

Home news

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HOME NEWS

In view of the unsatisfactory financial result in the working of the Swiss Federal Railways it is proposed by the management to extend the working day of the whole of the staff by half an hour and to slightly curtail the holidays: this would mean a general return to the eight-hour day. It is estimated that this extension would allow of a gradual reduction of the staff by about 2000 and diminish the wages bill by about 12 million francs.

The final scrutiny of the elections returns for the Ticineses Grand Council gives the Liberal Party 28 mandates instead of the 29 originally announced.

In the elections for two civil judges of Basel-Stadt the Socialist and Communist candidates gained the day, presumably owing to the apathy of the electors, scarcely 25 per cent. appearing at the polls.

In the canton of Fribourg M. Jules Bovet (Conservative), Prefect of the District of Broye, has been elected States Councillor in the place of M. Georges Python, who died on Jan. 10th; only 20 per cent. of the electors recorded their votes.

An ancient ceremonial was revived last week in Solothurn when the 75 year old farmer Stanislaus Roth from Beinwil was invested with the traditional red-and-white robe of honour entitling him to an annual gratuity of Frs. 100 as the oldest descendant of the historic Hans Roth, whose good fortune it was to warn the town fathers in 1382 of the intended nocturnal raid by the Duke Rudolf of Kyburg and thus preserve the independence of Solothurn.

The former communal clerk of Eugst am Albis (Zurich), Charles Hufschmied, has committed suicide in order to evade arrest on a charge of having misappropriated about Frs. 6,000.

NOTES AND GLEANINGS.

Pestalozzi Celebrations.

Simultaneously with the celebrations in Switzerland a large number of lectures were held in this country; here is a report of two London conferences taken from the *Schoolmaster and Woman Teacher's Chronicle* (Feb. 24th):—

"Above all things a lover of children, and with that a friend of the poor, and a social reformer, and then a teacher and a pioneer, his whole work was in the Swiss tradition, but all humanity is in his debt." So began the noble tribute of Sir Michael Sadler at King's College to Johann Heinrich Pestalozzi, who, among the ruins of Stans, amid beggary and starvation, ignorance and suspicion, "one of the imperishable pictures of educational romance," laid broadly and firmly the foundations of the modern primary school. As Sir Michael Sadler recited the wonderful story of Pestalozzi's life, exactly one hundred years after the subject of his narrative had entered into silence, he was deeply moved. The audience felt that he, like thousands of teachers all over the world, had been inspired by the message and the example of this man. "What compassion he had, what patience he had, how to his artistic temperament came the floods of exaltation, and then the long periods of depression and sorrow"—the whole a picture of one who, unkempt and ragged, would yet give his only pair of boots to a beggar, and has been proved to be an outstanding benefactor to his fellow men.

Of the genesis of his ideas through a long series of idealists back to our own John Locke, no one is more fitted to speak than Sir Michael Sadler, who brought out very clearly the predominant influence of Rousseau. "The true education," said Pestalozzi, "is the life of simplicity," and again, "I dream of an education

that can only come about in a simpler world." The winds, the birds and the trees were the true teachers, and by dwelling on the beautiful in nature, art and music, the secret of happiness and understanding might be reached. "I learnt very little," said one of his pupils, "but I never forgot the training we had in exact observation, or the sense of power it brings."

His work did not stop with his death, but has inspired a sequence of great successors, Froebel, Herbart, Montessori; and in its emphasis on practical occupations the craft teachers of our own day, Kerscheneister, and John Dewey of New York. Lord Eustace Percy rightly said that to Pestalozzi Europe owed a revival of the humanistic conception of education, and that, like a true teacher, his lament and his glory was that he produced "nothing finished or complete."

From a few delightful remarks of the Swiss Ambassador we concluded that the Pestalozzian tradition was not necessarily followed in the Swiss schools any more than in our own, and that the love of teachers had not there become a rule without exception; but His Excellency seemed eager to learn more about his great countryman, whom so many London educationists had gathered together that night to honour, and whose portrait, surrounded by a laurel wreath presented by the Swiss colony in London, stood upon the platform.

In the afternoon at the College of Preceptors a more intimate gathering, largely of women teachers and students, and conducted by Mr. John Russell, the author of the best English biography of Pestalozzi, who in his work at King Alfred's School, Hampstead, has faithfully followed the tradition of freedom, brought us even closer to the man himself. A number of portraits and publications surrounded the room, and the most interesting exhibit among them was an album that formerly belonged to the Rev. Charles Mayo, one of the disciples who first introduced his ideas into England, and containing an autograph message of love and gratitude from the great teacher. This had been lent by Miss Mayo, his daughter, now in her ninety-second year.

The Duchess of Atholl spoke of Pestalozzi as a great idealist and a great realist, who always related education to the environment of the child, who drew out the best in his moral nature, who avoided mechanical repetitions, who completed one stage of the educational process before going on to the next, and who resisted the temptation, to which so many teachers succumb, to impose his own personality and interests upon the immature mind. She emphasised his spiritual appeal, the ideal of service that he preached, and his insistence upon the virtues of love, gratitude and obedience.

