

La Suisse et le monde

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LEMO TICINESE.

Sembrava un enorme ferro di cavallo arroventato, gettato là sulle falde del monte Boglia. E pareva volesse abbracciare tutto il monte, nella cupa notte. Ardeva, si spingeva sempre più in su, indomabile, irrequieto. . . . Uno dei soliti incendi di montagna che impressionano così tanto e che fanno restar estatici, ad ammirarli . . . frutto solito di solite imprudenze, meglio, di solite sbadataggini di contadini o viandanti che gettano via il mozzicone del loro sigaro, senza pensare che all'improvviso, in un baleno, quel loro innocente mezzo di una placida fumatina, può tramutarsi in spaventevole incendio. . . . All'alba più nulla. Solo chiazze rossastre, qua e là, cenere . . . odor penetrante di bruciaticcio. Mentre, placida, la cittadina dormiva, indisturbata, arditi esperti domavano, nelle tenebre rotte da bagliori sinistri, il fuoco — aiutati da bravi terrieri — lo domavano così come san far loro, alimentando altre fiamme che s'avventassero contro le prime, soffocandole. . . .

Ciò che sta cercando d'imitare pure il partito liberale-radical ticinese. . . . Trovando che di partiti politici ce ne sono troppo pochi nel Ticino, pensarono bene di dividersi in due campi, nettamente distinti, ognuno con criteri, capi, giornali propri. . . . tanto ben distinti che alla fin fine c'è chi non sa più se appartiene al partito liberale-radical oppure al partito liberale-radical democratico; i due gruppi tengono manifestazioni, organizzano riunioni, cercando chi più può avere il maggior numero di seguaci, pronti poi sempre ad attaccarsi a vicenda . . . ed i vessilli, i gonfaloni, svolazzano, dopo ogni manifestazione, sul piazzale della Stazione della capitale, che guarda, incuriosita quella novità. . . . Così le discussioni politiche, le schermaglie, si accentuano sempre di più, e tutti, con la buona intenzione di essere i salvatori della terra loro, inveiscono, arruffando le cose, facendo forse i danni del cantone al quale, con tanto slancio, tutti intendono dare il massimo benessere. . . .

Proprio vero. Tante teste tant'idee. — Veramente io, come donna, la politica non dovrei toccarla, anche perché me ne intendo ben poco di essa — quel tanto solo che basti per non farmi ri-

tenere completa citrulla da chi mi parli di politica; quel tanto che basti per comprendere al minimo le sorti del mio paese; tutta la mia politica potrebbe rinchiudersi in una pillola . . . amaro-gnola (non posso pensare alla politica dolciastra!) — anche se, in altri tempi ed in altra nazione, io, un giorno, tutta pomposa, me ne andai a votare . . . votazione alla quale partecipai più per peccato (e da qui questa mia pubblica confessione . . . per penitenza!) di curiosità e d'orgoglio che per convinzione. Di curiosità per vedere come si svolgono queste famose votazioni; per orgoglio per poter dire, con un tantin di commiserazione forse: "Ho votato anch'io" a chi non può votare trovandosi in paesi dove, alle donne, ciò non è permesso; (e fanno benissimo: alla donna il focolare domestico, all'uomo . . . la fornace politica; alla donna lo scavare, serena, il giardino casalingo, all'uomo lo scavare, nella politica, solchi che si fanno sempre più profondi magari . . . ed infruttuosi). Ma . . . segno dei tempi anche questo: la donna vuol cacciarsi ovunque — ed anche nel piccolo Ticino, come nelle grandi metropoli, gli uffici sono pieni di tanti bei (sempre?) sorrisi femminili . . . e le macchine da scrivere cantano allegramente, toccate da gentili manine ben tenute . . . i numeri (quei numeracci, bestia nera quasi sempre delle bimbe, a scuola) diventano disegni leggiadri se trattati da una matita che sa di Coty . . . ed i giovanotti passeggiano intanto . . . assillati dal come e da dove far sortire un impiego — per dieci gendarmi richiesti, trecento i concorrenti. . . . Anche il Ticino ha le sue business girls . . . relativa disoccupazione maschile. . . . Modernissimo quindi il Ticino! — Press'a poco cento sono le sue maestre disoccupate; finalmente, però, è venuta la tanto attesa legge (e tanto combattuta!): alla maestra che si sposa il Dipartimento Pubblica Educazione fa il regalo di obbligarla a starsene a casa . . . cedere il posto a chi, per intanto, non ha ancora il maritino . . . così . . . il giovanotto che vuol sposare una docente, sa ora che la sua dolce metà dovrà insegnare alle caseruolette, alle scope, alle vivande, tutta la scienza che prima scodellava a scuola; ed invece di poter dire: "mia moglie guadagna tanto e tanto facendo scuola" potrà concedersi il lusso di esclamare: "mia moglie spende tanto e tanto facendo la massaia!" . . .

