

# After the speeches at Fribourg

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## AFTER THE SPEECHES AT FRIBOURG.

The Tir Fédéral has come to an end. It was a very imposing affair, and a splendid demonstration of the art of rifle shooting in Switzerland. About 44,000 marksmen from all parts of the country, and from abroad, gathered together at Fribourg. The enthusiasm during the three weeks was remarkable, and the reports about the happenings on every individual day, occupied the principal columns of the entire Swiss Press. Therein one could also read the numerous speeches which were uttered; in many cases they were reproduced *in extenso*. In all the speeches and reception addresses more or less the same thing was said: World crisis, (political and economical), spectre of war, necessity of keeping the army in readiness for all eventualities, necessity also to make sacrifices for new and heavy taxes to keep the Army at full war strength. Unity was admonished, and the consequences of party strife and class hatred were painted in vivid colours. Many eloquent words about the old Swiss traditions were uttered, and the people were advised to live less sumptuously and to accommodate themselves to the difficult times.

The logical consequences of all these oratorical exertions should be, that the advice, given by the leading personalities of our country, should be taken to heart and, that endeavours should be made to live up to it. One must extricate from all these speeches the points which will be most valuable, and which will prove to have a lasting effect on the affairs of our country both political and economical. If this is done, one would not have to worry about the future; but alas, these speeches are soon forgotten, and the newspapers in which they appeared are thrown away. The time has come now to show what has entered into the hearts, and what has, like chaff been swept away by a gust of wind. At these festivals most of the speeches are spoken *al fresco*: beautiful rhetoric phrases, delivered with gusto are expected and appreciated; if these conditions are fulfilled, very often the contents of the speech does not matter a great deal. And really what can one say nowadays, which has not been said over and over again. The happenings which move us all, which make us reflect, which worry us, and which make us look into the future

with misgivings, are known to everyone, we hear and read about it every day. The speakers are, of course, forced to repeat all this in their orations, and, after all, a "Festhütte" is not exactly the most appropriate place, to expound great and far reaching thoughts; in any case it would be an unthankful business to proclaim such thoughts between the various courses of a Banquet, and at a shooting Festival the shooting is the thing that matters most. The achievements of the individual marksman are first and foremost and supplant in the end the most beautiful patriotic speech; it is a matter of course that the various shooting results receive more comments than the speeches. This assumption is perhaps too pessimistic, but if the many speeches which are held throughout the year at innumerable festivals had been taken to heart, things in our country would have long ago taken a turn for the better. Experience has taught us once more, that Festival orations hardly ever change, and that they have become rather stereotype, there are far too many during the short span of a year, and it is a matter of some difficulty to judge whether they bear any tangible fruits. The rhetorical value often overweighs the ethical one.

The seriousness of the present times has been repeatedly pointed out at Fribourg, and people have been admonished to economy. It is now about time, to put into practice what has been drummed into the ears of thousands of our countrymen, all the more as winter is approaching, a winter which will be for a considerable number of our people full of worries and uneasiness. Unemployment is an ever present spectre, many of our smaller communities have no means to help the unemployed, and even the means of the Confederation are not inexhaustible. It is true that the Federal Council has advised the different cantonal authorities to promote voluntary labour services, and already a central office for this purpose has been created, in order to render advice to the authorities.

It is hoped that thus new opportunities for work will be created, but if the financial burden of these endeavours is to be borne by the Federal Government alone, the budget will be seriously taxed. More than ever the question arises, where the money is to come from, and what would happen if the citizens should come to the point where additional and necessary taxes cannot any more

