

# Swiss students at Southend

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# SWISS NATIONAL FETE DAY.

1st August 1291-1934.

When the tumult of the day has died down, when the hurrying footsteps of those returning from work are not heard anymore, when the little children are safely put away in their cots, when father turns to the newspaper, lights his pipe or cigar or cigarette and settles himself down in his chair to read of happenings outside his immediate circle, when, mother takes up her darning needle and when, through the wide-open windows the preciously cool air of the summer evening streams into the room and all is peace and quietude, when, in the words of that wonderful song "Die Daemmerung sinkt auf's Schweizerland" then, if it be the 1st of August, all of a sudden, bells are heard all over the country, joyous bells, thankful bells, little ones and big, deep-voiced ones, all sending out one momentous message to the people:

## Switzerland Again Celebrates Its Independence!

Gladness and gratitude fill the heart of every right thinking man and woman. Gladness that once again Switzerland has been allowed to live a year in peace, gratitude that once again the Swiss People may celebrate that precious gift which surpasses everything else in importance, that FREEDOM.

Bon-fires are lit on the hills and mountains, signalling one to the other that "all is well," songs are sung in the Towns and villages testifying to the same message, speeches are made from endless platforms to thank Providence and to exhort the listeners to continue living lives worthy of FREEMEN and FREEWOMEN.

We SWISS living abroad, separated from our homeland by land and by sea, send our innermost thoughts across on that evening, across to our beloved country, across to the hills and dales, the eternal mountains and in those moments, when we celebrate in close union of spirit with our kinsmen at home, we too feel that deep gratitude, that holy stir in our hearts, we too, testify with our kinsmen and rejoice that once again "all is well."

We are proud to signal, not only to each other, but to the World at large, that "all is well" in Switzerland. We know very well that there is a great deal happening also in Switzerland, to which that signal could not be applied, but when, on the 1st of August we Swiss celebrate our INDEPENDENCE, we say "all is well," and we signal it to those abroad, not in a spirit of arrogance, of superiority, but in a spirit of deep gratitude, and in the hope that others, who, in an effort to cure the ills that beset their people, chase after all sorts of chimerical expedients, might take stock of themselves and their thoughts and turn, for a moment, to the contemplation of what has been achieved in Switzerland and what is being held fast there.

It has been stated with a great show of reason that the abolition of patriotism must necessarily precede any serious attempt to bring the Nations of the World together in a closer union.

It all depends what one understands by the term "patriotism." If it means the love one bears one's own country to the exclusion of kindly

consideration for any other, if it means that one's own country must be considered right in every case, that one's own country must come first in every instance, that one must be imbued with the notion that no other country can possibly come near it in any way, that no other country's people can possibly be anywhere so good and excellent as one's own countrymen and women, then I agree to the necessity of abolishing Patriotism.

If on the other hand, Patriotism means the natural love any living man and woman has for his or her country of origin, the same as the love that a Winterthurer quite naturally feels for his home-town, but which does not prevent him for feeling a deep love also for the Canton of Zurich and equally so, even more perhaps, for the country of Switzerland, then I disagree.

Patriotism which enables one to extend one's love for one's nearest home to the larger home without and from that to the still larger home which is represented by the country of one's birth, and from that, it would follow quite naturally, to the still larger home represented, say, by the Continent of one's birth, and, still extending, to the whole Earth, is a fine thing and to be encouraged.

And, I think and hope, in that respect, we Swiss can be an example to others. We can show other Nationals that, although we are Swiss first and foremost, we are also good Europeans and good "Worlders" if I may coin that name.

When we come to look into the history of the Swiss Confederation, as we know it to-day, we shall see that it has grown up from very small beginnings, in precisely the same way, as the World-Confederation will grow up. From a beginning of three small Cantons in 1291, it embraces to-day 24 Cantons, most of them, as individual Cantons, larger than any of the three first ones.

This progress from the smaller to the larger UNIT has been slow, has necessitated a number of wars, all sorts of "international" clashes, religious strife, economic wars, congresses and conferences in great numbers and of the most varied composition, but, finally and under the pressure of necessity as much as because the individual really wanted it, the FUSION has come about, gradually, painfully at times, joyously in other instances.

Tariff wars, quotas I believe, and other trade hampering devices, all have been used at one time or another during the growth of this Switzerland, this Swiss League of Nations, until to-day, Switzerland has

ONE COUNTRY — ONE CONSTITUTION —  
ONE DESTINY

which constitutes PATRIOTISM.

