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Bidgenossenschaft

Wie ist denn einst der Diamant entstanden

Zu unzerstörlich alldurchdringender Einheit,

Zu ungetrübter, strahlenheller Reinheit,

Gefestiget von unsichtbaren Banden ?

Wenn aus der Völker Schwellen und Versanden

Ein neues sich zu einem Ganzen einreihet,

Wenn Freiheitslieb' zum Volke dann es einweihet,

Wo Gleichgesinnte eine Heimat fanden:

Wer will da wohl noch rütteln dran und feilen ?

Zu spät, ihr Herrn! Schon ist's ein Diamant,

Der nicht mehr ist zu trüben und zu teilen!

Und wenn, wie man im Edelstein erkennt,

Darin noch kleine dunkle Körper weilen,

Soll sind sie fest umschlossen und gekannt.

Gottfried Keller.

XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX X SWITZERLAND'S ROLE IN EUROPE. X XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX

Ever since the three forest cantons of Uri, Schwyz and Unterwalden declared their independence in 1291, Switzerland has played a big role in Europe far out of proportion with her size or population. Today, as a troubled continent gropes for peace and stability, that fact is more true than ever before. That the Swiss are an efficient people is evident when you consider that the only natural resources in the country are water power and eye-catching scenery. Switzerland makes the most of both.

Rushing glacier streams have been harnessed to provide light and power for homes, industry and the railroads. Large reservoirs glitter under the Alpine sun, and in valleys, the great turbines hum day and night. Enough hydro-electric power is generated so a surplus is available for "export" to foreign areas near the frontiers. The extent to which Switzerland uses electricity is especially evident in her railroads, which are 96% electrically operated. Result is that trains are both fast and remarkably clean. The Swiss, incidentally, are almost fanatically neat - not only the trains but every railroad station and chalet seems to have been scrubbed with soap and water.

Scenically, Switzerland is a spectacular showcase of snow peaks, quiet lakes, green hills. Graustarkian villages and resorts. There are enormous differences in altitude ranging from the low point of 633 feet above sea level along Lake Maggiore in the Italian speaking Ticino, to the soaring 15,203 foot spire of the Monte Rosa, in the Canton of the Valais. Wherever you go, there are busy mountain railroads, funiculars and chair lifts. The people have the same kind of pride in showing you the prize scenic spots as a stamp collector has when he shows you his album. You have an amazing selection of high altitude or lakeside resorts, all of them with a wide range of hotel accommodations where the staff speaks English, French, German or assorted Swiss dialects. You can go skiing on the Jungfrauoch in mid-July, or relax in Winter along the Riviera-like retreats along Lakes Lugano and Maggiore. Even the cities are fascinating places to visit. In Zurich Geneva, Berne and Basle, the picturesque old sections of town rub elbows with broad avenues lined with shops, theatres and modern office buildings.

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