be squeezed out of them. It is true enough, that there is still a great deal of dormant capital in Switzerland, but it cannot be touched, it is dead for commercial enterprise, or is hidden away; and yet there seem to be millions and millions still about. The Budget for the Tir Fédéral was set up at 10 million francs, and although the accounts are not yet closed, it is common knowledge that the financial result will show a considerable profit. It is certain, that during these 3 weeks a much larger amount than these 10 million francs has found its way to Fribourg. There were about 44,000 marksmen at the borders of the Sarine, if each of them has on the average spent 50 frs. only, for food, lodgings and other small expenses, a sum of 2.2 million francs is reached. The profits, *f. i.*, of each performance of the "Festspiel" is known to have reached from 18,000-20,000 frs., every performance being sold out. Then comes, the no doubt, enormous amount paid by the marksmen for their ammunition, these figures are not yet available but they must be considerable. In any case the turn-over at Fribourg must have gone into millions. We only mention these figures, because if at one festival such enormous amounts can be set into motion, it should not be found difficult, in future, to find the necessary means for productive work, produced by the unemployed. Furthermore one must not forget that throughout the year a large number of cantonal and other festivals are celebrated, at which, perhaps not millions, but at least thousands of francs are expended. It seems to be our duty to bring these facts before our people, especially as one hears nothing but complaints about the lean times, and how severe Switzerland is hit by the world crisis.

One often refuses to take these laments at their face value, when one considers that enormous numbers of our countrymen travel year in and year out to the various festivals. It is said that these arrangements are fully justified, as they create work and thus improve the economical situation of the country, but just the opposite is the truth, and the fortune of the public (Volksvermögen) suffers by these never-ending festivals, and they are certainly no antedote for the unhappy economical conditions at home.

We therefore come back to some of the statements which have been made by various orators, namely that it is the patriotic duty of every Swiss

## RECITS JURASSIENS.

L'ami Ulysse de la Saulaie.

par

JEAN-PIERRE DES RAISSES.

I

LA SAULAIE.

Continuation

Introduisons-nous chez notre ami; nous sommes en hiver, le toit de la Saulaie est recouvert de neige et l'âpre vent de l'Ouest gémit dans les branches dénudées des vieux saules.

Frappons à la porte car, de temps immémorial, notre héros ferme sa porte au verrou, et il est nécessaire de montrer "patte blanche" pour qu'elle s'ouvre.

Une voix formidable demande:

— Qui est-là?

— C'est nous, tes deux amis, Jean et Henri.

La porte s'ouvre; on pénètre dans la vieille cuisine noire et, à la lumière tremblottante d'une chandelle, on aperçoit un grand gaillard, haut en couleurs, aux yeux ronds et percants, surmontés de sourcils noirs et touffus, le visage, complètement rasé, porte les traces de la petite vérole: le nez est arqué et le menton saillant; la tête, en pain de sucre, aux cheveux drus et grisonnants, est agrémentée d'une paire d'oreilles très petites et qui semblent collées aux tempes.

Il est vêtu d'un pantalon maltraité par le temps, d'une vieille blouse en cotonnade bleue et blanche sur un gilet de laine tricotée ou "spencer"; la coiffure consiste en un bonnet noir appelé irrévérencieusement par la présente génération "casque à mèche."

La voix est très forte et grasseyante et l'accent est le plus pur "vieux X.", accent bien connu de ceux qui se souviennent et consistent, surtout à "trainer" sur certaines syllabes et à se servir d'un répertoire de vieux mots du "crû," tombés maintenant en désuétude.

Pour se rendre bien compte de la diction de notre ami, il faut que le lecteur sache qu'il lui est impossible de prononcer les r.

Il a une manière, à lui, de parler, qui donne à son langage quelque chose d'original en même temps que du plus haut comique.

Ainsi pour dire la phrase suivante:

"Je suis allé faire un tour et j'ai vu passer le corbillard," il prononce:

"Je suis allé faigue un toug et J'ai vu passer le cogbillag."

Nous ferons grâce, au lecteur, de cette prononciation et nous le prions seulement de s'en souvenir pour la suite, car elle donne un saveur particulière au discours de notre ami Ulysse.

