

Du coq à l'âne

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His real mistress was to be art. On the advice of Reynolds he set off in 1770 for Rome, where he stayed for eight years and found above all in Michelangelo what he chiefly sought, "Space, Height, Depth, Length." Federmann rightly stresses the fact that Fuseli was here well ahead of his age. An album of this period, preserved in the British Museum, is full of drawings done in Rome on subjects from Shakespeare, Milton and even Dante. His element was the daring, the grandiose, the heroic. We are not surprised to find him, after the year 1800, painting scenes from the Nibelungen epic and even making use in them of the Volung saga.

Fuseli's poems and prose as printed or reprinted by Federmann illumine chiefly the early period. A prose "Complaint" of 1763 expresses, almost in the language of a bereaved lover, his sense of loss on leaving behind him his fellow-exile and travelling companion, Lavater. It is, of course, partly a literary exercise, in a vein that anticipates "Werther." The poems are not likely to attract much attention at this date; Federmann has to admit that other critics have not thought so highly of them as he does. But they throw some light both on Fuseli himself and on the storm and stress period in Switzerland. The first is an "Ode on a Meta" of 1760; the title, like the text, breathes respect for and imitation of Klopstock. The third contains a clearly seen and heard metaphor:—

dum pfondnernd
Welzet London seine Menschenluthen!

The "Ode to Patience" (1766) bears a Latin motto from Calvin and speaks of the myriads "Denen mit eisernem Fuss die Noth folgt."

Here and there, perhaps, a line is inspired already by Milton or Shakespeare. The "Ode to the Friends left behind" (Essex, 1765) contains the proud lines:—

"Spiele, brause mein Tag, für euch verloren
treibt

Er der Ewigkeit Meer mich zu!"

Here and later Fuseli is feeling his way towards a sincere and personal utterance: now and then he comes close to the tones uttered by the young Goethe. But one may doubt whether practice would have turned him into a great poet. Still these poems, like the letters, help us to draw nearer to this spirited personality. Less interesting are the aphorisms carefully preserved by Knowles and admirably cited by Federmann. But some of them deserve to be recorded anew, for now and then there is a flash of inspiration or of warm feeling. No one who takes an interest in Fuseli, or indeed in the art and literature of this period, can afford to neglect this fascinating and beautifully produced monograph.

Mountain Railways.

A correspondent who was "agreeably surprised" by the readiness displayed by the erring English papers in rectifying a "terminological inexactitude" sends us the following extract from the *Scotsman* (Sept. 10th) which bears witness to the comparative safety of modern mountain railways:

"The recent disastrous accident on the Chamonix rack and pinion railway has once more shown how the most ingenious safety devices can be rendered ineffectual through a fault of the human factor. Fortunately, while the fault of the engine driver by starting at excessive speed caused the disaster, the presence of mind of a conductor saved the rear carriage and its passengers by a supreme effort in detaching and arresting it on the brink of the precipice, as the engine and the front carriage were taking their fatal plunge. As usual in cases of excessive speed, especially on steep down grades, the train derailed at a curve. This averted probably an even greater disaster if the train had run unimpeded down the whole incline to an inevitably fatal impact at the terminus in Chamonix. The great safety device on rack railways, of which the present writer has had a large experience, is the automatic brake-clutch of the pinion wheel in the rack teeth; obviously the wheel had not been given time to grip the rack and so the automatic brake could not function. Two precisely similar cases within the present writer's recollection are those on the Snowdon rack railway in Wales, and on the Florence and Fiesole electric railway in Italy (1890), and it is noteworthy that such accidents, extremely rare as they are, invariably happen, not on the ascent, but in descending at excessive speed.

