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THOUGHTS AND WISHES.

The year 1938, with its tribulations, disappointments and often bitter experiences, is about to pass into oblivion, and few will be the tears shed over its passing away. It has left the world, little better if not worse off than at its commencement, and a tired world is still longing and waiting for that betterment, which has been so often promised and yet seems so slow to arrive.

There are people who have almost given up hope, and have predicted that the seven lean years will be doubled if not trebled. Although there is little cause to be optimistic, whilst there is so much unrest, misunderstanding and ill-feeling amongst the various countries; yet it would be a sad outlook indeed if not one glimmer of hope was left in our hearts, that things must ultimately take a turn for the better. Does it not largely depend on each member of the community to hasten along, the turning of the tide? We all, each of us, some in the smaller, some in a larger degree can help to make our earthly abode a fitter and better place; by trying to foster that spirit of goodwill towards mankind. Let us start at home, or amongst our countrymen here and in our homeland, let us make an effort to understand each other more, to forgive and forget some of the things which have vexed or annoyed us in the past, to live more up to the maxim that "to err is human, but to forgive divine." —

It behoves the Editor of the *Swiss Observer* to pass a parting glance at the outgoing year, it would be superfluous to state, that the universal crisis had no effect on our venture, the truth is, that we have suffered like everyone else, and if we have not broadcasted our distress, we have done it, in order not to add to the worries of those who have given us their support in such a generous way, we believe in trying to fight our own battle, without squealing and appealing, whenever a dark cloud appears on the horizon.

We do not wish to strike a too pessimistic note, but we cannot help but look to the future of our paper with serious misgivings. The costs of production, owing to increased wages and higher paper charges, has substantially increased and a considerable loss seems to be in front of us.

Whilst new subscribers come in very sparingly, we have again lost through death and departure a number of old and faithful subscribers. Although we are quite aware that but few of our younger compatriots are allowed to settle in this country, we nevertheless feel that there are enough of our countrymen still residing here, to make our paper a success, if only they would come forward and give us their support.

We have for the past years in these columns appealed for help for all sorts of charities, collections, etc., both for the Colony and for our people abroad and at home. May we now in turn ask our readers to help us to carry our paper through a difficult time? This can be done in two ways, firstly by inducing your friends to subscribe to our paper, secondly by giving us advertisements. We would especially appeal to our countrymen in the Provinces to give us their support; we feel that with their help we could carry on this paper, which, in all humility, we consider has rendered some valuable services, during the last eighteen years.

We sincerely hope that this Appeal, which necessity dictates, will not go unanswered, and that the support which we so badly need at this juncture will be forthcoming. —

Yet in spite of some disappointments, the Editor is glad to say, that he has received throughout the year, numerous messages of appreciation and encouragement, especially from readers from the provinces, to whom the *Swiss Observer* is almost the only link between them and their country.

The Editor wishes to thank his collaborators, Kyburg, ck., M.G., E.G.L., Gallus, and Dr. E., for their great and never failing help, without which it would have been almost impossible to carry on. He wishes to thank the Swiss Minister and the Swiss Consuls at Liverpool, Manchester and Balloch for their appreciated and valuable co-operation. The Publisher for his never failing help and advice. Thanks are due to all those who have, from time to time sent articles or communications; including those, who, on many occasions have informed him, that they were *going* to write, and who *never* wrote, and he sincerely hopes, that amongst their New Year's resolutions will be the one, to honour a long standing promise.

Editor.

NOTRE POLITIQUE DE NATURALISATION.

Notre pays compte environ 140,000 habitants, presque exclusivement des jeunes classes d'âge, — qui sont nés en Suisse, mais ont néanmoins conservé leur nationalité étrangère. Il y a là un problème, dont l'importance n'échappe à personne, eu ce moment surtout, et que nos commissions de naturalisation devraient bien examiner de très près.