— Ah! c'est vous, entrez; je pensais justement que, depuis dix jours, je n'ai vu à moi qui vive à la Saulaie, et vous me faites bien plaisir d'avoir pensé à moi. Vous ne savez pas ce que c'est que de vivre ainsi isolé; du temps que ma mère vivait encore c'était tout différent; une mère c'est toujours une mère et, quand même elle était bien sévère avec moi, il m'en a rudement semblé de la voir partir; mais je n'ai au moins rien à me reprocher à son égard; j'ai toujours été un fils respectueux et dévoué, et si ma chère mère me voyait à présent avec la Saulaie qui est franche et mes économies qui sont placées à la caisse d'épargne elle serait heureuse et contente; moi qui ai été pauvre étant jeune et qui suis arrivé par mon travail, je ne dirai pas à la richesse, mais, au moins, à l'indépendance — est-ce que vous avez froid, voulez-vous des "caignons" le fourneau est bon chaud et la "séchée" a risqué de prendre feu; il y a aussi la marmite où j'ai mis la braise du souper. Avez-vous entendu dire que le grand Pidem veut partir pour l'Amérique — excuse Jean, tu m'as un peu dérangé ma "serpillière." Ah! on ne sait pas ce que ça donne d'ouvrage pour tenir une maison en ordre. — Tenez, voilà des allumettes, c'en est encore une boîte que j'ai rapportée depuis Bullon la dernière fois que j'y suis allé — il faudra que j'y retourne bientôt, ils me font des reproches parce que je n'y vais pas assez souvent, mais si c'est toujours pour m'offrir la place de syndic, il ne faut pas qu'ils comptent là-dessus — à la fin du compte! qu'on me laisse tranquille! je sais bien que, sans moi, ils ne peuvent rien faire de bien mais, grâce à mes conseils, ils ont, enfin, pavé les deux médillons — je suis très sensible aux avances qui me sont faites par les notabilités de ma commune, mais je ne suis pas disposé à quitter la Saulaie pour aller demeurer à Bullon, surtout que, une fois que j'y serais, ils m'ont déjà dit qu'ils voulaient m'envoyer au Grand Conseil de Lausanne — et puis, une fois qu'on est à Lausanne, on vous envoie encore à Berne, au Conseil fédéral, et il faudrait encore que j'apprenne l'allemand et, c'est pas pour me glorifier mais, malgré mes capacités et mon intelligence, je n'ai pas le temps de m'occuper de politique. Qu'on me laisse tranquille! à la fin du compte! — nous aurons un changement de temps; cette nuit passée les renards aboyaient du côté de la Rochette et les bois sont venus noirs du côté du Chenailon; c'est une remarque que ma mère m'a apprise — c'est pour de la pluie, et ma mère ne se trompait

pas souvent. Mon arrière-grand-père Jean-Jacques Bouvet du Cernil-Verbé était un homme très instruit et ma mère avait hérité de lui ses profondes connaissances en "astronomie"; elle me les a transmises et, pour savoir le temps qu'il vent faire je n'ai pas besoin de "baromètre."

Ah! je me dis souvent lorsque je fais mes remarques au ciel, depuis la Saulaie, il n'ont qu'à aller consulter le papier à la pharmacie Gentet, qu'ils reçoivent depuis Zurich, j'en sais plus long qu'eux. Ils ont inventé une nouvelle science qu'ils appellent la "métérologie" mais jamais ils n'arriveront à savoir le temps comme moi.

Ils ont beau être "souple" d'orgueil, Jean des Paniers était plus fort qu'eux et il m'a aussi appris bien des choses à ce sujet. — En voilà encore un que j'ai bien regretté et qui jouait de la "clérinette" autrement mieux que ces musiciens d'à présent. — Aussi, je me trompe rarement dans mes prévisions et quand vous me verrez dans la rue avec les pantalons dans les bottes, vous pouvez être sûrs que c'est un signe de pluie! Henri, sans te commander, veux-tu me passer cette écuelle qui est sur le cul du four.