With these few exceptions, the hundreds of steep grade mountain railways, rack or wire-rope, or both combined, worked by steam, water or electricity, in all parts of the Alps, or connecting the low and high level quarters of many cities, have functioned with perfect safety and regularity ever since 1872, when the first rack railway on the Rigi was opened in Switzerland. These railways, shooting up like mushrooms with gradients of 1 in 4, 1 in 2, and even 1 in 1.6 (e.g., the wire-rope lines of Murren Stanserhorn, and Varese, Italy), and to altitudes of 6,000, 8,000, 10,000 (Gorner Grat), and even 13,000 feet (the Jungfrau line) annually enable—apart

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from the ever-increasing crowds of tourists — thousands of delicate visitors to ascend to heights of invigorating air which they could not reach otherwise. Mountain railways have often been derided as disfiguring scenery; but even the great Alpine trunk lines are mere specks on the mountain sides, and both they and their lesser offspring confer inestimable boons on mankind."

Referendum Fiasco.

The only reference in the English Press on this subject was contained in the following from the Geneva correspondent of the *Daily Mail* (Oct. 7th):—

"Charges of wholesale fraud are made against the Swiss Communist Party, which has failed to secure the requisite number of signatures for its referendum on the new law affecting the status of Government officials.

Under the new measure—which has been strongly combated by the Communist element—strikes by Government officials are made illegal. Out of the minimum of 30,000 signatures required before a referendum can be held the Communists obtained only 25,000, and of these several thousand were afterwards annulled for various reasons.

On the lists being examined many people were found to have signed several times, while many of the signatures were those of boys and of foreigners ineligible to vote.

Hundreds of other people who signed the petition on the strength of false representations by Communist canvassers afterwards wrote to the authorities cancelling their signatures.

Thus, out of 51 signatures, collected at Dubendorf, only one remained, while at Wädenswil only 20 per cent. passed out of a total of 200 on the lists.

The Press is particularly jubilant over this defeat in view of the fact that the Swiss Communists have always been generously subsidised by Moscow."

DU COQ A L'ANE.

Si j'intitule cet article du nom de deux animaux de basse-cour, ce n'est nullement pour insister sur la sagesse des hommes qui règne en ce début de XXème siècle dans notre triste monde. Mais c'est simplement parce que je vais essayer, sautant par dessus les barrières du temps et de la distance, de vous retracer quelques menus faits qui agitent les esprits en différents coins de notre Suisse.

Ceux qui, durant la conférence économique internationale, ont passé par Genève ont vu sans doute un édifice ridicule placé, telle une baraque foraine, sur le débarcadère du quai du Mont-Blanc. On avait dressé là un relief du système douanier actuel en Europe. La Suisse y paraissait telle une minuscule cour de prison, écrasée par les murs dressés de tous côtés par ses voisins. On s'en allait le coeur triste et l'esprit porté à la réflexion.

C'est par un court récit semblable que le Comité de la Semaine suisse débute dans l'appel qu'il lance à la population pour l'aider à soutenir ses efforts.

Vous savez, sans doute, ce qu'est la Semaine suisse; il s'agit de faire une intense propagande pour tous les produits de première et de seconde main manufacturés ou réalisés sur notre sol.

Du 15 au 29 octobre, les devantures de tous les magasins n'exposeront que des produits nationaux, en l'indiquant de la plus aveuglante façon. L'affiche dessinée à cet effet comprendra, évidemment, la croix fédérale émergeant d'une gerbe et que surmonte un compas.

Tout le pays s'apprête à soutenir cette annuelle tentative et on a l'impression que l'effort va décidément crescendo. Il n'y a pas jusqu'à la pédagogie qui ne se mêle de la partie, puisqu'on annonce que des concours de composition éveilleront l'esprit de la jeunesse à cet aspect nouveau du sens commercial.

Vous avez lu, sans doute, et dans leurs moindres détails, les affreuses catastrophes fluviales dont ont souffert les Grisons, le Tessin, une partie de Saint-Gall et de Thurgovie. D'un mouvement unanime, le peuple suisse s'est porté au secours des concitoyens dans la peine et de tous les chefs-lieux, de tous les villages, abondent des sommes d'argent importantes qui viendront se joindre à ce que l'Etat a déjà fait de son côté. Les membres du Conseil fédéral se rendent les uns après les autres dans les

QUOTATIONS from the SWISS STOCK EXCHANGES.

