

Zeitschrift: The Swiss observer : the journal of the Federation of Swiss Societies in the UK

Herausgeber: Federation of Swiss Societies in the United Kingdom

Band: - (1923)

Heft: 111

Rubrik: Extracts from Swiss papers

Nutzungsbedingungen

Die ETH-Bibliothek ist die Anbieterin der digitalisierten Zeitschriften. Sie besitzt keine Urheberrechte an den Zeitschriften und ist nicht verantwortlich für deren Inhalte. Die Rechte liegen in der Regel bei den Herausgebern beziehungsweise den externen Rechteinhabern. [Siehe Rechtliche Hinweise.](#)

Conditions d'utilisation

L'ETH Library est le fournisseur des revues numérisées. Elle ne détient aucun droit d'auteur sur les revues et n'est pas responsable de leur contenu. En règle générale, les droits sont détenus par les éditeurs ou les détenteurs de droits externes. [Voir Informations légales.](#)

Terms of use

The ETH Library is the provider of the digitised journals. It does not own any copyrights to the journals and is not responsible for their content. The rights usually lie with the publishers or the external rights holders. [See Legal notice.](#)

Download PDF: 18.03.2025

ETH-Bibliothek Zürich, E-Periodica, <https://www.e-periodica.ch>

so. Vor Jahren waren sie gute Freunde, hatten dann einen Wortwechsel, worüber weiss ich nicht, seither treffen sie sich jeden Tag, sehen aber einander nie an. Dort ist der eine." Ich liess anhalten, sprach ein paar Worte mit meinem Landsmann, einem Berner, dem ich mich als Baslerbeppi vorstellte und den es zu freuen schien, zu hören, dass ich mein Baslerdösch noch nicht vergessen hatte. Auch mit meinem zweiten Landsmann, einem Graubündner, sprach ich später kurze Zeit. Auf die Frage des Kutschers, was wohl die zwei Landsleute entzweit hatte, erwiderte ich: "Die Schweiz ist zwar ein kleines Land, hat aber 22 Kantone, die vor Zeiten beinahe souveräne Länder waren. Es hat vier Sprachen, zwei Hauptreligionen und mehrere Sekten und zwei Dutzend Regierungen. Es gibt in der Schweiz hohe Berge, tiefe Seen und reisende Flüsse. Das alles begünstigt die Entwicklung der Eigenart des Einzelwesens und führt schliesslich zur Unerträglichkeit und Zanksucht. Wober die beiden im australischen Busch sich gezankt haben, ist nicht von Belang."

Im Verlauf des halben Jahrhunderts, das ich im Ausland zugebracht, sind mir noch andere Beispiele von Schweizer Streitsucht zu Ohren gekommen. Die richtige Erklärung für diesen seltsamen Zug findet man in Oechsli's Schweizergeschichte.

(C. C. S., Bournemouth, im "Bund.")

Basler Ferienkolonie in England.—Wie früher in den Jahren 1909-10 und 1913-16, Schüler der Kant. Handelsschule Basel (Ob-Realschule), unter der Führung von Herrn Jos. Meyer, verliessen am 16. Juli Basel, um einen schon lange geplanten Ferienaufenthalt in England anzutreten. Der Continental-Express Dover-London brachte die Partie am folgenden Tage nach der Victoria-Station. Während des zehntägigen Aufenthalts in der Weltstadt wird Gelegenheit geboten zur Besichtigung der wichtigsten Sehenswürdigkeiten. Es seien davon erwähnt: die königliche Münze, die Docks, Bank von England, Tower Bridge, das Windsor Schloss, ein Warenhaus, der Zoologische Garten, sowie verschiedene Museen und Kirchen.

Während die Schüler in London in der Zentrale des C.V.J.M. wohnen werden, steht für die letzten 14 Tage, die sie in Hastings am Meere zubringen werden, eine öffentliche Schule mit Küche zu ihrer Verfügung. Am Meeresstrande können sie sich von den Londoner Strapazen ausruhen und das Badelieben geniessen. Am 10. August werden sie dann Hastings verlassen müssen und am 11. August alle wohlbehalten und körperlich und geistig neugestärkt in ihre liebe Vaterstadt zurückkehren.

