

And now let a woman speak!

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week, but in rural areas too, Protestant women take an active part in church life. More than one-third of the women interviewed are members of some society or club. With regard to fashion consciousness this declines after marriage, except in large towns.

The authors are of the opinion that, although prejudice against women outside the family continues practically without change, the most important problems for women stem from inside the family. They maintain that discrimination outside the family is probably a consequence of discrimination inside the family rather than the other way round.

Finally, it is stated that the largest possible number of men and women should analyse their position. Women's organisations could play an important part in this. Without doubt, solutions would have to be found by men and women alike in order to improve the distribution of roles both within and without the family.

MM

NEW SNTO PUBLICATIONS IN EUROPEAN ARCHITECTURAL HERITAGE YEAR

As a contribution to European Architectural Heritage Year the Swiss National Tourist Office (SNTO) has published an illustrated guide "Ancient castles and historic mansions in Switzerland" which deals with the subject in brief and clear fashion. A map in the appendix and small sketches show how some 90 out of a total of 3,000 fortresses, castles and ruins – often really remote places worth seeing – can be reached by public transport or on foot. The second new publication also takes the reader along paths – culinary ones this time – to historical inns and castle hotels in Switzerland. The booklet provides information on the history and services of 76 renowned hotels and restaurants and about excursions and sports facilities in their vicinity. Also mentioned are speciality dishes, from elaborate to simple but choice fare. Both publications are available in English, French and German.

FORTHCOMING EVENTS

TUESDAY 21 October, 7.30 pm, Swiss Church, 79 Endell Street, WC2, Nouvelle Société Helvétique – *Concert by the Orchesterschule der Kammermusiker Zuerich* (Youth Orchestra) and the *Iverson Consort*, London. Admission free (collection will be taken). All Swiss and their friends welcome.

LONDON SWISS PHILATELIC SOCIETY, 24 September, monthly meeting followed by Auction. 29 October, monthly meeting with film show. 26 November, cup competition. No meeting in December.

AND NOW LET A WOMAN SPEAK!

In 1975, which is International Woman's Year, George Sommer, editor of *The Swiss Observer*, has interviewed a lady who has managed to combine a professional career with a measure of idealism and yet retain that quality so vital in a woman – femininity!

And who is this lady? The answer is Dr Christine A. Pickard, MB, ChB, the daughter of a Yorkshire doctor and a Swiss mother.

Not unnaturally, Christine spent many long holidays in Switzerland in her youth and got to know the country and many of her people well.

Her comments and observations about Switzerland, coming as they do from an educated woman, are therefore interesting, if sometimes slightly caustic.

She recognises her Swiss origins to the extent that she feels proud of the fact that she speaks all the national languages (except Romansch) with varying degrees of fluency.

Christine's mother, née Alice Clara Gautschi, was born in Reinach, Kt

Aargau. Her maternal grandfather was, at one time, Mayor of that town and the family roots there stretch back over many generations.

And what is it about Switzerland that she remembers with the most pleasure and, indeed, still impresses her? "Very simple", she says, "it is the closeness of the family even though it has long since dispersed".

Every 10 years they arrange a "Zusammenkunft" (the next one is due to be held in 1976) and the fact that for the last one members of the family attended from as far afield as Canada, illustrates to Christine one of the nicest aspects of Swiss life.

Although she is definitely not a "woman's libber" (she knows Germaine Greer well) she does regard the average Swiss male as being more chauvinistic in his attitude to women than almost any other civilised people although she freely admits that the younger generation is not as bad as its elders.

She prefers to describe herself as a "peoples' libber" because, as she points out, there are many instances where a man can suffer as much apparent injustice as a woman, a fact she can substantiate with various examples she met while practising as a doctor.

The most obvious, in her opinion, is the case where a man's wife dies, perhaps leaving him with young children. There is, as yet, no machinery under the welfare state for this man to be paid a pension if he should wish to give up work in order to bring up his family. He is virtually forced by the system either to put the children into care or to hire help to look after them.

Perhaps this is the appropriate spot to introduce a little more of the lady doctor's background which might, hopefully, put some of her later thoughts into better perspective.

Christine was born in Barnoldswick, Yorkshire (the town is now in Lancashire, following the re-drawing of county boundaries) and lived there until the age of 18 when she went to Liverpool University to study medicine. She qualified in 1962 and subsequently practised in Liverpool, London and later, in various parts of North Africa.

