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# The Swiss Observer

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## “THE SWISS OBSERVER.”

It has probably not escaped the notice of our readers that the conduct of our columns in the last two issues has undergone a change.

This change is due to the fact that Dr. A. Latt has requested us, in consequence of his return to Switzerland in the near future, to release him from the Editorship which he had kindly accepted temporarily.

We greatly regret thus being deprived of Dr. Latt's very able co-operation, and we feel sure our readers will join us in coupling our most sincere thanks for the support he accorded to “The Swiss Observer,” with our very best wishes for Dr. Latt's future.

We have succeeded in making arrangements for regular and original contributions on Home Affairs from the economic and financial point of view, as well as for Gleanings from the English Press, etc.

We further wish to remind our readers that we shall always be pleased to receive and publish individual contributions and correspondence of general interest to the Swiss colony.

THE PUBLISHER.

## RANDOM JOTTINGS IN SWITZERLAND.

The rough result of the 1920 *census*, recently taken in Switzerland, shows, according to the “Nationalzeitung,” 3,856,825 inhabitants of Switzerland. The increase since 1910 is but 103,532, whereas our population increased from 1900 to 1910 by 437,850. This seems to indicate that Switzerland approaches the limit where she can no longer increase to any considerable extent the number of her inhabitants without seriously lowering the standard of life—in other words, the struggle for life is already pretty hard in our country. Certainly that limit is not yet reached, but it cannot now be very far off, especially if we consider the present circumstances of anarchistic economic conditions which may possibly still last for years. The Census has at any rate proved that we are not yet the 4 million people already now and then quoted. If we continue to increase as slowly as we have done during the past decade we may well wait till 1935 before reaching the round figure mentioned.

As things are such, it is surely necessary that Swiss people exercise greater care than they have done hitherto regarding the type of individuals whom they accept as their fellow-citizens from abroad. Fortunately, there are signs that our people begin to realise that the *foreigner*

ALL COMMUNICATIONS TO BE ADDRESSED TO—

THE EDITOR, *THE SWISS OBSERVER*,

21, GARLICK HILL, E.C. 4.

*question* is a very serious problem: that the 17 per cent. of foreigners who actually live in Switzerland are the utmost limit we can afford. One day we shall be able to make good confederates of the children born of foreign parents in our country, but meanwhile it is our duty to consider very keenly whether those foreigners who become naturalised can afford any guarantee of their being acquainted with the Swiss character and our national ideals. The St. Gall Kantonsrat has recently proved that it is alive to the changed situation. It refused, in an outburst of national pride, to ratify the naturalisation of a school-master of German origin, living at Rheineck, because he had called his pupils “Schweizerkühe.” In the Canton Schaffhausen there is also actually a scandal about a naturalisation being talked of. But this case is rather a deplorable one. A German factory manager tried to acquire the citizenship. A strong patriot protested, however, immediately. He thought the candidate particularly unfit to become a Swiss whilst he not long ago—in fact during the war—used to boast widely of his German origin and the glory of the Fatherland. But no sooner had the Swiss patriot said a word against the manager than this latter was instantly backed up by a highly respected lawyer, whose position in the army is as well known as his functions in our councils. The patriot was not only intimidated by so prominent a personality, who was soon joined by other pillars of society, but in a very short time the newspaper press also adopted the point of view of the German would-be Swiss and refused the patriot even the space to reply to the attacks upon his honour. The battle is still going on and is upsetting the whole canton.

If business plays often too great a part in Swiss politics—if you don't believe it, you have but to read Gottfried Keller's “Martin Salander,” which the “Verein für Verbreitung guter Schriften” has just issued in a popular edition—it is no less true that sometimes our authorities as well as our people have their good moments and pass wise and generous resolutions. One of the finest things achieved in Switzerland in recent years and one of the most famous monuments of Helvetic solidarity, too, is the construction of the *road to Indemini*. Indemini is a forlorn little village high up in the Tessin mountains at the foot of the Gradicoli and the Tamaro. There existed, until our councils decided to undertake the construction of a road, only a small bad footpath to connect Indemini with the nearest Swiss village, Gerra. It took one seven hours to ascend from Gerra to Indemini! All goods had to be carried by those poor women of Indemini on their backs! It was terribly hard work, and nearly all of them