Febbraio, 1934.

ELENA GHIRINGHELLI LUNGI.

LA SUISSE ET LE MONDE.

Par G. de REYNOLD.

A l'entrée d'un monde nouveau, en présence de théories appliquées comme le racisme, la Suisse doit se demander quelle est sa raison d'être.

Notre raison d'être n'est point de l'ordre économique. La Suisse a plus d'un million d'habitants qu'elle ne peut nourrir. Elle est sans issue vers la mer, sans colonies, sans matières premières; un tiers de son territoire est stérile. Elle est donc incapable de fonder son existence sur le motif économique.

N'aurions-nous donc qu'une raison d'être politique? Celle-ci encore serait insuffisante. Le politique possède une valeur supérieure à l'économique, mais, comme ce dernier, il n'est qu'un moyen, non une fin en soi.

Il est vrai que nous devons nous efforcer de différer politiquement le plus possible de nos voisins, puisque nous ne saurions en différer par la race ni la langue. Mais la démocratie avec ses tendances à la centralisation étatique menace de nous conduire de par les nécessités de la crise au même régime unitaire que celui de nos voisins. La raison d'être de la Suisse est son histoire et l'idéal de société humaine que dégage cette histoire.

Nous sommes de la plus vieille civilisation occidentale. Nous la résumons sous ses deux aspects latin et german, méditerranéen et nordique. Notre puissance à la vie indépendante, née le 1er août 1291, est le résultat d'une longue gestation. Entre le fossé du Rhin, le rempart des Alpes et la barrière du Jura, depuis l'époque post-glacière, la nature avait dégagé un espace pour être la cellule de communautés libres. L'assemblée des hommes qui délibéraient en armes, sous la présidence du chef, et qui survit dans les Landsgemeinde d'Unterwald et des Appenzell, apparaît avant César et la conquête romaine.

Avec les barbares, la frontière des lanposite surgit, Germains encadrés de Latins, à l'Ouest et au Sud. Les plus nombreux de ces barbares, les Alamans, apportent une force politique, un esprit d'indépendance qui agit comme un aimant: nos cantons et notre système de milices viennent d'eux. Le corps de la Suisse est déjà sorti de la terre, modelé sur celle-ci: s'il lui manque une

DIALOGUE ON DEBTS.

The American Dilemma.

A correspondent has directed our attention to a most interesting article by Mr. Irving Brant which was published in the November issue of "International Conciliation," a monthly pamphlet issued by the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, Worcester, Mass., U.S.A. The article takes the form of a witty dialogue, but its humour adds piquancy to an expression of sound common sense. It begins with a definition of War debts and proceeds:—

Q.—How was the money sent to Europe?

A.—The money was not sent to Europe. It was paid to American manufacturers, farmers and other business men by a committee of the American War Industries Board.

Q.—What for?

A.—Munitions of war, food, cotton and other supplies sent to our Allies; transportation, shipping, interest.

Q.—How much was loaned after the Armistice?

A.—\$2,500,000,000, plus \$740,000,000 in relief supplies.

Q.—How was this post-Armistice money sent to Europe?

A.—It was not sent to Europe. It was practically all spent in the United States for the purchase of War supplies, cereals and cotton sent to our Allies.