En 1930, date du dernier recensement fédéral, la Suisse hospitalisait environ 355,000 étrangers. La moitié, ou presque, n'ont conservé la nationalité étrangère que parce que notre droit public n'admet, en matière de naturalisation, que le "jus sanguinis" d'après lequel l'individu est rattaché par les liens du sang au pays auquel ressortit son père. Ce système, qui est de tradition en Suisse, jouti, on le sait, d'une grande renommée; au moins en théorie, car en pratique, il prête à de sérieuses critiques, surtout pour un petit pays comme le nôtre. C'est pourquoi la plupart des Etats lui préfèrent le système de l'incorporation "jure soli" en vertu duquel la nationalité est déterminée en principe, non plus par filiation, mais par la naissance sur un territoire déterminé. La loi fédérale de juin 1903 sur la naturalisation a fait un premier pas dans cette voie, en donnant aux cantons le pouvoir de décider que les enfants nés, sur leur territoire, d'étrangers domiciliés, sont de droit citoyens du canton et, partant, citoyens suisses, sans que l'autorisation du Conseil fédéral soit nécessaire, 1) si la mère est d'origine suisse, 2) si, à l'époque de la naissance de l'enfant, les parents étaient domiciliés dans le canton depuis au moins 5 ans. Mais la loi n'imposait pas aux cantons l'obligation d'introduire l'incorporation "jure soli" dans leur droit. Et cette réglementation est demeurée lettre morte, pour plusieurs raisons, dont la plus déterminante est que les cantons et les communes craignaient que cette innovation n'ait des répercussions onéreuses sur le régime de l'assistance publique. La question des étrangers... qui n'ont d'étranger que le nom, resta donc en suspens.

En 1923, un spécialiste en la matière, le professeur Fleiner, avait déjà déclaré qu'avant de modifier notre procédure de naturalisation, il faudrait procéder à un remaniement de nos traités d'établissement, afin de donner à notre pays la possibilité de refuser le séjour durable aux éléments dont on peut dire d'emblée qu'ils ne pourront jamais s'adapter à l'ambiance de notre pays. Cette opinion ayant été critiquée de divers côtés, le prof. Fleiner insista avec raison sur le fait qu'une mesure de ce genre ne serait nullement l'expression d'un nationalisme outrancier, mais uniquement une mesure de défense indispensable pour notre conservation nationale et pour la sauvegarde de notre indépendance.

Bien que cette manière de voir s'impose aujourd'hui plus que jamais on n'a pas encore pu se décider chez nous à pratiquer une politique de naturalisation rationnelle et... cohérente. D'une part, on continue à encourager l'émigration, de l'autre, on ne fait rien pour incorporer les éléments manifestement assimilés, mais qui conservent néanmoins leur nationalité étrangère le plus souvent parce que la procédure de naturalisation est longue et les taxes de naturalisation très élevées. Et l'on a doublement tort, parce que ces éléments ont beau être de souche étrangère, comme ils sont établis en Suisse, ils ont le droit d'y travailler; ils contribuent donc, tout comme s'ils étaient suisses, à aggraver la situation du marché du travail.

Le problème qui se pose du fait que nous avons 140,000 étrangers nés et élevés chez nous est encore plus politique qu'économique. A l'heure actuelle, deux de nos voisins, l'Allemagne et l'Italie, travaillent systématiquement à empêcher que leurs ressortissants à l'étranger ne subissent l'influence du pays dans lequel ils résident; et cela constitue un réel danger pour un petit pays comme le nôtre, surtout si l'on ne revise pas les traités d'établissement. Ainsi que l'a montré récemment M. le Prof. Lorenz, de Fribourg, la colonie allemande en Suisse forme un conglomérat toujours plus homogène, qui subit quotidiennement une "infiltration" d'idées et de sentiments qui nous sont étrangers. Quoi d'étonnant s'il finit par être en opposition marquée avec le peuple chez lequel il réside. Sans compter que tout Allemand à l'étranger est un agent de propagande du national-socialisme, comme on l'a dit au congrès des Allemands à Stuttgart. Et ce qui est vrai de l'Allemagne l'est aussi, à des degrés divers, de certains autres pays, en particulier de l'Italie. Nous connaissons des cas où des étrangers qui voulaient acquérir la nationalité suisse en ont été détournés par les autorités de leur pays d'origine, bien que, économiquement, il ne soit pas question pour eux de retourner vivre dans leur pays. Ces faits devraient nous donner à réfléchir. Renoncer plus longtemps à pratiquer une politique d'assimilation systématique, à incorporer tous les éléments qui ont, en fait, la qualité de Suisses, serait faire preuve d'une légèreté impardonnable, surtout si l'on songe qu'en Suisse sur neuf habitants il y a un étranger.