Le lecteur pourra juger, par cette tirade, que notre ami Ulysse est doué d'une prodigieuse facilité d'élocution. En revanche, ces flots de paroles, dont il est coutumier, sont un peu incohérents. Mais on peut se rendre compte de la mentalité de leur auteur, et l'on s'aperçoit, dès le début, qu'il n'est pas précisément un modèle de modestie. Il est, au contraire, très-satisfait d lui-même et commence souvent sa conversation par ceci: "C'est pas poug me gloquifier mais, etc."

Cependant, on lui pardonne volontiers ce petit défaut, parce qu'il est, au fond, bon enfant, et parce que les glorieuses qualités qu'il s'attribue inspirent plutôt la gaieté et ne font de mal à personne.

— Le vieux poêle en "catelles" vernies répand une chaleur agréable dans la petite chambre basse, lambrissée en sapin, où Ulysse passe ses jours et ses nuits. Une paire de bottes, aux dimensions colossales, est placée, bien en évidence, sur ce qu'il appelle le "cul du four" et qui, en effet, est bien le prolongement du vieux four à cuire le pain.

Dans un coin, une antique horloge en bois, peinturlurée comme les joujoux de la Forêt-Noire, fait entendre son tic-tac lent et monotone. La fenêtre, presque à fleur de terre, est encore à petits carreaux et, devant elle, est placé l'établi d'horloger sur lequel notre ami travaille en hiver.

(à suivre).

citizen to reduce unnecessary expenses and to live in a simpler way, in short to accommodate himself to the altered conditions, like other countries have had to do. This does not mean that our people should be less happy or would get less out of life; but it would go a long way to do away with the dissatisfaction of those of our countrymen, who through force of circumstances are debarred from earning their daily bread.

We do not think of those who are never satisfied, whatever you do for them, but of those thousands and thousands who do not know what the next day will have in store for them, of those unemployed who are getting on in years and whom nobody wants, of those who walk with embittered hearts through the streets, because they feel that they are outcasts and dependent. We think of all the young men, who must ask themselves, what will become of them, when they have to spend their best years in idleness. What must their thoughts be, when they see how in East and West, and in South and North the flags are hoisted for all sorts of festivals, when countless speakers tell the people what they should do to conquer the numerous obstacles, when they say that it is the patriotic duty of everyone to stand together in sorrowful and hard times, and to help those who have, often through no fault of their own, landed in Queer Street; when the result, say of a shooting, music, gymnastic or Yodel competition is far more important to the masses, than the warning given by some of our responsible statesmen. What does the country benefit, when on every possible occasion patriotic cheers are raised, and patriotic songs sung, when the very existence of the country is in danger?

ST.

### SWITZERLAND'S ONLY CIRCUS.

Who amongst our readers does not remember the famous Circus Knie? Here is a description from a special correspondent of the *D.M.T.*, of a performance of this well-known company.

The little medieval town of Thun in the Canton of Bern has just been all agog with the coming of the Knie Circus. On my arrival in Spiez, a little way down Lake Thun, I was surprised to see a great coloured poster heralding the arrival of an "Under Water Circus."

Advertisement hoardings are not allowed to spoil the beauty of Spiez as a rule, and exception was only made for this much-loved circus, the only one Switzerland possesses and of which it is rightly proud.

I am not at all keen on seeing a man go into a cage of many lions, make them leap through burning hoops, climb pyramids, and, incidentally, poke a stick at them till they roar and beat the air with angry paws. But the whole staff of the pleasant, home-like hotel was so enthusiastic about this circus and its popular directors, the Knie Brothers, that I decided to make an exception, too, and pay it a visit with the young Swiss band that were off to Thun for the last performance.

It was a wild and thundery night, and I wondered if lions were unfavourably affected by thunder, but my cheery companions were so sure of their circus that they drove all doubts away, and as we sat with half of the Swiss Army around us I felt that any unfortunate happening would be capably dealt with.

