

Our next issue

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tives, has not given the Swiss people any real international outlook.

Membership of UNESCO, however, has been an interesting experiment for the Swiss people, and especially for the more world-minded minority. It may even be a step towards membership of the United Nations itself. Before 1935, when the League of Nations had its headquarters in Geneva, Switzerland was a member with reservations guarding her neutrality; she would not enter a system of collective security. Since the emergence of UNO, and especially since the Marshall Plan, Switzerland has been called upon once more to consider her relations with the rest of Europe. Reservations remain, even concerning the project of a customs union between Western European nations. When recently the Foreign Minister, M. Max Petitpierre, gave his consent to the examination of a customs union, and pledged Swiss support that far, he had to defer to the unreadiness of his countrymen to go any length towards international co-operation.

At the time I write, the crucial issue in international affairs is Western Union. It was at Zürich in 1946 that Mr. Winston Churchill first adumbrated the plan for which he has since secured European-wide support and to which, in principle, Mr. Bevin later committed the British Government. Switzerland's place in any Western Union is of particular significance. For Switzerland is already in herself a Western Union in miniature: a centre of French, German and Italian unity which might be the nucleus of a Federal Europe. On the other hand, Switzerland is a rich country while her neighbours are, in consequence of the second world war, poor countries. Western Union

would never be a real union unless there were economic as well as political unity, a single or freely exchangeable currency and an end to customs barriers. Such changes would inevitably mean for Switzerland at any rate a short-term loss, and it is hard at present to visualize their coming.

So there is something of a paradox about Switzerland's position in post-war Europe; she affords a practical model for European unity and yet, because of the very success of her system, she will not easily fit into a wider pattern of Western Union.

Still, the more important factor is Switzerland's unique experience of federal government; and that experience is relevant to the situation of every European people and especially to those greater European Powers which have vainly sought security through national sovereignty and national defence. Necessity drove the Swiss cantons together in the thirteenth century and after; will the same necessity seal the union of Europe in the present century?

OUR NEXT ISSUE.

Our next issue will be published on Friday, November 26th, 1948.

We take the opportunity of thanking the following subscribers for their kind and helpful donations over and above their subscriptions: L. W. Krucker, H. Schenkel, E. P. Dick, W. Walter, A. Muller, C. Devegney, R. J. Helfenstein, E. Frey, W. Wagner, A. A. Bodenehr, P. Eichenberger, J. Zimmermann, C. J. Bernheim.

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