Q.—Why were these loans made to the Allied Powers after the Armistice?

A.—The principal reason given by the Secretary of the Treasury was that these loans would enable American business men to complete their War-time contracts with the Allied Powers. If these contracts were suddenly cancelled, he said, it would have an injurious effect upon American business.

The question of the rate of interest is thus discussed:—

Q.—Why should England pay 3.3 per cent. while France pays only 1.6 per cent.?

A.—Because England was looked upon as a wealthy, powerful nation, while France was poor and struggling?

Q.—How much does England owe?

A.—\$4,300,000,000.

Q.—How much gold has England?

A.—\$800,000,000.

Q.—How much does France owe?

A.—\$3,800,000,000.

Q.—How much gold has France?

A.—\$3,400,000,000.

Q.—Then is France really a poorer and more struggling nation than England?

A.—Not poorer, but more struggling. France struggles much harder to keep her gold.

Economic Law.

The French, it is explained, expected to pay their debt with money obtained from Germany.

Q.—Why should the French have such an expectation?

A.—It seemed a natural line of reasoning to them. Germany was to pay the cost of the War. The debt to the United States was part of the cost of the War. Therefore Germany should pay the French debt. That was the way they figured it.

Q.—Had Germany been doing so?

A.—Yes. All French payments on the War debt were made with reparations money from Germany.

Q.—Where did Germany get the money?

A.—Germany borrowed it from the United States.

Q.—So the United States loaned money to Germany with which to pay France, so that France could use it to pay the United States?

A.—Yes.

Q.—What about England?

A.—It was the same way there, only more round about. The United States loaned money to Germany. Germany paid it to France. France used part of it to pay off her War debt to England. England sent it to the United States.

Q.—Of the entire three billion dollars paid by European nations on their War debts to the United States since the Armistice, how much was paid out of American money loaned to Europe?

A.—All of it.

Q.—Then the United States really hasn't collected a cent?

A.—Not a cent. We have merely loaned the money with which we have been repaid.

Q.—Why did Germany quit paying reparations?

A.—Because the United States quit loaning money to her.

Q.—Then the War debt payments have stopped in reality because we have stopped loaning our debtors the money with which to repay us?

A.—Exactly.

Q.—How did we ever let them put over a trick like that?

A.—It wasn't a trick. It was the result of economic law.

Q.—What economic law? What is the real reason we can't collect our War debts?

A.—The fundamental reason is that we made the loans in the form of goods, and we insist on being repaid in gold.

Q.—Is there any way we can collect the War debts?

A.—Yes.

Q.—How?

A.—By taking payment in goods and services. By importing more goods than we export. By accepting an "unfavourable" balance of trade.

Q.—Is this generally understood?

A.—It has been said a thousand times in the past ten years, and still the country won't believe it.

The Conclusion.

The discussion then turns to the alternative means of accepting payment and their social and economic consequences, leading to this dramatic passage:—

Q.—When we refuse to accept goods in payment of the debt, aren't we ourselves proposing to cancel it?

A.—Exactly. In theory we say "Pay." But in practice we say "Cancel."

Q.—How will it end?

A.—In cancellation. The economic forces opposing payment are too powerful.

After discussing the fundamental difference between domestic expenditure on armaments and making payments overseas, the dialogue goes on:

Q.—Didn't we issue Liberty Bonds to make these loans? If Europe won't pay, won't we have to tax ourselves to pay off the Liberty Bonds?

A.—We surely will.

Q.—Well, doesn't that prove we are right, morally?

A.—Morally, we are always right.

Q.—France has gold. Why can't France pay?

A.—France cherishes this delusion that this money was a gift to make the world safe for democracy.

Q.—Where did that idea originate?

A.—Mostly in the French imagination. But several unfortunate remarks were made in Congress, during the debate on granting the first War loans in 1917.

These remarks showed that the possibility of the debt not being repaid was clearly envisaged in the United States.

(The Times Trade and Engineering Supplement, March.)