The Knie Brothers were, as it were, born in the ring. Their father was a famous tight-rope walker who lost his life by mischance when he was walking on his rope over the Rhine. His sons started the circus bearing their name and have flourished exceedingly.

One brother puts three fine elephants through their paces, one huge beast stepping so daintily over him as he lies on a supposed battlefield as a cat walks over china. He also lowers his vast bulk over his prostrate master until he seems to be lying on him. Then he picks him up in his trunk and carries him triumphantly round the ring.

Another Knie brother is in charge of a magnificent lot of horses, amongst which are some sixteen Shetland ponies that waltz daintily in pairs under nodding plumes. Splendid Arab steeds are ridden by fearless trick riders in wide-brimmed Mexican hats, and steady, broad-backed circus horses canter sedately round the ring with sometimes as many as four men and a girl standing on the same back. A slim, dark girl looking not a day older than ten, the only Knie daughter, ends a turn by standing on one leg on her father's shoulder as he gallops round the ring standing on the back of one of these steady creatures.

The third brother looks after the human part of the circus and two young sons are already doing wonders in trick riding. The circus seems a real family affair, and the Knie Brothers are deservedly popular for their generosity in giving free performances in the afternoon to those too poor to pay. All the many charitable institutions such as orphanages and asylums get free passes in the towns and villages passed through, and often some of the company visit hospitals so that the patients may get a chance of seeing something of this much-beloved circus.

A company of Arab acrobats do wild and wonderful stunts. The strong man and leader holds, without apparent strain, a pyramid of men on his shoulders with the top one standing on his head at the apex.

There is almost savage grace about the whirlwind back-somersaults turned at lightning speed by these tawny men, their black hair streaming like manes from their whirling heads. One of them swung over the ring standing on his head on a swinging horizontal bar, keeping his equilibrium with arms and legs scarcely moving and no protecting net underneath. I began to think I preferred the lions, but he swung on as unconcerned as a child in a hammock.

It was, however, the second part of the programme that gave the circus its name of "Under Water." An exciting episode of desert life was splendidly given. A Kalif of Patsari, with his bride and numerous suite, comes riding through the desert, and decides to camp for the night in an oasis.

Night falls, a camp fire is lighted, round which slave girls, desert men, and snake charmers dance in ever-changing colours of electric light. When at last all are asleep, even the guards who should have watched, a desert prince succeeds in capturing the sleeping bride and hides her in his desert fortress.

Then begins an exciting chase, the Arab acrobats making perfect desert men. The bride is finally rescued, and the Kalif gives a Venetian fête in his palace gardens to celebrate the fact. This is the famous under water scene of the poster.

A cascade of 500,000 litres of water pours through the Rialto bridge into the ring, which has been swiftly and deftly turned into a circular lake with the help of waterproof sheeting. Swans, peacocks, and gondolas appear as if by magic while the attention of the audience has been held by a beautiful girl who dances on a platform high up over the cascade and turns herself into a series of tropical butterflies, bats, and spiders.

A fine modern fountain in the middle of the lake throws the water up to the roof of the tent in many-coloured spray, and from the rim jets of dancing water make a screen through which you follow the exciting episodes of the Kalif's revenge, in the course of which most of the troupe seem in and out of the water.

As the audience poured out of the great tent, men were busy taking down the seats. Everything has to be packed and the ground left as tidy as it was found in something like the space of three hours, for the circus is always touring and only stays a few days in each town or village. They used to carry fodder and food with them, but since the depression they have done their catering in the towns as they come to them. As there are 350 animals and 250 people to be provided for it is no small undertaking.

K.

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Es wurden in unserer Kirche folgende 3 Brautpaare getraut:

Am 23. Juli: Frederick Yelverton Wright von Carshalton (Surrey) und Margaretha Anna Stüssy von Lüntal (Canton Glarus).

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