(National Zeitung.)

EUROPEAN & GENERAL EXPRESS CO., Ltd.

MANCHESTER, LONDON, W. 1. LIVERPOOL,
32, Brazenose St. 15, Poland Street, 14, South Castle St.

Oldest Swiss Forwarding Agency in England

Household Removals at inclusive Prices
in our own Lift Vans.

Luggage and Private Effects
collected, packed and shipped to and from all countries

BEST GOODS SERVICE BETWEEN
SWITZERLAND & ENGLAND

Average Transit for Petite Vitesse (Frachtgut):

LONDON-BASLE 7-8 days
BASLE-LONDON 4-5 ..

Managing Directors: H. Siegmund & Erh. Schneider-Hall.

MISCELLANEOUS ADVERTISEMENTS

Not exceeding 3 lines.—Per insertion, 2s.; three insertions, 5s.—
Postage extra on replies addressed to Swiss Observer.

YOUNG LADY gives LESSONS IN ENGLISH, conversation, dictation, etc.—Olive Nicholls, Torrington House, 36, Torrington Square, W. C. 1.

ENGLISHMAN in Swiss family is willing to share his room with gentleman (bath room same floor); good opportunity for English conversation; board if required; terms moderate.—1, Westmoreland Rd., W. 2.

GRAFTON HOUSE, The Vale, Acton, W. 3.—Over-looking Park; main road; within 40 minutes of City; easy access; limited number of guests received; breakfast, late dinner, full week-ends; from 35s. per week.

FRENCH BILLIARD TABLE for Sale; all accessories and ivory balls.—Apply, 14, Cambridge Street, W. 1.

ENGLISH CLERGYMAN receives Young Swiss; family life; home comforts; English lessons if required; near park and museums; moderate terms.—R. V. C. Merk, 5, Roland Gardens, South Kensington, S.W. 7.

NOTES AND GLEANINGS.

By "KYBURG."

Young Swiss—England.

A very well-informed and, what is perhaps more, a very well-intentioned member of the Swiss Colony told me the other day, when we were discussing my recent paragraphs in the *S.O.* on this subject: "You know, the majority of our compatriots in London are much too apathetic. Once they have got a billet they do not care what happens to others and you cannot expect them to take any trouble in such matters." Now, I know it is hot. I know that to take trouble on behalf of others is an ungrateful task, unless you value the feeling of having done something unselfish for once in a while, but I really do hope that my friend was unduly pessimistic. Now then, Swiss, do get a move on, somehow, somewhere! Don't let that very important question go to sleep again! Agitate! It is extremely important for the future of commercial Switzerland that young Swiss should be allowed to come over to England and stay here for a couple of years. Restrictions must be abolished! If the matter is properly explained by the Swiss to the British Government, I am quite sure that the latter will make the necessary concession. John Bull has never refused to help when help was possible and especially when it could be proved to him that it would be beneficial also to his own interests: Now then, *Agitate!*

Switzerland and German Films.

Cinema (5th July):—The Swiss themselves are at last up in arms against the persistent efforts of the German producers to misrepresent the history of other countries on the screen. What has roused the wrath of the little republic is a film of "William Tell," made in Germany, the producer not even taking the trouble to cross the Swiss frontier in order to secure the correct historical backgrounds for his scenes.

The "Revue Suisse de Cinema" says it is high time to make a firm stand against such methods. If France and England have allowed Germany to give untrue representations of their respective histories in several films, there is no reason, says our irascible contemporary, why Switzerland should put up with a similar indignity.

"It must never be forgotten," the "Revue" adds, "that a film goes from one continent to another, bearing with it in its travels its living images, which penetrate the mind of all who see them, and leave lasting impressions behind them. Never let us forget, in fact, that such films are weapons."