J.S.E.

EINE ERNSTE MAHNUNG AN DIE SCHWEIZER.

(Mahnworte der Appenzellischen Landesväter vor beiläufig 550 Jahren. Aufgebot.)

Treu Hertzige Wahrnung an ein löbliche Eydtgnoschaft. —

O du mein liebe Eydtgnoschaft — die durch Besondre Gottes Kraft — bishier mit grosser Lustbahrkeit — florierest in frid und einigkeit — Hüüt dich vor unfrid und zweytracht — damit nit wird zertrennt dein macht — Haltet vest euere Aeydes-Band — so bleibt ihr Herrn in dem Landt — Keinem frömden Herren, der da ist — landigir und vil argen list — Traut Kurtz umb nit, wan er gleich — verschreibt ein gantzes Königreich — gedenckhet an die alten Tag — da ihr geführt manche Klag — Ueber die Landvögt Tiraney — und der zwingherren schinderey — gedencket an die Sempacher Schlacht — da eifere feindt Treiben grossen Bracht — gedencket an Carl von Burgundt — der euch wolt richten gantz zu grundt — last Keine frömden Gest ins landt — sonder Thut ihnen Tapfer widerstandt — verwahret euere Berg und Thal — so seyd ihr ruhig überal — Haltet einander Treu und Eydt — so gehts euch wohl in Ewigkeit — Komt Euch fröndes Volk einmahl ins landt — so geht es übel euerem standt — die weil ihr aber Brüder seynd — und gleichsam ein Mutter Kindt — so haltet euch zusammen vest — und Thue ein jedes Orth das Best — Besitzet in Ruh das schöne landt — dass euere vächter gwynne Hand — Ehret, lieber und fürchtet Gott — so hilft er euch aus aller Noth.

CITY SWISS CLUB.

The first meeting of the year will take place on 10th January, and we understand from Mr. Bingguelly that he has been successful in arranging a very interesting conference by a well known French Lady, Madame Champion, who will arrive from Paris on 8th January. She will speak to the members on a most attractive subject "Le rire et l'esprit Français au Théâtre."

Madame Champion's conferences are always exceedingly well attended due to her great sense of humour, and wonderful way in which she recounts the latest episodes of the Paris Theatre, and gives bright details of the amusing side of Paris life. Madame Champion is well known to many of our compatriots who are looking forward to hearing her, and as the meeting will be well attended we suggest that members should make reservation in good time, particularly if they decide, as anticipated, to bring a number of friends with them.

The Secretary asks us to remind the members to try and show at the first meeting that they have made the good resolution of attending in large numbers throughout 1939.

Now for a Happy and Prosperous New Year to all members, and rendezvous on Tuesday, January 10th.

SWISS MERCANTILE SOCIETY.
Monthly Meeting.

The Monthly Meeting of the Society was held at Swiss House on Wednesday, December 14th. Mr. A. Steinmann, President of the Society, was in the Chair. The Committee's efforts to mark the occasion of the Jubilee with a drive for new members met with great success. Six new members were elected which brought the total number of new members to fifteen for the last three meetings, a very gratifying result.

A proposal was made to study ways and means of celebrating the Swiss National Day (August 1st) in conjunction with other Swiss Societies who were to be approached in due course. The meeting unanimously adopted this proposition and appointed Messrs. W. Meier and F. Streit to pursue the matter and report to a later meeting.

In order appropriately to wind up the Jubilee Year which has been a milestone in the history of the Society in more than one respect, a social evening was arranged to follow the business part of the meeting. The fact that about fifty members and friends were present was a proof that the Committee's endeavours to



revive the social side of the Society's activities were not in vain and the response must have been a source of encouragement to them.