In other words, the growth of the small units into a larger WHOLE has not done away with Patriotism, but, on the contrary, made Patriotism

possible, in a loftier form, in a form which in its interpretation means much more to the welfare of the individual Swiss than did the old form of patriotism embracing only the smaller unit.

"ALL IS WELL" signal the celebrations in Switzerland on the 1st of August 1934, because the difficulties of the time through which we, in common with the whole World are passing and which are, as, I believe, emerges fairly clearly from the above, but the travail of the World struggling towards that greater FUSION of its individual units, are difficulties which, although they beset our people at home directly and impose extremely heavy sacrifices upon them, are as nothing, compared to the all important fact that our Switzerland, that lovely, beautiful country of ours, is SAFE and INDEPENDENT.

Therefore, when WE SWISS celebrate the 1st of August let us be aware of the deep significance attached to that UNITY and INDEPENDENCE which we celebrate. Let us take renewed hope that one day it may be possible to celebrate this festival of achieved Unity and Independence on a much larger scale. Let us hope that the World at large will finally realise that salvation will come only when the various units come together, that improvement will be possible only when the various forms of warfare in which the various countries are engaging in to-day, have ceased and when in their stead there is PEACE and GOODWILL, UNITY and INDEPENDENCE.

We all have learnt, from the lips of men like Arthur Henderson and others qualified to form an opinion on such matters that FEAR is the greatest stumbling block to Disarmament and to the efforts that are being made to abolish trade barriers, in other words, to the bringing together of the Nations into one harmonious, and therefore INDEPENDENT WHOLE.

May not they look at the history of Switzerland too, they that FEAR?

Swiss history will teach them of fears that brought about wars and other disturbances throughout the growth of the Swiss Confederation. At the same time, the Switzerland we know to-day, will teach them, how utterly unfounded those fears were, how infinitely better off the various, formerly individually independent members of the Swiss Confederation are to-day, now that their former individual has been merged into the greater sovereignty embracing them all.

"ALL IS WELL!" Let us pray that this signal may flash next year not only from the eternal mountains of our beloved Switzerland, but from all the beacons right throughout the whole world!

And meanwhile, on the evening of August 1st, 1934, let us send our affectionate thoughts across to our dear homeland, commune with our people and celebrate with them, and let us thank GOD and invoke his further blessing on the land of our fathers.

By KYBURG.

Heil Dir Helvetia.

Vive la Suisse.

El viva Svizzera.

## SWISS STUDENTS AT SOUTHEND.

A Mayoral welcome was extended on Saturday last, to a party of 45 Swiss Students, mainly from Basle and district, who are staying in Southend for three weeks. The ceremony took place in the Council Chamber, and Alderman Bockett, chairman of the Governors of Southend High School for Boys, and Dr. W. I. Moore, headmaster of the school, were among his Worship's supporters.

The Mayor said this was the first time that students from Switzerland had visited Southend to reside in the homes of English boys. They would be enabled to obtain an insight into English family life. Visits of that character were an expression of the good will and respect which existed between Great Britain on the one hand and Switzerland on the other.

The exchange of visits between students of the different countries was a good foundation for bringing about proper understanding and confidence among nations. For the last few years the world had been passing through troublous times, and now all nations were looking forward to the return to prosperity, which brought in its train confidence and good feeling, which, in its turn, led to the happiness and well-being of the community as a whole. Happiness was the desired state which every man, whatever his nationality, aspired to attain, and happiness could only be attained by kindness and good will

of neighbours. That applied to nations equally as much as to individuals.

He hoped the impression of the welcome the students would obtain as a result of their visit would remain throughout their lives. By spreading that impression among their fellow countrymen they would be doing an enormous amount of good work, helping forward a feeling of good will and toleration among the nations.

Mrs. Alexander, the German mistress at Southend High School for Boys, translated the Mayor's remarks.

Dr. Dietschi, the leader of the Swiss party, in reply, said they had been asked how they liked their stay in Southend. They appreciated everything they had seen up to now.

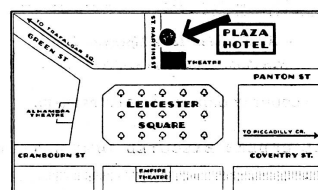
They appreciated the town itself; its fine institutions; its trams, which were very clean and very rapid; the fine arrangements for the sea front, especially the cliffs gardens, which were a wonderful sight, a sight which people who had travelled quite a lot appreciated very highly; the beach pools for the children and so on; and the pier which fascinated them.

He had heard many words of appreciation of the people of Southend; the students had been made to feel that they had been taken into the families with which they were staying. Wherever they went they were welcomed by a friendly smile.

Peter Wolfmaster, one of the students, also replied.

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