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THE "SWISS OBSERVER" 30 YEARS AGO

On 3rd December 1938, we read that the Swiss electorate had accepted by a large majority the Government's proposals to balance the federal budget over the following three years. Some illicit business had been discovered — large quantities of bogus *Kirsch* had been put on the Swiss market, containing cheap alcohol flavoured with some essence. There was a long report on the Farewell Service at St. Anne's in Gresham Street, at which The Rev. C. T. Hahn took leave from his parishioners. Other events covered by word and picture were the Annual Dinner of the Association of British Members of the Swiss Alpine Club, The "Old Friends' Evening" at the Union Helvetia and — over 800 words! — the Annual Banquet and Ball of the City Swiss Club at Grosvenor House, with Mr. L. Chapuis as President and Monsieur Ch. de Jenner (*Chargé d'Affaires* during Monsieur Paravicini's absence) in the chair. The rest of the issue was taken up by "Skippers of the Skyways", giving the *curriculum vitae* and photograph of Swissair's chief pilots on the Anglo-Swiss route. The seven names included such famous "aerial messengers" from home as Captains Nyffenegger, Zimmermann, Borner, Heitmanek and Ackermann.

The following issue brought a report on the golden jubilee of the University of Fribourg and on "Memorable Days in the Alps" by J. J. Eberli. "Switzerland ready for new sacrifices in order to safeguard its Independence" told readers of Swiss military preparedness, including recent changes in defence policy. At Paganini's, the Unione Ticinese had held their 36th Annual Concert and Dance.

On 17th December, a biography of Federal Councillor Dr. A. Meyer was published. He had resigned after nine years in office. The death was announced of the universally known Swiss chess champion Paul Johner. Among a motley collection of articles were "Lembo Ticinese", poetry by the Rev. Bommeli (temporarily in charge of the Swiss Church Community at St. Anne's), "Swastikas in Switzerland", "L'Erreur du Conseil Fédéral", "Chronique Technique" and "L'Escalade à Londres".

On 24th December, the new President of the Confederation for 1939 was announced — Mr. Ph. Etter, with Mr. M. Pilet-Golaz as Vice-President. Well over 650 words were devoted to the Swiss Mercantile College Students' Christmas Dinner and Ball at the Prince's Galleries in Piccadilly, with Mr. W. Meier in the chair.

The last issue in 1938 was full of Swiss-German frictions, foreign spying and warnings. What a pleasant

change was an article on the "Art of Good Living", in which André Simon gave information on and appreciation of Swiss wines! There was also an article on "Dunant: the Story of the Red Cross." Looking back on the events which we now know were going to happen in the following year, it seems particularly appropriate to have published "Eine ernste Mahnung an die Schweizer — Mahnworte der Appenzellischen Landesväter vor beiläufig 550 Jahren", in which the old Swiss citizens were warned to keep the peace and defend their territories which had been preserved by a merciful God. It begins

*O du mein liebe Eydtnoschaft —
die durch Besondre Gottes Kraft —
bisher mit grosser Lustbahrkeit —
florierest in frid und einigkeit — . . . and ends*

*So haltet euch zusammen vest —
und Thue ein jedes Orth das Best —
Besitzet in Ruh das schöne Landt —
dass euere vätter gwunne Hand —
Ehret, liebet und fürchtet Gott —
So hilft er euch aus aller Noth.*

SCHILTHORN AND JAMES BOND

The operation of a film studio on top of a 10,000 feet mountain is an experiment presenting many new problems. Peter Hunt started filming scenes for the new film entitled "On Her Majesty's Secret Service" a month ago. The entire five storey building, including the unique rotating restaurant on the Schilthorn (Bernese Overland) peak, has been placed at the disposal of the filming unit. The ice rink on the helicopter landing pad and the ice tunnel are completed. Expert skiers and of course James Bond himself, are training for the shooting programme which will require their skilled performance. The large Augusta Bell 204-B helicopters are in daily use. They will carry out a rocket attack on the Schilthorn, the eagle lair of the villain planning a bacteriological war of annihilation.

Murren is as busy as during the peak season as a result of the large film company living there for many weeks. All the hotels are open and tourists have many opportunities to see the famous film stars at close range.

[S.N.T.O.]

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