Mr. M. Schneider, Hon. Secretary, acted as compère and the programme opened with Swiss songs in which all present joined with much gusto. Mr. R. Chappuis very ably acted as accompanist on the piano.

The audience then had an opportunity of admiring the adept tricks of Mr. George King, the well-known conjurer. He constantly baffled the company with feats of his skill.

Mr. W. Mathyler, solo yodler of the "Brienzler Jodler Club," at present a student of the College, needed no introduction for he had already made a name for himself not only in his Society but also in the Swiss Colony. He appeared in his attractive national costume and with his inseparable accordion. He sang, played and yodelled "S'Brienzler Burli" and "Chilter Bueb," and the vociferous applause which he received was a proof that everyone present thoroughly enjoyed his songs.

Mr. F. von Bergen, who has earned himself a reputation both as a singer and a yodler, then delighted the audience with two of his specials, "In an old-fashioned Town" and a "Negro Spiritual." All present showed their appreciation with a very hearty ovation.

Mr. King once more entertained the audience with his clever conjuring tricks and as an interlude the members had an opportunity of listening to the newly installed wireless equipment, replete with microphone and loud speakers.

The programme was wound up with songs by Messrs. Mathyler and von Bergen and thus brought to a close one of the most successful and enjoyable evenings at Swiss House.

WB.

"DUNANT; THE STORY OF THE RED CROSS."

It is a strange historical paradox that the man who created the greatest of humanitarian institutions — the Red Cross — is, of the world's great men, perhaps the least known. One may ask: who is Henri Dunant?, and relatively few will be able to answer this question; yet thousands are daily comforted by the blessings of his work. Dunant's noble idea had rapidly assumed practical form, and to-day this philanthropic organization embraces the entire civilized world. It was Dunant's wish that not his name, but his work be glorified.

In a recently published book, entitled "Dunant; The Story of the Red Cross," Martin Gumpert describes the life of Henri Dunant, founder of the Red Cross. In his Dunant-biography, Gumpert not only repeats, but even stresses the often circulated rumour, that Dunant, the great friend of man, had to spend the eve of his life in the poorhouse of a little village in Switzerland — forgotten and deserted by an ungrateful world. These statements of Gumpert are pitifully incorrect. Several times, Gumpert refers to the room in which Dunant lived and died, as the cell (!). If this misrepresentation of facts would not be so deplorable, it would be ridiculous. The Truth is, that Henri Dunant did not die in an almshouse, nor had he ever lived in an almshouse. His end came (1910) in the regular county hospital (Bezirks-Krankenhaus) of Heiden, Switzerland. And the "little village" is the famous health and summer resort of Heiden, where he had spent a number of years after his health began to wane.

Dunant was an idealist, rather than a businessman. He had ventured into financial speculations which cost not only his own fortune, but also affected several of his friends and relatives. These sad events nearly crushed him. He was so persecuted by his own conscience, that he decided to leave his home for an unknown destination. After several years of wandering in foreign lands, returned to Switzerland and arrived, in 1887, at Heiden, broken in health and wealth. Soon, however he was recognised as the founder of the Red Cross, and now sunshine again began to enter his life. Here, in this charming mountain-resort of Heiden he felt at home and he concluded a lasting friendship with the distinguished Dr. Alther, town-physician and owner of the celebrated hotel "Freihof." His close friendship with another Heideener, Wilhelm Sonderegger, unfortunately, was broken up after a few years. Dunant, at first, was living in the small hotel "Paradies," and here he was discovered by Wilhelm Sonderegger. Then, as the honoured guest of Dr. Alther, he stayed for a few weeks at the hotel Freihof, but in order not to exhaust this hospitality Dunant returned to the hotel Paradies. One day, in August 1895, Dr. George Baumberger, editor-in-chief of a St. Gall newspaper paid a visit to Dunant. After this call Dr. Baumberger published an article in the widely known periodical "Über Land und Meer" and in stirring words he brought Dunant in all

his greatness before the public, reminding his readers that the world still owed a debt of gratitude to this great benefactor. His appeal was heard, and donations began to pour in from all directions so that his material worries were now definitely a thing of the past.

