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# The Swiss Observer

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## LETTER TO THE EDITOR

I received news this morning that a most beautiful and historically interesting house in my native village of Brissago is going to be demolished to make way for a flat complex. It is interesting in so far that it was the home of Leoncavallo in the early part of the century. He had it built on the proceeds of the sale of some music specially composed for the Kaiser. Apart from the sentimental connotations for the village, it is also a rather beautiful example of Art Nouveau Architecture, which with the Grand Hotel just below make up a rather attractive complex reminiscent of a bygone era of gaiety and splendour. What I want to know, is there not a national fund to help these smaller villages to keep their more interesting national monuments? I see nothing progressive in pulling down the beautiful to be replaced more often than not by the mediocre. Alternatively why not hold an Opera Festival once a year to help Brissago keep what few things of beauty remain. Many have vanished already.

Now on to another tack. Do you know if there is an embargo in

Switzerland on the import of baby seal skins or any articles made from these same skins. Would it not be a wonderful thing if we followed France and the U.S.A. in putting one on and showing the world what we think of such cruel and atrocious commerce?

*Who could seriously find fault with the sentiments and the ideas set out in this letter? What do our readers think — should the Swiss take an active part in curbing cruel practices and, if so, how should they go about it? Any ideas would be gratefully received.*

W.G.S.

### IN MEMORIAM

Robert Lehner, 1892-1967

### ERRATA

From the List of Swiss Organisations in the U.K. which appeared in our issue dated April 1978 please delete reference to the Birmingham Swiss

Club and the address given. The information appeared under the sub-heading 'Outside London (In London Consular District)'.

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