

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: - (1934)

Heft: 670

Nachruf: J.C. Rathgeb †

Autor: St.

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: 30.01.2025

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

R. I. P.

J. C. RATHGEB †.

We deeply regret to announce the peaceful passing away on Sunday last, of M. J. C. Rathgeb, of "Wolverton," Finchley, Church End, N., at the age of 88. —

Born in 1846 at Horgen, Ct. Zurich, the deceased left his parental home in 1864 at the age of 18 to try his luck in foreign lands. London, the great Metropolis of the British Empire, was his ambition and to London he came. In those days a journey to London was not such a simple affair as it is nowadays, but there was no obstacle big enough to discourage a young man who was determined to satisfy his life's ambition.

At that time prejudice against foreigners was far more pronounced than it is to-day, and it was not easy for an outsider to gain a footing on these now so hospitable shores. But there was a young man who made up his mind to succeed, and succeed he did, as will be seen from the following account.

After having occupied some minor positions, the late Mr. Rathgeb entered the then well-established firm of Louis Henlé & Co., General Merchants, of Walbrook, E.C., who had business connections all over the world. There was an opportunity for a young and ambitious man to show what stuff he was made of. Before long his principal became aware of the great capabilities of his young employee, and he entrusted him with important missions to various foreign lands. For many years Mr. Rathgeb travelled extensively in Germany, France, Belgium, Italy, Denmark, Sweden, Norway, Finland and Russia, and some time before the death of his principal, he was made a partner of the firm, in recognition of faithful service.

When in 1914 the world war broke out, which had such disastrous results especially to concerns trading with foreign countries, difficult times lay in front of our late friend, but with an iron determination in which his immense

wealth of experience stood him in good stead, he mastered difficulties which seemed at one time almost insurmountable, and was proudly able to keep the old flag flying, when all around this terrible war was claiming its victims not only on the battle-fields but also in this great City of London. What was the secret of this undeniable success? Mr. Rathgeb had given it to the writer some years ago, it consisted of two insignificant words: *Hard work.* —

A faithful companion in his early struggles was his wife, an English lady, who presented him with five children, three daughters and two sons, all of whom are happily still alive, with the exception of one son who gave his life for his adopted country during the Boer war. In the year 1900 he lost his constant and faithful partner, who had faced storm and sunshine with him, but a happy providence filled this sad gap, by the tender care which his unmarried daughter has bestowed on him until the eventide of his long earthly pilgrimage.

One would think that a busy life would have left but little time for recreation, and yet Mr. Rathgeb was one of the best-known athletes and gymnasts of Victorian times. Countless cups, medals and diplomas adorn his home at Finchley. To mention only a few, we may state that as far back as 1865 he won, at a gymnastic Festival at the Crystal Palace, the one and only coined medal of the German Gymnastic Society. Nine years later, on the occasion of a great International Sports rally, again at the Crystal Palace, the first prize, a large silver medal and cup was presented to him by the National Olympian Association for Promotion of Physical Education, together with a diploma declaring him Champion of all England. The then Prince of Wales, later King Edward, who was present expressed a wish to be introduced to this famous sportsman, and the Shah of Persia, then on a visit to this country and an eye-witness of the display, extended an invitation to the champion to

accompany him to his capital to take up a position as a gymnastic instructor, an invitation which was however politely declined. Another feat worth mentioning is that in 1866 he accompanied the celebrated rope dancer, Charles Blondin, of Niagra Falls fame, across the rope at an Exhibition which took place at the Agricultural Hall, and which at that time caused a great stir.

Mr. Rathgeb was not only a prominent business man and a great sportsman, but also made a name as a collector; his home, which he had occupied for over 50 years, contains not only a collection of valuable pictures but a most exquisite collection of old Dresden, Meissener and Sèvres china, which denoted his excellent taste as a collector.

The Swiss Mercantile Society had counted him as a member ever since its foundation and with the exception of a short interruption he has been a member of the City Swiss Club since 1864. Many of the younger generation will, of course, remember Mr. Rathgeb as having met him at various social functions at the City Swiss Club or the Swiss Mercantile Society where his kind face, with the little twinkle in his eyes made him a welcome visitor. The writer vividly remembers how at some social functions, in spite of his great age, he entertained the audience with a few comic Swiss songs, and how our hearts went out to that man who had spent the greater part of his life away from his native land, and yet kept an ever green memory and a young and warm beating heart for the land of his fathers. He was a great and splendid example for some of the younger generation. And now this faithful heart has ceased to beat, those kindly eyes are closed, but in the hearts of all those, who have known this great old man, he will leave a never-to-be forgotten memory.

