

Johann Heinrich Pestalozzi

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sentiment. During the war it had 59 delegations serving abroad, all the members being Swiss, and they travelled a total of eight million miles on their various missions of mercy. Food parcels dispatched to prisoners of war ran into millions and cost three milliard Swiss francs. Much inevitable obstruction had to be overcome. The Germans would only allow parcels to be sent to persons whose names were already known to the International Red Cross, and would not allow other names to be revealed. Starting with 60 known names, and working on a chain-letter system, the investigators finally compiled a list of 56,000 interned persons in Mauthausen, Dachau, Belsen, Theresienstadt, Landsberg and other camps. As a crowning achievement, the International Red Cross delegations were able at the last moment to prevent a massacre of prisoners by the Germans in the camps of Berlin, Oranienberg and Ravensbrück. The work of repatriation is now in full swing. Numbers of refugees have been sent home, other contingents are being convoyed daily. Repatriation is complicated by the fact that many of the interned are unwilling to leave Switzerland, either because they have nowhere to go or because they fear the consequences.

If the Swiss stoutly defended the right of asylum for the oppressed, they were equally vehement in asserting the right of Swiss industries to supply the belligerents with whatever they thought fit. There is nothing in international law to prevent this, but in practice it meant that supplies were sent to Germany alone. Almost down to the end of the war the long German coal-trains from the Ruhr lumbered through the St. Gotthard and Simplon tunnels night and day to keep the war industries of Milan and Turin running. Swiss firms supplied machine tools and precision instruments to Germany, and the Swiss automobile industry combined to form a repairing and reconditioning workshop for German military cars. For the Swiss it must be said that all through the war they were under strong military pressure. The Germans had only to cut off the supply of coal and Swiss industries would have been paralysed, with consequent mass unemployment.

Uncompromising insistence by Switzerland on her absolute sovereign neutrality would probably have the same deleterious effect on the future organisation of peace as her privileged position in the League of Nations. The co-operation of the Swiss, a peace-loving people by definition, would be of inestimable value in the task of maintaining peace in the new conditions that have arisen with the invention of new weapons. But some modification of the traditional attitude towards neutrality would seem to be necessary before that co-operation can be made effective.

OUR NEXT ISSUE.

We intend to go to press on February 22nd, 1946, and take this opportunity of thanking the following Subscribers for their enlarged subscriptions:

H. Senn, Miss O. Asper, F. H. Rohr, W. Deutsch, W. Lehmann, P. Siebenmann, W. Eichenberger, R. Weist, R. Schmid, G. Hafner, Miss J. Wyss, L. Forrer, Mrs. E. Muller, H. Leuzinger, A. Ottiker, F. Schubeler, L. Siegrist, J. R. Tissot, A. B. Chilvers, Mrs. Marquarie, A. Schneider, Miss M. Meyer, C. Rougemont, Miss C. C. Meyer, Dr. Pettavel, E. Belart.



JOHANN HEINRICH PESTALOZZI
(b. January 12th, 1746)

On January 12th not only Switzerland, the land of his birth, but the whole civilized world did commemorate Heinrich Pestalozzi, for it is largely due to this great educator that the instruction and education of youth is to-day recognized as a matter of national interest.

Pestalozzi was born in Zurich as the son of a simple surgeon; after his father's early death he spent his boyhood in the loving care of his mother and a faithful maid servant. From his grand-father, vicar of a rural parish not far from the city, the bright youngster got to know the peasants, not only in their hard toil and many troubles, but also in their happy moments. At that time young Heinrich like so many of his contemporaries, fell under the spell of Rousseau's "Emile." Filled with holy zeal he vowed to become a reformer of his people.

After a brief course of studies he turned to practical work and took up agriculture on a Bernese farm. He next decided to work on his own account with his wife, who was seven years his senior, and took over the Neuhaus estate near Birr in Argovia. He wanted to prove that the best remedy for empty pseudo-culture and also for the moral and physical misery of the people was a combination of agriculture with intelligent home education. Unfortunately his venture failed and even the home for the poor that he set up on his estate miscarried owing to his lack of organizing ability.