BONDS.	Oct. 3		Oct. 11	
	Fr.	S.	Fr.	S.
Confederation 3% 1903	79.85	79.50		
5% 1917, VIII Mob. Ln	101.30	101.75		
Federal Railways 3 1/2% A-K	84.50	84.60		
1924 IV Elect. Ln.	101.00	101.10		

SHARES.	Nom		Oct. 3		Oct. 11	
	Fr.	S.	Fr.	S.	Fr.	S.
Swiss Bank Corporation	500		830		823	
Crédit Suisse	500		867		870	
Union de Banques Suisses	500		737		745	
Société pour l'Industrie Chimique	1000		2730		2715	
Fabrique Chimique et-der. Sandoz	1000		4500		4287	
Soc. Ind. pour la Schappe	1000		2900		2925	
S.A. Brown Boveri	350		585		582	
C. F. Bally	1000		1295		1310	
Nestlé & Anglo-Swiss Cond. Mk. Co.	200		819		819	
Entreprises Suizse S.A.	1000		1180		1177	
Comp. de Navig. n sur le Lac Léman	500		540		540	
Linoleum A.G. Giubiasco	100		137		145	
Maschinenfabrik Oerlikon	500		787		789	

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villages sinistrés et le pays entier est réellement secouru par un élan de compassion sincère et désintéressé.

Pendant ce temps Genève tente, après maints essais qui tous "ratèrent," de jouer à la grande ville. Une fois de plus, un projet de fusion entre les grandes communes urbaines et la minuscule Ville est présenté au Grand Conseil. En attendant que les rues de la cité de Calvin se traient à angle droit comme celles de New York et que le plus petit de ses édifices ait quarante étages, il serait louable de pouvoir dire une bonne fois combien Genève compte d'habitants sans devoir mentionner ou les Eaux-Vives ou le Petit-Saconnex. Mais vous connaissez l'esprit particulariste qui règne au pied de Saint-Pierre et ne doutez pas que la chose aboutisse de sitôt...

Dans cette même bonne ville, la libre concurrence, loyale et franche, quoique autorisée par la loi et sanctionnée il y a quelques mois à peine par un jugement du Tribunal fédéral, n'est pas du goût de toutes les mentalités. La "Feuille d'Avis Officielle," qui fut récemment transformée en quotidien, rencontre non seulement la mauvaise humeur, mais la haine de certains hommes politiques de droite qui, à tort ou à raison, estiment que leur journal, "Le Journal de Genève," perd et son importance...et surtout ses lecteurs par la transformation de la nouvelle venue. Dès lors, tout est bon à ces Messieurs pour barrer le passage et briser celle que leur mentalité surnomme l'intruse.

Récemment, "La Feuille d'Avis Officielle" publiait quelques extraits d'une oeuvre de Schiller, "La Guerre de Trente ans." Vous penserez comme moi que ce n'est pas là vouloir défier ou braver certaines tendances politico-religieuses. On vit, malgré tout, une levée de boucliers de la part du Parti indépendant, estimant que ses idées se trouvaient gravement lésées par de semblables publications. Je vous fais juge de ces accusations.

Plus tard, un directeur de journal prit véhémentement à partie un article où le chef du Département de l'Instruction publique avait été 'interviewé' et où il exposait les idées d'une réforme qu'il entend soumettre au corps législatif. Scandale sans précédent au dire de notre fougueux député, qui parla d'une violation 'du cahier des charges!' Si les paroles mêmes d'un membre du Conseil d'Etat sont désormais paroles interdites, où faut-il trouver une déclaration dont on puisse tenir compte?

Malgré cela, et peut-être à cause de la publicité gratuite qu'on lui fait ainsi, "La Feuille d'Avis," traversant courageusement ce nouveau 'passage à tabac,' s'en va son petit bonhomme de chemin et finira bien par sortir du mauvais pas que d'aucuns prétendent lui prolonger.

Le plus grand des couturiers, le plus souriant aussi, s'est mêlée d'écrire une opérète; et la chose est comique, parce que nous ne lui savions pas une plume aussi alerte que sa paire de ciseaux. "Chiffon," en est le titre et le plus agréable des témoins, j'ai nommé Francell, s'est chargé de l'interprétation. Peu importe, après tout, ce qu'il chantera, pourvu que ce soit lui qui le chante. Et je sais plus d'une jolie femme qui raisonne comme j'écris.