âme, le christianisme la lui donnera. Je veux évoquer ici les saints nationaux qui, de saint Maurice et de ses compagnons martyrs, jusqu'au bienheureux Nicolas de Flue, patron de la Suisse, ont vu, de leur éternité, leur culte se répandre partout; je veux également parler de l'action civilisatrice exercée sur le pays entier de Charlemagne, par des monastères comme celui de St.-Gall. Enfin, la Suisse, comme telle, est surtout une survivance du Saint-Empire germanique et romain. Les paysans libres de la Suisse primitive, cette aristocratie montagnards, ne relevaient que des empereurs. Pas besoin de légende pour expliquer la naissance politique de la Suisse: sa date est l'ouverture au trafic du Saint-Gothard, le seul passage avec Brenner, qui reliait directement l'Italie et la Germanie, ces deux moitiés de l'Empire.

Ainsi, notre civilisation est composite, complète. Nous avons beaucoup moins créé, qu'adapté, assimilé. Là où cette civilisation est la plus originale, comme à Berne, à Fribourg, dans la région du Saint-Gothard, dans les Grisons, on pourrait lui appliquer cette définition que le philologue Ascoli donne de la langue gréco-romaine: forme latine et matière tudesque. Elle est l'image de notre terre et de notre peuple. Genève est purement latine, française avec des influences italiennes; à l'autre bout du pays, Schaffhouse est purement allemande du Haut-Rhin; mais on passe de Genève à Schaffhouse par des gradations et des transformations lentes, successives. Là est le charme, la saveur des œuvres suisses.

Nous demeurons des traditionalistes, des conservateurs. Notre génie est populaire avec des éléments aristocratiques; nos élites, de naissance ou de culture, n'ont jamais perdu contact avec le peuple. Nos plus grands esprits vivent d'une vie concentrée: la personne est le centre, puis la famille, puis le canton, qui est chez nous la patrie, puis la Suisse, puis enfin l'Europe. Nous devons à notre histoire d'avoir naturellement le sens de l'Europe, de joindre le particularisme à l'universalité. Ce petit pays ne cesse de produire et dans tous les domaines de la vie, vie économique ou vie militaire, vie d'aventure ou vie de la pensée, des tempéraments qu'il est trop étroit pour contenir, qui brisent les cercles, mais qui finissent par revenir au centre.

C'est ainsi qu'un type d'humanité, un idéal humain se dégage de notre terre et de notre histoire. Entre l'individualisme et l'étatisme, nous affirmons l'autonomie des intermédiaires: la famille, la cité, les associations de toutes sortes. Par là, nous avons maintenu et modernisé la manière primitive et naturelle de vivre. Nous opposons à l'unitarisme, le complexe, cette condition même de l'unité. Nous prouvons que des hommes de race, de langue, de religions différentes, ailleurs hostiles, peuvent vivre ensemble et que leur terre et leur histoire ont formé une nation. Nous sommes, comme l'écrivait Samuel Cornut, une petite Europe réconciliée avec elle-même, et, comme l'écrivait Robert de Traz, une affirmation de la volonté humaine contre toutes les formes de fatalisme, une victoire de l'homme sur l'homme. C'est par là que nous avons notre raison d'être, et cette raison est l'esprit.

Schweizer Echo.

NEWS FROM THE COLONY.

CITY SWISS CLUB.

The monthly meeting, preceded by dinner, of the City Swiss Club took place on Tuesday last, at Pagan's Restaurant, Great Portland Street, W., and was attended by about fifty members and guests: amongst the latter was Mr. A. E. Tschiffely, author of the book, "Southern Cross to Pole Star," and Mr. A. Steinmann, President of the Swiss Mercantile Society. Mr. Tschiffely made a very interesting after-dinner speech which was much appreciated.

After various speeches, the ordinary business of the meeting was quickly despatched by the President, M. H. Senn. Two resignations were announced and accepted; no admission. — "Tir Fédéral": a contribution of five guineas was voted from the funds as a donation towards the "Gaben Fund." The meeting also agreed in principle to again hold a First of August celebration this year. Close of the meeting, ten o'clock.

SWISS CLUB, BIRMINGHAM.

