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# FOR YOUR READING PLEASURE - *REVIEWS*

Undoubtedly the most beautiful book, or rather books, that have come my way recently, is a set of four **"Focus on Switzerland"**. It was published by the Coordinating Committee for the Presence of Switzerland Abroad, whose President is the former Federal Councillor Willy Spuehler. It was compiled by an editorial board representing the Federal Political Department, the Federal Departments of the Interior and of Public Economy, Pro Helvetia (Swiss Foundation for Culture), the Secretariat of the Swiss Abroad, the Swiss Broadcasting Corporation, the Swiss National Tourist Office and the Swiss Office for the Development of Trade. The result is a magnificent document, volumes beautifully presented and full of relevant information and superb pictures and reproductions, many of them in colour, charts and a separate map and a booklet **"Switzerland in figures"**. The first volume is called **"The Landscape"**, the second **"History and Institutions"**, the third volume **"Cultural Life"** and the fourth **"The Economy"**. I have rarely seen anything as perfect as these four volumes in a case. The price is high: Sw.Fr. 90, and the books may be had from the Secretariat of the Swiss Abroad in Berne.

The Geneva Publishing House of Skira is well known for its excellent art publications. **"La Peinture Suisse du moyen age à l'aube du XX<sup>e</sup> siècle"** is an

example of the fine quality of its books. 196 pages — 210 reproductions of which 63 are in colour. Price Sw.Fr. 145.

Books of particular interest for Swiss abroad are **"Die Kantone der Schweiz"**, also obtainable in French. Each volume (Berne and the Grisons are in two volumes each) contains over 100 pictures and a topographic map. All 24 volumes cost Sw.Fr. 395 and individual volumes cost Sw.18.50 per book. Editions Panoramic, Jean Moreillon, Post Box 35, 1211, Geneva 24.

The Schweizer Verlagshaus in Zürich (Klausstrasse 10) has published a book on Switzerland **"Schoen ist die Schweiz"**, 32 pages of text and an introduction by Federal Councillor Ernst Brugger, as well as Carl Jakob Burckhardt's essay **"Eidgenoessisches Dasein"**. There are 96 pages of most attractive pictures in colour and the same in black and white. The price is only Sw.Fr. 59.

For Sw.Fr. 1 less, a book for the weapons enthusiast can be had, published by Fritz Haeusler, Muehleobelstrasse 33, 8500 Frauenfeld. It is in three languages, French, German and English, has 140 pages with 112 illustrations. It is called **"Swiss Handguns"**, and it gives an excellent picture of Swiss pistols and revolvers from 1817 to the present day.

Now something for the philatelists: **"Die Schweiz im Spiegel ihrer Marken"**. It is only a booklet, but most attractively

got up and gives an excellent survey of 12 separate special issues in various causes, each set with a short summary of historical or other facts relating to the particular set. It also gives the addresses of the philatelist post offices in Switzerland, all eight accompanied by the present ordinary stamps, each depicting a building in the town indicated. Needless to add, it is published by the PTT in Berne (Wertzeichenverkaufsstelle), and as far as I know it is free of charge.

A book which I did not actually read or see, but which has been highly recommended as first class is the **"Handbuch der Schweizerischen Aussenpolitik"** to which 35 authors have contributed

## ARE YOU A YOUNG SWISS?

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(Paul Haupt Verlag, Berne). It is the first comprehensive work on the subject. 1,052 pages make up the 48 chapters on nine different aspects of Swiss foreign policy. Federal Councillor Graber wrote the preface, and the price is Sw.Fr. 60.

A book of an entirely different nature is Ulrich Kaegi's "**Volksrepublik Schweiz 1998**", a frightening political satire setting out how Switzerland could become a Communist state. All the happenings and speeches are founded on actual Communist or near-Communist events and personalities in or out of Switzerland. The author started out by trying to enact the Socialist daily life as it is in Eastern Europe on the Swiss stage, and gradually he found he was compelled to write this tragedy as something which could become reality, without any revolution and entirely in truly helvetic tempo and manner. It is a fascinating book and must make any serious-minded Swiss stop and think. Published by Walter Verlag Olten and Freiburg im Breisgau.

And now a book of a quite different nature again, published by the Henry Dunant Institute in Geneva. It is "**Guérilla et Droit Humanitaire**" by Michel Veuthey. (The price is Sw.Fr. 69.) It is the latest work in the Institute's "Scientific Collection". A list of books published by the same body may be had on demand. The Henry Dunant Institute was founded in 1965, and its supreme authority is a General Assembly of three members each of the League, the Swiss

Red Cross and the International Committee of the Red Cross. It is by way of being a Red Cross "Academy", and its main activities are based on research in the many fields concerning the Red Cross. The Institute's 10th anniversary booklet may be had on application. In connection with the Henry Dunant Institute, I should like to mention by way of conclusion, the **Annual Report of the International Committee of the Red Cross**. Its 70 pages make fascinating reading and give an excellent picture of its manifold activities covering operations in many parts of the world where the services of a neutral humanitarian body are needed. And there is not a continent that is left out, even Europe (prison visits in Northern Ireland, Maze - Long Kesh - and Armagh), Cyprus and Portugal. A great deal of work is done in the Middle East due to the conflict between Israel and the Arab countries. Then there are Chile, Indo-China and Vietnam, as well as other Asian countries where strife leaves thousands in need of medical help, food, relief of all kinds; where children have to be evacuated and refugees looked after. Sw.Fr. 4.4 million was spent on transport alone, not counting the amounts donated by governments and voluntary organisations, nor the offer by certain airlines to transport goods and people without charge.

The second part of the report concerns the Central Tracing Agency. In Indo-China alone there are 150,000

records. The total reference cards of the International Tracing Service amount to nearly 2 million. The next chapter is devoted to Department of Principles and Law, legal, national societies and principles, and documentation and dissemination.

Relations with national societies, international organisations and information and public relations fill the next three chapters, followed by personnel and finance. 238 employees at headquarters, 85 delegates in the field plus local staff of 130, not including personnel loaned by national societies. 86 applicants who wanted to become ICRC delegates were chosen amongst the 392 Swiss who came forward. As one can well imagine, finance is a complex matter. It is interesting to see that contributions towards financing the permanent structure vary to an amazing degree: Germany gave Sw.Fr. 311,760, France Sw.Fr. 186,000 and in third place the United Kingdom with Sw.Fr. 121,000. Switzerland, of course, stands above them all with a contribution in 1975 of Sw.Fr. 7,500,000. In addition, National Red Cross Societies made considerable contributions, the largest coming from U.S.A. And then, of course, there were funds for special operations given by governments (with U.S.A., Canada and Switzerland at the head) and by national societies (with Sweden and Switzerland first). It goes to show that the Swiss take this, their very own humanitarian organisation, very seriously indeed.



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