Ceux de nos parlementaires qui s'en étaient allés à Rio-de-Janeiro pour la Conférence parlementaire internationale du commerce nous sont revenus. C'est M. Albert Maunoir, conseiller national, Genevois, qui présidait notre délégation. Les paroles qu'il a adressées, au cours d'un banquet, au ministre des Affaires étrangères du Brésil, ont vivement frappé l'opinion publique là-bas et chez nous. Il a dit le désir de la Suisse de voir la grande République sud-américaine reprendre sa place au sein de la S.d.N. La ronde bonhomie de notre représentant et la voix affable avec laquelle il sait dire les choses les plus difficiles auront, sans doute, produit une impression profonde sur nos amis brésiliens.

Pendant ce temps, les colonies égyptiennes, dans toute la Suisse, fêtent avec joie l'avènement au trône de Fouad Ier.

Ainsi, tandis que les uns se lamentent, les autres se réjouissent. C'est l'habituelle et continue destinée de notre humanité. Vous vous êtes plaints de brouillard et hier vous avez eu du soleil. Telle est la vie à Londres, telle est la vie en Suisse!

Le fil télégraphique.

J. H.'S Weekly Letter to his Friends and Compatriots.

Ladies and Gentlemen,—The quest of youth is the quest of the future. So let me then redeem the promise which I gave recently, the promise to tell those of our young compatriots who are still thirsting for knowledge where to find the fountain at which they may assuage their intellectual thirst.

I suppose that most of us are chiefly interested in studies connected in one way or other with trade and 'bread-and-butter' careers. As is to be expected, it is exactly in this branch of education that here in London great facilities are offered. Most of you will have seen the placards of the L.C.C. Educational Department inviting people to

join the various courses bearing on such subjects as Accountancy, Auditing, Mathematics in general, Economics and kindred sciences, etc. These courses are open to almost anyone and are very cheap when we consider that the teachers are in most cases really experts in the particular line they teach. It is preferable, however, to join such a course at a School or Polytechnic which is within the borough of the student's domicile. Otherwise the charges are sometimes increased. It is possible at most of the L.C.C. Evening Schools and also at all the Polytechnics to work an external student for the qualifying examinations as Bachelor of Commerce, Science, Science (Economics), Law, these all being subjects which in some way have to do with our trade or calling. The examinations have, of course, to be taken at one of the Colleges belonging to the University. One has to register when starting the course. This has to be done at the office of the Registrar (for External Degrees), University Building, South Kensington, who, on application, will send all particulars.

Those among you who have enough energy and who would very much like to take the M.A. or other Degree, would, however, be debarred from the external courses because for all degrees above the Bachelor a full course of internal study at a recognised College is necessary. The length of such a course varies between 3 and 4 years, but here comes in the great advantage Londoners have. All the courses for the above-mentioned subjects are worked double. Full courses for the above-mentioned degrees and subjects are worked in the evening, so giving a man or woman who is dependent on his or her earnings the opportunity of availing themselves of the facilities for higher education.

It wants some courage and determination, but having worked it through it gives a feeling of success, of power, and last but not least of satisfaction. There are two colleges, especially, which come in question for this line of study: The London School of Economics and Political Science for Economics, Statistics, Mercantile Law, Banking and Journalism, and King's College for Law in general. The first-named college also houses a Library which is very valuable for any student of Administration, Economics and Political Science, and the Trustees are ready to grant permission to use the Library also to non-students, if the applicants are bona fide Research Students and can find a well-known person or a lecturer of the University to introduce and recommend them to the Director.

Now at all the Schools and Colleges mentioned, as well as at others, it is always possible to pursue only one small line of study, or one or two special subjects. While for any degree the applicant has to bring a certificate of having passed the London Matriculation, or other accepted examination, or failing this, has to sit for a preliminary examination, in the case of partial study (as a so-called 'occasional student') no such qualification is needed. So it is always possible to take, for instance, the Law of Banking, or Higher Accountancy, or again, Banking and Currency, etc., and so just fill up the gap in one's knowledge.