Our country has lost in him a true and faithful son, and we, who remain behind, are mourning a lovable man.

ST.

J. HAUENSTEIN †.

On Tuesday last, J. Hauenstein, who suddenly passed away through cerebral haemorrhage, was cremated at the Golders Green Crematorium.

J. Hauenstein, who was 64 years of age, was born at Dietikon (Ct. Zurich), and came over to this country some forty years ago. In 1902 he established himself in the City as an agent for Swiss Textile firms.

Aided by great business abilities, coupled with a high integrity, he managed to build up a business which enjoyed a reputable name in this particular trade.

J. Hauenstein was married to an English lady, and leaves a widow and two sons behind. He was not often seen at the functions of the Colony, as he devoted his spare time to his family who found in him a devoted and affectionate husband and father. He however kept in touch with many of his Swiss friends, as well as with his native country; the latter, in spite of his long absence, he never forgot, he was proud of his nationality, and in return we were proud of calling him one of us.

J. Hauenstein was a man who never pushed himself to the front, he was unassuming, quiet and reserved, but amongst his friends, and in the intimacy of his family he found his happiness and true recreation, and his untimely departure will leave a great gap.

He died in harness; as quietly as he lived he slipped away, leaving behind him a large number of friends who will sadly miss him. We tender to his family our sincere sympathy, may the thought, that he will remain in lasting remembrance to many, be of some consolation to them in their sad bereavement.

C. J. DURUZ †.

We deeply regret to record the death of Mr. Charles, Joseph Duruz, which occurred on Thursday, August 16th, at the Bevan Nursing Home, Sandgate.

Mr. Duruz, who was aged 64, was born at Estavayer, in Switzerland, and came to Hythe about 40 years ago. His first position was that of head gardener at the Hotel Imperial, then known as the Seabrook Hotel.

Five years later he saw the opportunity for a really go-ahead nurseryman and horticulturist in Hythe, and he took the step of opening his own business, which, subsequently grew from year to year, until to-day he could be reckoned amongst the most successful tradesmen in Hythe.

Mr. Duruz, who was a Fellow of the Royal Horticultural Society, was the principal of the firm of Messrs. C. Duruz and Sons, of The Nurseries, Seabrook Road, and the premises, 30, High Street, Hythe.

He is survived by his widow and two sons, to whom we express our deepest sympathy.

L. E. JACCARD †.

We regret to announce the death of M. L. E. Jaccard, who lost his life in a fire which occurred last Saturday, at his business premises in Clerkenwell Road. M. Jaccard was a bachelor 70 years old and a native of St. Croix. He was a gramophone engineer who enjoyed a considerable reputation in his trade.

HEIMAT — ANDACHT.

ALFRED HUGGENBERGER.

Ich liebe meiner Heimat Auen,
Verklärt von tiefer Sommerlust;
Ein süßes, heiliges Vertrauen
Schwillt wie ein Wunder in der Brust.
Vor soviel stillem Dank und Freuen
Muss eines Gottes Zorn vergeh'n,
Er muss der Sterne Gold verstreuen
Und mit drei Engeln Wache steh'n.

Ich liebe die vergess'nen Weiler,
Die Zeugen zäher Bauernkraft;
Sie steh'n wie graue Eichenpfeiler,
Von keiner Flut hinweggerafft.
Ob nicht in einer engen Kammer
Die reine Seele träumt und wacht,
Die uns'rer Zeiten Not und Jammer
Mit grosser Tat ein Ende macht?

Ich liebe meiner Heimat Berge,
Weil sie so stolz und einsam sind.
Der Herr des Erdballs wird zum Zwerge,
Der kühle Spötter wird zum Kind.
Ein Kirchlein, wie dem Fels entstiegen,
Klebt grau in grau an steiler Fluh,
Es sendet, laut und doch verschwiegen,
Dem Himmel eine Bitte zu.

Ich kann auch einen Festtag lieben,
Wenn seine Pulse machtvoll geh'n,
Wenn rings, mit Flammenschrift geschrieben,
Am Horizont die Zeichen steh'n.
Singt, feiert! Lasst die Banner wehen,
Der Stunde gebt, was ihr gebührt!
Verschlaf'ne sollen aufersteh'n,
Vom Hauch der Weihe angerührt.