep flights of steps. Other evidences remain of days when the whole hill was a walled defense.

Everywhere, fountains splash. Many are white marble, with chiseled designs that have taken on the wear of use. For these fountains represent kitchen faucets to many residents of the old hill. A boy dips his pail between flowers that grow at the centre of a large fountain. It is at the terraced junction of two streets. With dripping pail, the boy disappears into an arched corridor.

At a plainer trough, (attached to another fountain, a woman with red hands sloshes linen white. No central heating softens the cold of these public watering places. Nor can anything in the way of public fountains exceed the clarity and color of this water, fresh from the lake, and only shortly from the Alps. Within the depth of an ordinary fountain, its liquid prisms break into pale blues and turquoise. In winter, ice forms fantastic patterns around the spouts.

Modern Geneva has expanded from the hill, but has in no sense deserted it. Every building is in use. Cantonal and city government is still centered there in the picturesque "Hotel de la Ville" and annexes. The cathedral is surrounded by headquarters of religious societies. Stores, homes and workshops fill the old city's queer corners. The ancient atmosphere is disturbed only in rare cases. One shop recently superimposed a modernistic front on a medieval interior. The more usual practice is to mark such a word as "garage" on a doorway that could not possibly accommodate a medium-sized car.

Within the narrow limits of the old hill, Geneva of history more than holds its own against waves of post-war architecture. Off the hill, modernism — even futurism — makes sweeping incursions. Apartment buildings — many of extreme design — multiply. These belong to the new Geneva. Journalists and others attracted to the city by international activities occupy them. If these modern buildings draw sufficient residents from houses of the older city, those may be de-

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molished. This process has begun in some sections of the city, but the hill could only be remade by tearing it down. Fortunately for Geneva's picturesqueness, that is not a probability.

Geneva of the Genevese and Geneva of internationalism have many links, despite their differences. The city has given several officials to the League and International Labor Office. A lively interest is taken locally in doings of these organizations. Their coming has given new impetus to the teaching of international subjects in the university. This means much, because Geneva sets store by the institution which has grown from Calvin's Academy.

With characteristic independence, however, Genevese never lose sight of something generally overlooked by the world — that Geneva enjoyed a satisfying culture centuries before the city became a seat of organized internationalism. That culture goes on, a stabilizing influence for both Genevas during ups and downs of international hopes, fears, disappointments — and gains.

R. H. S. Christ, Sc. Mon.

E PAAR ALBUMSPRUECH.
von Alfred Huggenberger.

's hät mänge Freud am Tadle,
Stoht's Hüüsi fertig do;
Und hett er selber's Planli g'macht,
Wär's tümmer nesecho.
So isch es bim Regiere,
's verrysst au mänge's Mul,
Und wenn de säb a's Rueder chunt,
So goht d'Sach erst recht ful.

Vom alte Wy hät mänge scho
Viell neu Gedanke-n-übercho;
En andre hät's mit allne Liste
Nid witer 'procht, als zu-n-ere Chiste.

So lang's no Milch und Anke git
Und Chäs und Ziger, vill dass d'witt
Cha d'Schwitz sich durebringe.
's hät mänge fuf, sechs Bierli truckt,
d'Chind händ diheim 's leer Kafi gschluckt,
d'Milch sei jo nid z'erschwinge.
Me meint, 's ist all' de glichig Mär,
Was nid vill chost, sei nid vill wert.

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HERE AND THERE IN THE ALPS.

Miniature Sketches by Barbara Scott.
ST. MAURICE.

When the Christians of the era of the Crusades conquered the Holy Land, Pope Paschalis II founded the bishopric of Bethlehem in Palestine in 1109 A.D. However, in 1223 the Mohamedans returned to power and the Bishop of Bethlehem fled to Clamécy in France where he was enabled to establish a temporary ecclesiastical residence in the suburb of Panténor. Since Roman Catholic Church law does not accept the dissolution of a diocese by a worldly power, the bishopric of Bethlehem, in an honorary capacity, never ceased to exist. Panténor became each honorary bishop's seat up to the days of the French Revolution.

At that time Bishop Durant de Lironcourt was requested to abdicate. Upon his refusal to do so, the little diocese of Panténor was dissolved and the bishop barely escaped with his life. After his death the honorary bishopric of Bethlehem remained an unoccupied office until 1840, when Pope Gregory XVI ordered in his own handwriting that the abbot of the Monastery of St. Maurice should henceforth assume the honorary office of Bishop of Bethlehem, and the abbot of St. Maurice is generally a Swiss.

St. Maurice is a town of very ancient origin. Excavations carried on here are continually unearthing old tombstones, inscriptions and archaeological fragments of all kinds. St. Maurice was at first the small fortified market-town of the Nantuates, a Celtic people, which inhabited the lower Valais. Later it became a Roman fortification under the name of Agaumum.

In 302 A.D. St. Maurice, commander of the Theban legion, suffered martyrdom here with his companions, and pious pilgrims erected soon afterwards a small monastery on the spot where these men had given up their lives for the principles of Christianity. This modest house of prayer was inaugurated by Bishop Theodore I of Octodurum, the present Martigny, between 381 and 390. One hundred years later King Sigismund of Burgundy journeyed to St. Maurice to do penance, and upon his departure he presented the foundation with such a handsome gift that it was able to build a large new church. Some 500 monks then became stationed at St. Maurice, as the place now was called.

The present church of this Augustinian Abbey was erected in 1611-27, but excavations made in the interior of this large ecclesiastical settlement have exposed to view the remains of foundations and catacombs of various epochs. Priceless manuscripts and works of art are contained in the library and treasury.

Wherever one turns there are vivid reminders of a hallowed past. On their way from their dwellings to the Abbey church the brethren have to walk daily over the last resting place of the Theban legion, and the famous bells of St. Maurice send their stirring messages from a Romanesque tower, which dates back to the days of Charlemagne, mighty protector of the church.

CONCERT NEWS.

We are informed that M. Edwin Fischer, the Swiss pianist of world-wide renown, is giving Concerts in London during the next week. M. Fischer would be especially delighted to see as many of his compatriots as possible among his audience. Particulars as to date and Hall can be obtained from the Daily Press.