The Germans have always used the films for propaganda and have been more clever than others in that direction. At the beginning of the war films were shown in Swiss cinema theatres, and "Our Soldiers on the March" showed *German Field Greys!* And our "pacifically penetrated" compatriots shouted Hurray! It is certainly necessary to keep a sharp watch against such mal-practices. I think that the N.S.H. keeps, or used to keep, its weather eye lifting for such manoeuvres.

Switzerland and her Future.

Daily News (9th July):—"The Other Voice," by H. Wilson Harris—The following merits being reprinted in full, I think, and I am sure many of my readers will be thankful for being able to read this really charming and wital very informative article. I should like to emphasize one happy sentence which so clearly shows us our duty as *Swiss*:—

The main function of the German Swiss, the French Swiss and the relatively small Italian Swiss elements is to work together (with, of course, numerous cross-divisions) on internal affairs, instead of pulling apart over external.

Most Englishmen know quite a lot about Switzerland. Many of us, for example, know it has the distinction of containing Mont Blanc—which it has not. Many more know it is separated from Italy by the crest of the Alps—which it is not. An eminent diplomat, speaking at the opening ceremony of the Lausanne Conference, knew it had never been invaded—which it has.

To knowledge so comprehensive it may perhaps be legitimate to add a few coping-stones of more immediate information. There is, after all, some advantage in writing about a country from inside it, and as I happen to be inside Switzerland at the moment, a word on it may not be out of place. It is worth while, I think, in any case. We ought to know more of Switzerland than we do, for there is at root a real affinity between the Swiss nation and our own. Word-words—

Two voices are there, one is of the sea,
One of the mountains, each a mighty voice,
linked together two great crusades for liberty, each as resolute as the other. And though it is Switzerland's misfortune that, being essentially pacific, she occupies nothing of that place in the public eye reserved for nations who win battles or lose them, her national period, so to put it, well deserves a little quiet study.

In reality the astonishing thing about Switzerland is that it should possess a national personality at all. Trilingualism illustrates what I mean. When you are menacingly assured that—

E pericoloso di sporgersi—
C'est dangereux de se pencher en dehors—
Nicht hinauszuhehnen—

that represents no triplicated passion for Safety First, but simply an official regulation whereby the three languages of the country must all stand on the same level in public notices. So that Switzerland is not merely a confederation of 22 different cantons, but an agglomeration of at least three different peoples. And out of that national personality has unmistakably been fused.

The differences, no doubt, matter less than they might in view of the fact that owing to her unique

neutrality and inviolability Switzerland has little of a foreign policy to consider. That does not mean that she has no interest in international affairs. The effect of the Ruhr occupation—an effect uniformly adverse—on public opinion has been striking. But it remains true none the less that the main function of the German-Swiss, the French-Swiss and the relatively small Italian-Swiss elements is to work together (with, of course, numerous cross-divisions) on internal affairs instead of pulling apart over external.

It is curious that in spite of that the public question on which feelings are most stirred to-day is one of foreign relations. It would be too long a business to explain here the affair of the "zones." It is enough to say that on certain Western frontiers of Switzerland France has, under various old agreements, kept her Customs houses some distance within her political frontier, the French territory between this Customs-line and the political frontier becoming thus a free-trade area for Switzerland. During the war everything, of course, was tightened up, and the French pushed their douanes on to the Swiss border. There they now claim the right to keep them, and an agreement with the Swiss Government to that effect was concluded. But here the public raised its voice, which under a constitution that includes both initiative and referendum it can do very effectively. Angered by the Ruhr occupation, which affected Switzerland directly, the Swiss people rejected the zone agreement by a referendum vote of five to one, and deadlock on the question now prevails.

In point of fact Switzerland, despite its large Franco-Swiss population, is at present definitely anti-French. The German part of the population has, of course, expressed itself freely regarding the Ruhr, and the French-Swiss Catholics are, as the result of the Pope's letter, disposed to take much the same line.