In 1901, Dunant, together with Frédéric Passy, was honoured with the first Nobel-Prize, which brought him 104,000 francs — a little fortune for those days. Also the Swiss government remembered him with the Bonet-Fendt Foundation; and the Dowager Empress Fedorovna of Russia gave him a yearly pension of 4,000 francs. He was, furthermore, offered a pretentious home, but the modest Dunant declined this generous offer, preferring to remain in his cozy room at the hospital, into which he had moved in the meantime, where he was always sure of the best of care and loving attention. In his old age Dunant became progressively afflicted with hallucination of persecution, and as a consequence he confined himself to his room during the last few years of his life.

Heiden, as already alluded to, is a well-known health and summer resort, beautifully situated on a mountain overlooking the serene lake of Constance. As a summer resort it has many hotels, a park and a Casino (Kursaal) where during the summer months the public is daily entertained with symphony concerts. Visitors and convalescents from all parts of Europe come here to spend their vacation or after-care, and the town is full of life. This writer well remembers the distinguished looking old gentleman sitting in his armchair watching the promenading visitors and listening to the concert while he was greeted with reverence and affection by all who passed him and recognized him. It was certainly far from a poorhouse atmosphere which surrounded Dunant in his eve of life! His declining physical and mental health deprived him of the full benefit of all the kindness and attention which was showered upon him in his later days, and his solitude toward the end of his life was an unalterable condition for which certainly his friends and his contemporaries in general cannot be blamed. The unostentatious departure of the dead Dunant from Heiden was in respectful observance of his own wish. For one who knows the facts concerning Dunant's residence at Heiden, it becomes a moral duty to correct the erroneous impression which Gumpert's distortion of facts is bound to create.

Albert Bartholdi.

MISTRANSITION.

Sir. — In Switzerland recently I came across an amusing example of misrepresentation by mis-translation. A famous religious order were announcing their charity and tolerance in the following words: "The Brothers of Misery harbour every kind of disease and have no regard for religion."

E. D.

Paddington.

TO OUR READERS.

The Editor of the Swiss Observer would be greatly obliged if readers would supply him with addresses of likely subscribers, so that specimen copies could be posted to them.

If such addresses supplied should be already included on our mailing list, no extra copies would be sent.

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FORTHCOMING EVENTS.

Tuesday, January 10th, 1938 (Dinner 7.15 sharp)
— City Swiss Club — Monthly Meeting, at
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Samedi 31 décembre :

8h.30 p.m. Culte de fin d'année, avec le concours du Chœur et d'un violoniste. L'arbre sera rallumé. Message de fin d'année. M. M. Pradervand.

Dimanche 1er janvier :

11h. Culte. Message pour l'An Nouveau. M. M. Pradervand.

Pas d'Ecole du dimanche

6h.30 Culte. M. M. Pradervand.

Vendredi 6 janvier, 7h.30 p.m. Réunion mensuelle de la Jeunesse de l'Eglise Suisse, au Foyer Suisse, 15 Bedford Way.

Invitation à tous les jeunes.

SCHWEIZERKIRCHE

(Deutschsprachige Gemeinde).

St. Anne's Church, 9, Gresham Street, E.C.2.

(near General Post Office.)

Samstag, den 31. Dezember.

7 Uhr Abends — Gottesdienst und Feier des Abendmahls, Pfr. E. Bommeli.

Sonntag (Neujahr) den 1. Januar.

11 Uhr morgens — Gottesdienst und Abendmahl.

7 Uhr abends — Gottesdienst und Abendmahl, Pfr. E. Bommeli.

Am Altjahrsabend und am Neujahrsdienstag wird der Weihnachtsbaum wieder angezündet werden.

Anfragen wegen Religions — bzw. Confirmanden Unterricht und Amtshandlungen sind erbeten an Herrn Pfarrer Ernst Bommeli, 12, Bedford Way, W.C.1.

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