It was while she was working in Egypt that Christine discovered she had a



Dr Christine A. Pickard, MB, ChB.

talent for journalism, so she effectively "changed horses".

It was not, however, in North Africa that she first realised the value of communication in medicine. This idea came to her forcefully while she was doing her year's internship in a Liverpool hospital.

She explains: "A few minutes spent explaining to a worried or confused patient what was happening to him was more effective than sleeping pills."

This basically simple philosophy has been one of Christine's prime motivations ever since!

On her return to the United Kingdom in 1964, she joined the *London Evening Standard* as medical correspondent. A couple of years later she was appointed editor of *Interface*, a journal designed for general practitioners and intended to cover a wider range than the more conventional medical journals.

Interface, which relates the role of medicine to the environment, gave Christine a good platform from which to air some of her views about the value of communication.

She feels the average general practitioner just does not know enough about some of the most fundamental problems which people have to face every day — problems connected with sex, loneliness and bad housing and general social conditions, to list but a few.

Although Christine has now relinquished the editorship of *Interface* in order to return to medical practice and, perhaps, engage herself in some research, she will maintain her links with the paper by remaining its consulting editor.

But what about some more of this Anglo-Swiss doctor's views about Switzerland and the Swiss?

Her greatest regret is that she is not entitled to citizenship — a fact which she regards as just another example of the somewhat outdated Swiss attitude to women. She was quick to make the point that a male born abroad of a Swiss father more or less automatically qualifies him for citizenship so why not a woman with a Swiss mother?

(At this point your editor did mention the fact that the whole question of entitlement to citizenship is currently under review in Berne but her point is still valid.)

Long sojourns in Switzerland, mainly in Aargau and the Bernese Oberland, "undoubtedly introduced an element of rebelliousness in me" — these were Christine Pickard's own words!

Why? Because she remembers what she likes to recall as "female conspiracies" in her family where the women were able to manipulate the menfolk in order to get their own way whilst still preserving the male ego intact. (Editor's note: this is probably a universal female talent!)

Also, says Christine, it is only now that she is accepted in Switzerland, both as an adult and as a doctor.

She illustrates this observation with an amusing little anecdote. Soon after qualifying as a doctor she visited

Switzerland with a party of friends — male and female. The girls stayed with Christine's family while the boys put up at the local inn. The next morning one of the men came to say that the other one was feeling unwell. Christine went at once only to be told by the landlady that her inn was a "respectable establishment" and she certainly wasn't going to allow a "young girl" to visit men in their rooms".

On another occasion, one of Christine's uncles was going shooting with some of his friends. Christine asked if she could go along to watch. She says the response to this request was typically and traditionally Swiss. "The women genuinely could not comprehend that a girl really would like to accompany the shooting party. They were absolutely convinced that I would much rather go window-shopping with my aunts."

"However," concludes Christine, "attitudes and social morés are changing fast in Switzerland, mostly for the better!"

And why are these changes taking place? At the risk of over-simplifying the issues, Christine volunteered her opinions.

"That women now have the vote is probably the biggest single factor. Also, the advent of some economic problems where, hitherto, stability has been taken so much for granted has forced the Swiss to take a fresh look at themselves."

To summarise, Christine said she thought the Swiss have become less (and she hesitated before using the last word) complacent.

WGS

BERLIN SALUTES BERNE!

On 4 October — only a few days after the gala evening in aid of Swiss sport — the Kursaal in Berne will be the setting for another outstanding spectacle.

The atmosphere will, however, be decidedly more Berlin than Bernese, as "Berlin greets Berne" with some very special German cabaret and other entertainment.

The show will be televised live by Swiss television and taped for a 90-minute transmission by West German TV. The show will also include games in which the public will be able to participate.

Berlin — which, like Berne, features a bear in its coat of arms — will also be sending to the Swiss federal capital an information bus to be parked, appropriately, at Bärenplatz from 3 to 7 October. And the same week a visiting West German TV team will film a documentary on Berne.

APPOINTMENTS

Mr Remo Santi has been appointed head of the chauffeur-driven department of the Welti-Furrer Car Hire of Zurich. Mr Santi has been with the company for eight years.

Mrs Dora Hert has been appointed general manager of the Marbach Hotel in the Lake Thun resort of Hilterfingen.

Mrs Hert has been in the Swiss hotel industry for 25 years.

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