That is the more natural in that the effects of the Ruhr occupation have come as the climax of a series of economic strains under which Switzerland is labouring. She is, as everyone knows, largely dependent on her tourist industry. Since the war practically the whole of her Austrian, her Russian and her German clientèle has vanished. In addition, the fact that her exchange stood till a few months ago above par, and till two years or so ago very much above par, automatically kept British and other foreigners away and would have done so even without the further fact that the low exchanges in Italy and France were attracting tourists to resorts in those countries rather than in Switzerland.

On top of that came the export of capital due to alarm as proposed Socialist measures, notably the attempted capital levy of last year. As a result of one factor and another the Swiss franc, which not so long ago stood at 21 to the £, is to-day nearer 27 than 26 and falling steadily, while unemployment has reached a level for which there are few precedents. Politically the result is to cement a coalition of all other parties (which fall broadly into the two categories of Catholics and Radicals) against the Socialists, whose stock, after their devastating capital levy defeat, stands temporarily at any rate very much at a discount.

But, speaking generally, there is no reason why Switzerland's position should trouble her patriots unduly. Her staple industries, the machinery of Winterthur and Zurich, the embroideries of St. Gall, the chocolate of Vevey and elsewhere, the watchmaking of Geneva and Neuchâtel, the milk and the wine of every rural district, the wines of Vaud and Valais—all these are sound enough, and if Europe as a whole should ever regain peace and stability, Switzerland, all fear of attack absent, and markets and sources of raw material open, should acquire again the prosperity she has for a brief period lost.

I do not remember having ever heard our *National Task* expressed with such felicity in so few words before, and I could wish that the sentence quoted could be printed in large letters, framed and hung in a prominent position in the Council room of each Cantonal Council, as well as of the National Council and the States Council for the ever-present benefit of all our Councillors!

A Veteran Alpine Guide.

Some little while ago I printed some matter connected with the Matterhorn tragedy of 1865. The following article will be of interest to many of my elder readers. The *Observer* (8th July):—

There recently passed away, in the mountain village of Zermatt, canton Valais, Switzerland, a notable figure, Peter Taugwalder the younger, the last survivor of the never-to-be-forgotten first ascent of that grand rock pyramid, the Matterhorn, on July 14, 1865. Born in the well-known village 6,000 feet up by the banks of the Visp, "Peter," a familiar figure to so many climbers, lived and died in the village of his birth, and with his "passing" is turned the last page in the book of that tragic adventure which ended the most daring enterprise in the history of Alpine climbing.

"For some time previous to 1865," writes the Rev. C. A. Wilberforce Robins, in "Chambers's Journal," "various attempts had been made to find a way up the Matterhorn. This noble peak was always considered by the natives to be inaccessible, and no human being had ever set foot on its summit. At last the day arrived when, nearly sixty years ago, the intrepid Englishman, Edward Whymper, who probably had to his credit more first ascents than any other climber of his day, succeeded in reaching the summit, accompanied by Charles Hudson, Hadow, Lord Francis Douglas, and guides Michel Croz and Peter Taugwalder, father and son. The ascent was accomplished by the Eastern face; and when the party stood on the top and unfurled their little flag of victory, they saw the Italian party, which had left Breuil to climb the mountain on the south-west side, coming up, some 1000 ft. below them. The Italian party, on seeing what they knew were the victors on the top, fled quickly down the mountain, only to return some days later and complete the ascent on the south-west side."

Whymper's party left the summit for the descent in the following order: Michel Croz, the famous Chamonix guide, led the way, followed by poor Hadow, Hudson, and Douglas, Taugwalder senior, Taugwalder junior, and Whymper at the end of the rope. On reaching the "shoulder," not far from the top, probably the most dangerous spot, Michel Croz turned completely round towards Hadow to give him assistance, and to place his feet on the safest ground. I am describing it as best I can from my knowledge of the mountain and Whymper's own narrative to me when he spoke of his dread that day of any undue strain on what he feared was a weak rope, though his own portion of it would have stood any strain put on it. Whilst turning round to continue his way, Croz was