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inherent protectionism are such that any excess harvest will have strong perturbing repercussions.

Finally, the European Economic Community raises the spectre of a common agricultural market in which only the large foreign producers will survive. This will make life harder for the Valais' vegetable and fruit industry.

Peasants are abandoning the mountains above the flat valley of the Rhone. This is a universal phenomenon and this exodus from the heights is officially acknowledged and accepted by cantonal authorities. Mountain peasants never had the means of competing with the surging cost of living as the geography and the climes under which they toiled would not allow them to raise their profits, however craftily they applied the progress of agricultural technology. The farmers in the valley have a rich soil which they can make more pregnant year by year. But however excellent the fertilisers and pesticides may be, they will be at a disadvantage with the men who, instead of owning fields, own factories. A machine can readily be re-adjusted to produce another article. Tilled land, and especially an orchard, cannot be adapted so smartly to the changing requirements of the market. The Valais plain is in fact so intensively cultivated and precious that no fallow land can be found in which to experiment without worry on new species. One example showing how innovation on the fields lagged behind the swing of consumer taste was

the case of the Canadian pippins grown in abundance in the Valais and which only managed to find outlets in France. The planters of the Valais are in part their own enemies as they tend to resist conservatively against improved agricultural methods. But this doesn't alter the basic fact that their customers are increasingly exigent and that they must spare no collective effort at increasing the quality of their production. Efforts are actually being made at grading the qualities of fruits. Besides the problems of adapting production in quality and in kind to the tastes of a shifting market, the Valais has to compete with other fruit producing cantons. Ticino comes ahead in tomato output, but other cantons such as Thurgau and Vaud have almost as many fruit trees. The Valais has 609,000 pear trees and 668,000 apple trees. Vaud lies in second place, but far behind, with 32,900 pear trees. Thurgau comes second in apple plantations with 427,000 trees. Vaud follows with 422,000 trees. Another quirk of the market is the tendency of consumers to swarm on first seasonal fruits—the first strawberries and the first peaches. This puts the Valais at a disadvantage in those areas where, for climatic reasons, it cannot come out first with a fresh picking. The strong competition coming from within Switzerland means that the possibilities of expansion are limited. But these are problems which the farmers of the Valais are certainly shrewd enough to face.

(Tages Anzeiger)

FORTHCOMING EVENTS

Every Thursday from 6 to 7.30 p.m. Discussion Circle in English. Young men especially invited. Tea from 6 to 6.15 p.m. Swiss Room, YMCA, Gt. Russell St., W.C.1.

Every 1st Wednesday of the month. Secours Mutuels des Suisses à Londres. Swiss House, 35 Fitzroy Square, W.1, at 7 p.m.

Tuesday, 27th October. City Swiss Club monthly meeting at the Dorchester Hotel, Stanhope Suite, at 6.30 for 7 p.m. Dr. Jürg Iselin will speak on the diplomatic career.

Tuesday, 27th October. The Swiss Club Edinburgh meets at 112 Hanover St., for a sing-song and the preparation of the Alpechilbi.

Saturday, 31st October. 12 a.m. Swiss Church Bazaar.

Friday, 6th November. Christmas Dinner of the Schweizerbund.

Wednesday, 11th November. Swiss Mercantile Society.

Saturday, 14th November. Annual Dinner and Dance of the Manchester Swiss Club at the Excelsior.

Friday, 20th November. Annual Dinner and Dance of the City Swiss Club.



Swiss Life

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