For one reason or another, our sister societies in the provinces make but little use of the official paper of the Swiss Colony in Great Britain; a fact which is all the more to be regretted, as we have on numerous occasions tried to encourage them by asking for reports of their doings.

It is hardly our fault, if many of our London Swiss are quite unaware that there are several Swiss Societies in existence throughout the country. Why all this shyness? Are they afraid that they will get bullied by their bigger Brethren in the Metropolis?

A much appreciated exception is the Swiss Club, Birmingham, an institution which periodically informs us of its activities. We have before us a circular which addresses itself to all Swiss, whether residing in Birmingham, or in the "vicinity."

We need hardly beat the drums for our friends at Birmingham; they are known as a stronghold of Swiss patriotism and solidarity in the provinces, and at the head of this small, but enterprising Society is our friend, M. P. Brun, who is a well-known and popular personality in the Swiss Colony in London.

The dinner and dance which has been arranged to take place on Saturday, March 17th, at the Midland Hotel in Birmingham, promises to become a most enjoyable event, and we are assured that no pains have been spared in order to make this function a great success.

The term "Swiss Rally" is used in the appeal, and we hope that many of our London Swiss, especially those who are owners of cars, will on Saturday, the 17th, drive down (or is it up?) to Birmingham, to spend a few happy hours with our compatriots in the Midlands; we are convinced that they will not regret it.

To Birmingham on the 17th.

PERSONAL.

We extend hearty congratulations to Mr. and Mrs. P. Bessire on the arrival of a little baby daughter, Anna-Marie.

LUCULLUS LODGE.

Ladies' Festival.

The Lucullus Lodge, which comprises amongst its members a large contingent of our countrymen, held its Ladies' Festival on Wednesday, February 28th at the First Avenue Restaurant, London, W.C.1, Mr. G. Wyss being in the chair.

The function was preceded by a reception held by the President, who was ably assisted by his charming wife. During the dinner an attractive programme of music was played by the Billy Davies Band. The menu cards, bound with a blue ribbon, formed a very pretty table decoration, the front page showing the colours of the Canton of Aargau, which was meant as a compliment to the Chairman, who hails from these quarters.

The Lodge, I assume, takes its name from that famous Roman General Lucullus, who was not only a great warrior, but an equally celebrated gourmet. This illustrious person, when once served with a mediocre meal, turned with disgust to his attendant, exclaiming: "Ne savais-tu pas que Lucullus soupait chez Lucullus?"

Well, this time Lucullus dined at the First Avenue Restaurant, and the menu was compiled by a famous chef, who is not only a member of the Lodge, but also one of our compatriots, namely, Mr. A. Indermaur. I feel almost tempted to give the full contents of the bill-of-fare, but space and a kindly feeling towards those who were not able to be present, prevent me from doing so. All I will say is that it was a "princely" feast, and I am convinced even Lucullus himself would have enjoyed it.

It is the custom at these functions that numerous toasts are proposed and drunk; these are announced by loud knocks with a wooden hammer, and two other gentlemen, whom I could not locate, lustily provided the echo, thus preventing anybody from taking a few winks in between the sumptuous courses.

The speeches were short. I especially enjoyed the one by the President, Mr. Wyss, who most feelingly dwelt on the happy relationship between the English and the Swiss members of the Lodge. Mr. J. Presnail eulogized with a very witty speech the Ladies, and his charming wife shortly and adequately replied to this toast. The toast to the President was proposed by Mr. C. L. Smith, and was heartily responded to. Mr. Stoddon, amid great applause, presented to Mrs. Wyss, on behalf of the members of the Lodge, a diamond bracelet as "a slight compensation for the absence of her husband from home on so many occasions, and as a token of the great esteem in which she is held." I thought this idea a very fine one, and I only wish that some of my friends, who at times keep me out late, would follow their example.