The competition in all branches of trade and in whatever vocation we choose, is daily becoming more severe and only those who have, in addition to practical experience, a good theoretical knowledge, will have the chance of getting a bit higher than the average.

One could also mention the many possibilities in the way of passing special examinations such as that of the Institute of Bankers, of Chartered Secretary or of Accountant, but all this is not very interesting to read for our friends who have all the knowledge they require, and I should advise prospective students to write to me for more particulars. Write to John Henry, c/o Swiss Observer, 23, Leonard Street, E.C.2., and state the line of study you want to pursue. I shall be pleased to help anyone either by advice or by telling him exactly where to get that advice.

Now then, I hope you will forgive me for only talking to one particular group of friends, but I am quite sure that you would have given the advice yourselves if it had been asked of you.

Yours sincerely, JOHN HENRY.

SWISS GYMNASIIC SOCIETY.

The first Display of the Season, followed by a Grand Dance in the evening, in aid of the Lucerne Fund, will be held on Sunday afternoon, the 23rd October, 1927, at 3 p.m. and 8.30 p.m., respectively, at the Union Helvetia Club, 1, Gerard Place, Shaftesbury Avenue, W.1., by the Senior and Junior sections of the above Society. The programme will consist of Individual work at the Horizontal and Parallel Bars, Simultaneous work at the Pommel Horse, Indian Club Swinging, Drill Exercises, Wrestling Exhibition, Pyramids and Tableaux, as well as songs and musical interludes.

In view of the fact that the Society contemplates competing at the next Federal Gymnastic Festival in Lucerne in July, 1928, it is hoped that the Swiss Colony will turn up in large numbers

on the 23rd October, especially as everything will be done to give them a really good show.

A LADIES SECTION is in course of formation. Will Swiss ladies or ladies born of Swiss parents desirous of joining same, send their names and addresses to the Hon. Secretary, C.E. Schlappi, 47, Ebury Street, S.W.1. Practice at a Drill Hall of a L.C.C. School in the Western district.

SWISS MERCANTILE SOCIETY.

EDUCATION DEPARTMENT.

In connection with the scholastic programme the following lectures were given by the students during last week:—

Mr. Walter Sieber, Münsingen: "The Great Scheidegg." Mr. E. Steck, Berne: "Petroleum, an International Question." Mr. W. Glauser, Bern: "Why Human Beings are Unhappy." Mr. Herm. Jeanrenaud, Basle: "Exportation." Miss Hanna Storrer: "My Experiences with Children." Mr. James Bauert, Zurich: "A Holiday Trip to Belgium." Mr. Paul Blanc: "The Parthenon." Mr. Joseph Fischer: "A Few Words on Hindenburg's Speech at Tannenberg." Mr. Raoul Pressia: "Shark Fishing." Miss Elsa Trub: "People who Earn their Living in the Street." Mr. Walter Imhof, Frauenfeld: "An Autumn Picture." Mr. Max Michel, Basle: "My Impressions of the Engadine." Mr. Ernest Niederer, Wolfhalden: "The Choice of a Profession."

The debating classes dealt with the following subjects:—

"Which is the nobler life, single or married life?" Proposer (single life): Mr. Raymond Thiel (Neuchâtel); Opposer (married life): Miss G. Thiel, Neuchâtel.

"Is lying ever justifiable?" Proposer: Miss Hanna Storrer, Winterthur; Opposer: Mr. James Bauert.

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(The figure in parentheses denotes the number of the issue on which the subscription expires.)

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- 150. { Wie Joggeli eine Frau sucht, Elsi, die seltsame Magd von Jeremias Gotthelf 4d.
- 151. Die Hand der Mutter, von Alfred Fankhauser 5d.
- 152. Erinnerungen eines Kolonialsoldaten auf Sumatra, von Ernst Hauser 4d.
- 153. Martin Birmann Lebenserinnerungen ... 5d.