

Zeitschrift: Helvetia : magazine of the Swiss Society of New Zealand
Herausgeber: Swiss Society of New Zealand
Band: 31 (1968)
Heft: [12]

Artikel: Dominus providebit
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DOI: <https://doi.org/10.5169/seals-942258>

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DOMINUS PROVIDEBIT

The Lord provides. Every man, woman and child in Switzerland should know these two words. But how many do, although they could see them many times a day. How? These two words work in secret as it were, yet every Swiss bank handles them a thousand times a day. Look at a Swiss five-franc silver piece, no, not where you might expect to find them, neither on the face nor on the reverse side, but along the edge in slightly raised letters, so tiny that one can only just decipher them. By accident almost was I made aware of them when I read an article by Hermann Wahlen in the monthly magazine of the Swiss Country Women's Association. And curiously enough, a few days later in the "Echo", monthly review of the Swiss abroad, Oskar Reck, President of the Nouvelle Societe Helvetique, mentioned them too in an article on political matters. And now, every time I handle a **Fuenfliber**, I feel for the words.

Dominus providebit. The fishermen on our picture patiently wait for their catch, sure in the knowledge that their endurance will sooner or later be rewarded. Few of them are conscious of why the fish may bite at all. We don't readily admit that our earthly goods are given us by the grace of God. If the fish bite, it is no doubt the excellence of the fly, the clever choice of the water, the super quality of the line, the expert handling of the rod. We consider our clever hands and astute brain responsible for our success and forget that they, too, are ours by the grace of God.

We complain and criticise and blame others if things go badly and overlook that we may have made the wrong use of what we have been endowed with.

On Sunday we celebrate the Federal Day of Thanksgiving, Atonement and Prayer. **Dominus providebit** — yes, we have much to be thankful for, not least for the strength the Lord provides to cope with adversity. Let us pray for faith and clarity of mind to realise our responsibilities, for the more we are provided with, the greater is our personal responsibility.

The recent events in another small country have made us realise once more how rich we are in having freedom. The Lord provided it, but it put an obligation on us. Heinz Kreis in the "Basler Nachrichten" said that the episode of long speeches, of patriotic exhortations, of pride and conceit has come to an end. We have been sobered up and realise that not all is well in the model democracy called Switzerland. Not all is well with our Swiss communities abroad; some of the young **Auslandschweizer** who spoke up at Schaffhausen put their fingers on more than one spot. Nor is all well in our own personal lives.

Dominus providebit — that is what we thank for, and that we may be granted guidance, humility and wisdom to see what this implies is what we pray for on Sunday.

—M.M.

(The Swiss Observer)