During the evening an entertainment was provided by Miss Bertha Willmott, who insisted on enticing all the gentlemen present into some dark valley, and if it had not been for their spouses being present, they would have "succumbed." Miss Polly Bask, who was as pretty as she was fair, sang charmingly about the "sweetest things," and all the men gazed at her in ecstasy, but when she suddenly burst into yodling and to intone that well-known Swiss song, "Nine geit's so schön u lustig," she absolutely brought the "house down," because it awakened amongst the Swiss members many sweet remem-

brances, and yodling seems to be always a source of amusement to our English friends. Clown Argo, with his mimics and funny noises, was most entertaining.

I understand that the greater part of the arrangements for this festival was in the capable hands of Mr. Edwards, and he is to be complimented for the excellent way in which he fulfilled his duties; everything went off without a hitch.

Dancing then followed, to the accompaniment of Billy Davies and his Pasadena Boys Bands, until the hour of 2.30 a.m. brought the Festival, which was attended by about 200 members and guests, to a close. It was truly a most enjoyable evening, and the Lucullus Lodge may be heartily congratulated on the success of this Ladies' Festival.

ST.

WILHELM WIDLER.†

We deeply regret to inform our readers of the death of Mr. Wilhelm Widler, *huissier* at the Swiss Legation, 18, Montagu Place, W.1, which occurred on Wednesday last.

Wilhelm Widler was born on the 13th of January, 1890, and was a native of Ottenbach (Ct. Zurich); he married Anna Widler, née Schwaninger, and there are two children; one boy, Richard, born in 1921, and a girl, Margaret-Anna, born in 1924.

Mr. Widler, who unfortunately lost his life in connection with a lift accident at the Legation, entered during the war into the service of our former Minister, Dr. Carlin, as a servant, and in 1920 was appointed *huissier* (Weibel). In this position he showed great capabilities, and a good all-round schooling which he enjoyed in his youth was a great help to him; he spoke fluent German, French and English. Widler was furthermore a clever mechanic, which, unfortunately, as he was using the lift in a different and unauthorised way, has cost him his life. He was also a handy cabinet maker, and several pieces at the Legation give proof of his great skill.

The Legation loses in Wilhelm Widler a conscientious and loyal servant, who has well attended to his duties. He was of a quiet and reserved disposition, and his shyness was often taken for a kind of roughness; but those who came in daily contact with him could make allowance for this peculiarity. Widler was at all times civil and obliging.

We tender to his wife and family our deepest sympathy in their tragic loss. Might the proofs of esteem which the short span of his life work earned him, be some consolation to them.

ARTHUR HONEGGER. BY W. TAPPOLET.

Hug: Zurich (in German).

The story told in this book makes it clear that Honegger is a composer to whom opportunities and repute came early. He received his first commission in 1918, at the age of twenty-six—it was to write incidental music to Paul Mèral's play, "Le Dit des Jeux du Monde," and this music created a scandal which witnesses described as a repetition on a smaller scale of that caused by Stravinsky's "Rite of Spring"—and in 1921 another two: from the Swedish Ballets for "Skating Rink," and from Switzerland for "Le Roi David," a work which created a great impression. By the time he was thirty his output was fairly considerable, and also fairly well-known. Shortly afterwards, "Horace Victorieux" and "Pacific 231" attracted considerable notice. He has been a subject of heated discussion, and new works from his pen find a ready welcome. All this may help to account for Mr. Tappolet's unhesitatingly proclaiming that "all that Stravinsky signifies for Europe, and Hindemith for the music of Germanic countries, is summed up no less strikingly in Honegger." But to indulge in sweeping assertions of this kind is dangerous. How many readers will agree with this other one, that the oratorio "The Cries of the World" is "a most powerful artistic expression of our time"? Probably very few in this country, where that work, recently broadcast, was almost unanimously found very disappointing. More generally, there is evidence enough that many judges whom one has every reason to suppose unprejudiced find that Honegger's music, despite its theoretical merits, often lacks the power to convince—very much like Hindemith's and probably for the same reasons: because he is (as pointed out by the Italian critics, Pannain, in a capital essay) too exclusively a technician, and a composer whose technical efficiency is not matched by his experience of, or interest in, life. He may be praised for his classical affinities, his sense of structure, his capacity for working according to plan; but he does not always succeed in imparting