

Swiss events

Objekttyp: **Group**

Zeitschrift: **The Swiss observer : the journal of the Federation of Swiss Societies in the UK**

Band (Jahr): - **(1977)**

Heft 1729

PDF erstellt am: **28.04.2024**

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accumulate knowledge, but also to *teach* to learn, to make each pupil realise his method of work and to afford the possibility of acknowledging his limits, to develop individual interests and thus to create a firm basis, so that what the school offers can be properly digested.

One also tries to adapt instruction to the fast technological development of today, not only by providing modern equipment like television and electronic apparatus, but also by adjusting the school curriculum. It is understandable that the pupil of today takes a more lively interest in the pre-requisites for a new landing on the moon than in the enumeration of the various *renonculae*.

Since the demands in civic and vocational training are growing, one talks of an extension of compulsory schooling from eight to 10 or even 12 years, as has been done in U.S.A., Sweden and elsewhere. But this would not be without problems and carries the danger of "over-schooling" and alienation from practical life. Much more important than the period of compulsory schooling is to awaken the wish and readiness to go in for further training and education and to develop the technique of learning. In this, the dual principle of Swiss vocational training, i.e. practical work in shop and factory under expert supervision coupled with special courses at trade and commercial schools, makes an excellent contribution. The well-established and very extensively used adult education

facilities go hand in hand with this in Switzerland. Although in this field it is doubtless the Scandinavian countries which acted as pioneers, Swiss achievements in the most varied sectors well deserve attention.

Together with the new vocational training law of 1965, with its natural and diverse structure, the basis is given for up-to-date and individually conceived schooling and training from the first elementary class right through to the start of working life, and all one can hope is that with the proposed university law academic training, too, may be included in this scheme.

In the 'sixties, a witty Swiss from Western Switzerland stated that if Heinrich Pestalozzi were to come back today, he would start again immediately with his great reform. *"No! — We have continued in his spirit, and we are fully conscious of the responsibility which we have towards our children, and we try within all our means to prepare them for the conditions which await them in life. We are aware that only in this way can we strengthen the efforts towards a political and social democracy consistent with life today and its development, in which every member of our national community will have a fine feeling not only for his duties but also his rights."*

"On the other hand we must not expect full salvation from schooling — however progressive and perfect it may be."

SWISS EVENTS

"Let us remember Pestalozzi's words:

"Domestic wisdom in the formation of man is like the trunk of a tree: upon it alone must be grafted and implanted all branches of human knowledge, science and direction in life; yet where the trunk itself is ailing and weak, the grafted twigs will die and the implanted shoots will wither."

Phillippe Garraux, Berne
(Freely translated by M.M.)

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