Extracts from the whole range of Pestalozzi's writings were read aloud by Mr. Russell with solemnity and clarity, and those who followed the resonant periods, the triumphant declarations, seemed to hear the authentic voice of the master himself. Then the schoolgirls and students sang the simple song by Goethe, which was taught by Pestalozzi to his children, and two new songs of praise written specially for the Centenary by a near relative who is now Professor of Music at Berne. Appropriate passages from Beethoven and Haydn were admirably rendered on the piano, and the meeting ended with a series of lantern slides.

There spoke to the vote of thanks Miss Margaret MacMillan, who in her love for little children may worthily be compared with her great forerunner, and who, in his own spirit, pleaded for better housing, and for a real opportunity for the mothers adequately to care for the children in the poorer districts. The meeting responded most enthusiastically to the eloquence that has inspired so many audiences. Mr. F. S. Marvin sounded once again the note of international unity.

Romauntsch.

The following article from the *Westminster Gazette* (Feb. 22nd) will prove of interest to the many "Romauntsch" residing in our Colony.

The announcement that students of Romauntsch have applied to the Swiss authorities to have that language recognised as a fourth official language is full of interest.

When barbarian hordes spread over the northern parts of Italy, the inhabitants fled to one hills further north, and there they have remained, talking the old Latin speech. Some forty years ago, an English visitor made careful inquiry in the districts bordering on the En-

ANNIVERSARIES OF SWISS EVENTS.

March 3rd, 1353.—The Bernese Union: Alliance of Berne with the forest cantons, which promised to defend its territory.

March 7th, 1656.—The Peace of Baden. Negotiations had been proceeding since March 2nd, which resulted in peace after the Vilmergen wars. Ratification took place on March 7th, the chief merit for their successful issue being due to the leader of the neutrals, Rudolf Wettstein, Burgomaster of Basle. The victorious Catholics gained their ends, every borough in the land obtaining equal rights as regards religion, citizenship and jurisdiction.

March 8th, 1880.—Promulgation of law regulating banking in Switzerland.

March 9th, 1823.—Death of Conrad Escher von der Lindt. Escher sided with those who welcomed the new ideas broadcast as a result of the French Revolution. In August, 1798, the new oath to the Helvetic Republic was taken throughout the country and an alliance formed with France. Escher, however, protested vigorously against sacrificing Switzerland's neutrality. He is also renowned as the originator of the "Lindt Canal" (1804-1822) and was a great friend and brother-in-arms of the noble-minded Paul Usteri.

March 11th, 1426.—Foundation stone laid of the Cathedral at Berne.

March 12th, 1526.—Alliance between Geneva, Berne and Fribourg.

gadne, and found the old Latin still spoken and written, somewhat Teutonised from Chur, whose bishops were lords of the upper Engadine from 1139 to 1494, when the people bought their freedom. An example may be taken from events in 1352. Entrance to the valley of Lugnetz was guarded by a gate, called Porclaus (porta clausa). This was attacked, when the men were away, by an armed force. The women defended it and saved Lugnetz. When the men returned they hailed their women as "las valorusas femnas di Lugnetza," gave them the south side in the church, and sent them up first for Communion, "aunz co ils homens."

The Romauntsch speakers call the Engadine "Endjadine." It is to them Enchod'een (at the Head of the Inn). Tres is still the Romauntsch for trans, and Pontresina is Pontresenium. A French savant wrote many years ago: "La Valteline et l'Engadine aiment beaucoup l'umlaut," the diphthong or modification of vowels, and this is still true. A little volume of comic verse of some sixty years ago had an account of a bear hunt, which tells how a bear has devoured "(ho devoro) il chatscheder e sierchaum saina sel e saina paun," eamem and panem pronounced as we should pronounce chame and pame.

There are far-reaching hints of colloquial abbreviations in the Latin talk of classical times, among which we may mention the omission of the last syllable of such words as dabium, iudicium, which appear as dabi, giudici. A quaint result, comes from the use of un (oon) as an intensive. Uors is a bear, uorsun is a great bear. Bap is a father, and they call a grandfather babun.

The Scriptures, the services and the sermons were in Romauntsch and German alternately. Two Cambridge students, afterwards bishops, spent a delightful four hours one Saturday with the examiner for Zwinglian Orders, discussing each word in the early part of St. John's Gospel, and the changes through which it had passed in its descent from a Latin original, down to the worlds "Ed a quels chi vendaiyan culombs deschet el, Pigliè davent da qui quaiostas chosas" (ii., 16). The Pfarrer said that if they came to his service next day his sermon should not have one word in it which they had not discussed. He kept his promise. His text was: "El ais gnien in sia proprietad; mas ils sieus nun l'haun arvschieu (i., 11), following exactly the Vulgate where our authorised version had "his own" in each case. Our Revisers corrected that by inserting in the second case "they that were." The Romauntsch perfect "have not received him" hit the generation to whom John spoke more personally than our (and the Greek) "received him not."

An association for the furtherance of the use of the language was formed some 30 or 40 years ago, and no doubt the claim for recognition has been much strengthened by the work of the association.

Pestalozzi Kalender

(ILLUSTRATED)

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