

Zeitschrift: The Swiss observer : the journal of the Federation of Swiss Societies in the UK
Herausgeber: Federation of Swiss Societies in the United Kingdom
Band: - (1956)
Heft: 1274

Artikel: An Englishman looks at Switzerland
Autor: D'Areis, C. Egmond
DOI: <https://doi.org/10.5169/seals-689609>

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AN ENGLISHMAN LOOKS AT SWITZERLAND.

It was a great day when — a long time ago — I was instructed to represent my paper in Switzerland as I had always wished to settle there. I already knew the country and people well and had a special liking for them. I expected to spend a few years here, but circumstances made it that these few years were many and I am looking forward to ending — if possible — my career among the Swiss.

This country is — as I soon discovered — a remarkable lookout post for a newspaperman and a centre where mingle people of every nation. There were those who attended the meetings of the former League of Nations; those who nowadays take part in the varied activities of the United Nations Organization and those who very rightly choose Switzerland as an ideal place for relaxing during their holidays. That explains why Switzerland is an unparalleled centre of world-wide information.

Being placed in the heart of continental Europe one can rapidly reach the main headquarters of European political and economical life. While excellent train connections make journeys easy through the country itself and to the neighbouring regions, air service makes it possible to go to London, Paris, Brussels, Vienna, Rome and to return within a single day with an abundant crop of valuable news.

Thus can a journalist live in a small country which at first seems to be shut in, and nevertheless remains constantly connected with the outer world and its currents of thought, without losing too much time in going here and there, which is an outstanding advantage for a pressman.

On the other hand, his work is greatly facilitated by an excellent telephone and telegraph system well connected with the outer world. During the past few years the Association de la Presse Etrangère en Suisse — whose President I now happen to be — gained in importance in the eyes of the Swiss authorities and public with the result that foreign journalists were granted many more facilities.

May I mention the excursions to which they are often invited in view of visiting some interesting region, factories, electric works, or of seeing typical folkloric plays. The big samples fairs make foreign pressmen acquainted with the newest developments of Swiss trade, industry, agriculture and artistic life

and when I add that the Federal and Cantonal authorities and Kurvereine — without forgetting the Swiss National Tourist Office — are doing their utmost for helping and keeping us well informed, one will understand why I say that working in Switzerland is unquestionably a pleasure.

Any foreign journalist who takes part in Swiss life and mixes with the people cannot be one-sided; he is bound to be internationally minded. Switzerland is in fact a microcosmos in which live side by side men of various origins, speaking four languages and who feel to a certain extent the influence of French, Italian and German civilization which they adapt to their own way of living and thinking.

To these main streams of ideas one has to add the astonishing diversity arising from the Cantons everyone of which has its own character constituted in its turn by the particularities of each valley and district they include. Thus is Switzerland a midget world and that makes it so attractive to foreign observers.

Switzerland is a land of beauty where everyone may find what he likes best; industrial cities, centres of learning, a pleasant countryside, romantic lakes, quiet vales, snowclad mountains. It is not only the beauty and variety of Swiss scenery which appeal to everyone, but also the changing light which in a single day ranges from bright and gay colours to greyish shades according to passing clouds and to the ever changing aspects due to the reflection of silvery waters, to the fancyful colouring of the splendid hills, snows and glaciers.

Switzerland made me an alpinist who did hundreds of climbs, often with guides who know how to bring their companions to love their mountains, sometimes by myself and my Swiss alpine experiences are among my happiest memories. I remember standing one early morning on the top of the Mischabel Dom on a wonderful clear day. The whole of Switzerland lay at my feet and I thought: "How small it looks, but so great nevertheless, and its greatness is due to the influence it has in the world thanks to the culture, love of freedom and peaceful ideal of its hospitable people".

C. Egmond d'Arcis.

"The Times", London, President of the "Association de la presse étrangère en Suisse".

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