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OBITUARY.

With profound regret we announce the death of Madame E. Blau, mother of our former Swiss Consul Mr. A. C. Blau. Many of our members will recall Mrs. Blau as a most charming and hospitable lady and we all regret deeply to receive this sad news. Our sincerest condolences are tendered to the relatives. Mrs. Blau was cremated in Bregmarten on January 26th last.

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AN ETHNOLOGICAL RACIAL PICTURE OF
SWITZERLAND.

The political and moral unity of the Swiss nation does not by any means rest on racial unity. There are indeed few countries that bring together in so small a territory such a great number of races and of cultures. The setting for Helvetian life has been determined, from the very earliest times, by geography and history. But this framework contains a population of a surprising ethnological diversity.

First of all, there is the well known fact that the Swiss Confederation recognises the existence of four national languages. These four languages are German, French, Italian and Romansch. But languages and races must not be confused. In Eastern Switzerland, for example, the word "alemannic" does not mean at all that the population is exclusively German or even Nordic. It indicates rather the language spoken there. The dialects spoken in Alemannic Switzerland belong indeed to the same group of Germanic dialects as the dialects spoken in Alsace, in certain districts in Baden and on the banks of the Lake Constance. But when reference is made to prehistoric times, ethnography and anthropology, it is seen that the population of Switzerland represents an extraordinary mixture of races. A country at the cross-roads of Europe, Switzerland was in the past the theatre of many migrations and invasions, each of which finally helped to form a certain number of ethnological and human types.

The first inhabitants, in the neolithic period, (new stone-age), came probably from the East. Coming up the Danube, they brought the first elements of civilisation (when they colonised the country). New invasions took place in the bronze age, four thousand years ago. Then, about 700 years before our time, tribes that knew how to work iron came and settled on the left bank of the Rhine. All these peoples, coming from unknown parts, all these inhabitants of unknown race, name and language, form the ethnological basis of the Swiss people. It would be useless mentioning them if they had for us merely an interest that might be described as "zoological". Now, archaeological excavations, that are very frequent in Switzerland, prove that these