

"Dropping the pilot"

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educational activities amongst the Swiss commercial youth, a veritable Pestalozzi in modern guise; Carl Weigl, Vice-President, with booming voice and unquenchable humour in powerfully built body; an "Auslandsschweizer" in the person of O. C. Isler from Winterthur; Fritschi also, all proved men of integrity and understanding, pioneers amongst the workers for Swiss Commerce.

Here is a new face, Who is he? Why, Dr. Thurnheer, the new Swiss Minister, son of an old S.K.V. member, and himself a trained "commerçant"; he has come to establish contact with us and assure us of his interest and goodwill.

What do I see now? Beds again in Swiss House? Our home has become a refuge for any compatriots who may suffer raid damage and need temporary shelter. And here are the various leaders of the Swiss Colony and their ladies. They seem mighty busy. So they are, too, because everyone lends a hand to arrange the shelter as quickly and as comfortably as possible.

Has anything gone wrong? The picture before my mind's eye has become sombre and something seems to have gone wrong with our home. Now I can see it more clearly; it has been bombed, sadly damaged, a terrible blow to us all. Thank goodness nobody is hurt. Old Bossert is still bustling about; not even his whiskers are singed. But what an experience for him, and what a wonderful old chap.

With a sigh of regret, and yet with a feeling of happiness over past successes and pleasures, I become conscious again of my surroundings. We are in our members' room with its warm and congenial atmosphere. The walls attract the eye like a magnet does the needle. Small wonder, for they show us pictures of our homeland's natural beauty, scenes from the Fête des Vignerons, etc., all gifts from friends and well-wishers. And at the head of the table stands the President, Mr. Boos, the man who, undaunted by illness in his home, war in the land, bombs on the roof, has guided our destiny with wisdom, charity, and firmness withal, during a good few years already. Handicaps, these, which might well have robbed a weaker man of all energy; an example to us all, and a living admonishment to remain faithful to the S.M.S. whatever the circumstances.

He is telling us, that this is our last meeting in this room. Has this fact caused my day-dreaming? I have not been asleep; but I have seen, in the space of a few minutes, those figures from the years of the past.

Fading Pictures? Perhaps.

Forgotten Pictures? Never!

"Eavesdropper."

LETTER-BOX.

H. L., Berne and G. S., Basle. — We have just discovered the advice from our Giro account and have added your name to our mailing list; the subscription will carry you to our issue No. 1020, as we now go to press once a month only.

We must apologize for the omission which has been caused by the dislocation of our files and papers through enemy action.

E. B. and Others. — We thank you for giving us addresses of friends likely to be interested in our publication and regret that under existing restrictions we cannot forward propaganda copies unless they are pre-paid.

Mrs. Ch. — We thank you for your remittance and have posted the issue to the address given.

CORRESPONDENCE.

To the Editor of the Swiss Observer,
Dear Sir,

Most of your readers have no doubt read, or at least heard of, an article published recently in the "Daily Mail." This article caused a considerable amount of surprise and dismay not only among the Swiss Colony but also with a number of English friends of our Country. So far, however, nothing has apparently been done by the Swiss Legation to counteract its damaging influence and to rectify some of the glaring misstatements it contains. The heading itself (across four columns) is highly tendentious and should have called for an immediate official statement, particularly as the article seems to have been written with the object of influencing the negotiations which were then going on with the Swiss Trade Mission. Personally, I do not think that a letter from an unknown reader of the "Daily Mail" would have had sufficient weight to achieve the desired result. A reply, to be effective, must of necessity include facts and figures which nowadays are not easily obtainable but which should be available to the Swiss Legation.

Amongst the plethora of goods and raw materials which Switzerland is supposed to be exporting to Germany, the article in question mentions iron ore. The figures of Swiss Imports of that commodity during the last five years before the war should easily show the utter absurdity of such a statement.

No doubt the Swiss Legation and its Commercial Division have been extremely busy lately but, as the article appeared as far back as March 24th, I think it should have been possible by now to send an official statement to the "Daily Mail" refuting the numerous allegations.

Yours faithfully,

C. J. B.

"DROPPING THE PILOT."

(To G.A.M.)

They've dropped their pilot at the last Election,
A man who knew the Club Rules to perfection,
Was truly popular with ev'ry section
And studied any member's predilection.
Isn't it sad?

We humans are at times an odd collection,
Emotions pull in more than one direction;
Some tiny discontent spreads like infection . . .
Accepted formulas meet with rejection!
It's just too bad.

Our pilot, for his part, courts not dejection.
Why should he? — with an ample recollection
Of duty done, with zeal and circumspection,
An in-born tact, defying all correction.
He can be glad.

What is the moral of this brief reflection?
That public office rarely breeds affection,
Whilst service reaps scant thanks and no protection
Against obscure or undefined objection.
I've nought to add.

GALLUS.