However, in the difficult period that followed, his literary gifts came to the fore. In those years he published a number of works in which he opened up new horizons. Amongst them was "Hermit's Evenings" and his famous novel of village life, "Leonard and

Gertrude." The world began to acknowledge his existence. A journey to Germany in 1792 gave him a chance of meeting Klopstock, Wieland, Herder, Goethe and other famous writers.

When violent revolts against the French conquerors broke out in Central Switzerland in 1798, Heinrich Pestalozzi was entrusted by the Helvetic Directory with the duty of gathering together the orphans at Stans. However, this work too was destroyed in the confusion caused by the war of the following year. The training-college for teachers he founded in 1800 in Burgdorf Castle only lasted a short time. Although Pestalozzi had already attained a considerable reputation in Switzerland and abroad even the institute in Münchenbuchsee did not succeed in achieving stability.

At last, however, the opening of the academy and training-college for teachers at Yverdon on the Lake of Neuchâtel made Heinrich Pestalozzi famous. Pupils flocked to him from neighbouring countries and from Spain, Russia and even North America. Teachers who had graduated from his school taught in Naples, St. Petersburg and Madrid. In the course of time, however, such severe attacks were made against the master himself and the direction of his institute that he was obliged to give up this undertaking, too, to which he had devoted twenty years of his life. At the age of eighty he returned to his beloved Neuhof where he wrote his "Swansong" and "Life's Vicissitudes." The untiring old man was still full of great plans, but a libel written by one of his former collaborators gave him the coup de grâce. The great child lover and philanthropist died at Brugg on February 17th, 1827.

But the world did not forget him. In him "we honour the people's teacher, who filled hearts with enthusiasm for the sacred rights and duties of the family and the mother and pointed out the way to all efforts towards social reform." (Hunziker).

* * *

The following appreciation appeared in the Educational Supplement of "The Times," January 12th:

"If we no longer believe that education is synonymous with knowledge and that only through books, facts and figures can a child grow into an educated human being, we owe it to the courage and wisdom of a few great men who have seen deeply into the spiritual life of man during an age of enlightenment. None has reached the height of Johann Heinrich Pestalozzi, born 200 years ago in Zürich, whose influence spread all over Europe.

The schools and institutes which he inspired became models for the age of liberalism then dawning, and his ideas have been studied and at least partially accepted by almost every educationist in the succeeding centuries. He published numerous books and articles, in part scholarly treatises, in part novels and symbolical stories, and in part pamphlets in which he engaged in the philosophical and political controversies of his time.

Influenced by Rousseau, Fichte and Kant, his approach to education was that of a philosopher and sociologist, his approach to society that of an educationist. Man was to Pestalozzi the product of many factors which it was the function of a true and healthy education to promote. Learning was but one of them. A loving family circle, friends, above all, work and a secure social standing with an assured income — these he recognized not only for their creative influence

upon adults but for their formative importance to the child. This combination of educationist and sociologist is of obvious relevance to modern times and has not yet found its final form and expression. Equally modern are the many psychological and sociological observations to be found in Pestalozzi's writings. He is deeply aware of the changing structure of society, of the rise of new social groups, and of the consequent dilemma between a new equality and the permanent need for social and political differentiation. He recognizes the constant presence of ruling groups and struggling minorities, and he is at one with us in seeking a solution compatible with our ideal of freedom. The essence of Pestalozzi's teaching — that the educationist cannot afford to neglect political, social or religious affairs any more than the politician and social reformer can neglect the educational implications of his actions — is equally applicable to-day.

If we recognize the importance of Pestalozzi's teaching to modern conditions its significance becomes overwhelming on a continent where, in many countries, education has to be restarted almost from the beginning. Here Pestalozzi's writings, with their clear recognition that school books alone will never suffice, become inescapable. Only in the right political and social conditions can a free democracy arise and the schoolmaster exercise to the full his true vocation."

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CHEMINS DE FER FÉDÉRAUX, Boulevard des Capucines 37, Paris 2^e. Tel: Opéra 63.30.

The first private air charter since the war is reported by Lep Air Services Ltd. A twin-engine De Havilland aircraft left Croydon for Zurich on January 21st carrying a London specialist and his wife to the bedside of their daughter, critically ill with peritonitis.