

The Swiss national languages

Autor(en): **[s.n.]**

Objektyp: **Article**

Zeitschrift: **The Swiss observer : the journal of the Federation of Swiss Societies in the UK**

Band (Jahr): - **(1935)**

Heft 720

PDF erstellt am: **08.08.2024**

Persistenter Link: <https://doi.org/10.5169/seals-693736>

Nutzungsbedingungen

Die ETH-Bibliothek ist Anbieterin der digitalisierten Zeitschriften. Sie besitzt keine Urheberrechte an den Inhalten der Zeitschriften. Die Rechte liegen in der Regel bei den Herausgebern.

Die auf der Plattform e-periodica veröffentlichten Dokumente stehen für nicht-kommerzielle Zwecke in Lehre und Forschung sowie für die private Nutzung frei zur Verfügung. Einzelne Dateien oder Ausdrucke aus diesem Angebot können zusammen mit diesen Nutzungsbedingungen und den korrekten Herkunftsbezeichnungen weitergegeben werden.

Das Veröffentlichen von Bildern in Print- und Online-Publikationen ist nur mit vorheriger Genehmigung der Rechteinhaber erlaubt. Die systematische Speicherung von Teilen des elektronischen Angebots auf anderen Servern bedarf ebenfalls des schriftlichen Einverständnisses der Rechteinhaber.

Haftungsausschluss

Alle Angaben erfolgen ohne Gewähr für Vollständigkeit oder Richtigkeit. Es wird keine Haftung übernommen für Schäden durch die Verwendung von Informationen aus diesem Online-Angebot oder durch das Fehlen von Informationen. Dies gilt auch für Inhalte Dritter, die über dieses Angebot zugänglich sind.

A l'heure actuelle, tout particulièrement, il est bon que les Suisses de l'intérieur tournent leurs regards vers nos colonies, afin d'apprendre d'elles comment on peut se défendre avec courage et victorieusement contre les influences étrangères contraires à notre idéal politique. Ils verront comment, pour éviter les divisions, on sait être Suisse tout simplement, en faisant abstraction de ce qui sépare pour insister sur ce qui unit. Ce bel exemple est le don le plus précieux que les Suisses de l'étranger puissent nous faire. Ils mettent en pratique l'avertissement qui ne doit jamais cesser de retentir à nos oreilles: "Soyez un, un, un!"

Notre économie nationale ne saurait se passer des Suisses qui sont à l'étranger. Notre vie spirituelle serait diminuée, sans l'enrichissement qu'ils nous apportent des grands centres de culture; la protection militaire de nos frontières a besoin d'eux; la défense morale du pays compte sur eux, comme sur ses meilleurs agents. Les temps viendront — ils ne sont peut-être plus très éloignés — où la renaissance spirituelle de notre patrie se fera par l'union de tous les Suisses; mais nous n'y parviendrons que si nous savons tenir compte de l'opinion et de l'exemple des Suisses à l'étranger.

Des valeurs de tout ordre constituent l'importance de la Suisse de l'étranger pour la Mère-Patrie. C'est à nous qu'il incombe de maintenir celle dont toutes les autres dépendent: l'attachement au pays.

Si l'on ne fait pas encore suffisamment aujourd'hui pour les Suisses émigrés, sous le rapport de la culture nationale, de l'assistance, de la lutte contre le chômage, des œuvres de vacances, de la protection juridique des travailleurs et de la lutte en vue de garder, sur le terrain économique, les positions acquises, le devoir du Secrétaire de la Nouvelle Société Helvétique pour les Suisses à l'étranger est justement de seconder ces efforts, en recherchant avant tout à resserrer les liens spirituels entre l'émigré et sa patrie.

Que le plus beau titre de gloire de ce livre soit d'avoir contribué à cette tâche!

WIE VIEL GILT DAS SCHWEIZER BÜRGERRECHT?

Das Luzerner "Vaterland," die "Gazette de Lausanne" und vielleicht noch andere schweizerische Zeitungen empören sich darüber, dass am 8. Juli im "Feuille d'avis" von Lausanne zwei Inserate standen, die ein Notar C. R. in M. aufgegeben hatte, um die waadtländische Einbürgerung für ein junges Ehepaar und einen Junggesellen käuflich zu erwerben. In einem dieser Inserate werden die Gemeinden ausdrücklich gebeten, ihre Angebote mit Preisangabe zu machen. Dazu bemerkt das "Vaterland:" Als vor einigen Jahren eine St. Gallische Gemeinde Einbürgerungen zu günstigen Bedingungen anbot, ging eine Welle patriotischer Empörung durch die Presse des Kantons. Was wird der Kanton Waadt tun? Wird das kantonale Justizdepartement ohne weiteres eine solche beschämende Ausbeutung eines hohen patriotischen Wertes zulassen, wie die Einbürgerung einer ist — und das noch durch einen patentierten Notar? Und wird die Notarenkammer einen solchen Krämer mit dem Bürgerrecht als einen der ihrigen anerkennen?

Da fragt sich die "Gazette de Lausanne," ob denn das schweizerische Heimatrecht so erbärmlich tief im Werte gesunken sei, dass einer es in zynischer Weise so zur Versteigerung bringen kann, dass einer sich nicht schäme, auf die Finanznot der Gemeinden zu spekulieren, um unser Heimatrecht um den billigsten Preis zu erstehen. In solchen Geschäftspraktiken liegt eine schändliche und schmachliche Entwürdigung, ja Entehrung unserer Nationalität. Wir haben bis jetzt in der Fremde einen reservierten Stolz gehabt, Schweizer Bürger zu sein. Wenn dieses Bürgerrecht dem ersten besten Käufer so billig als nur möglich angehängt wird, ist es keine Ehre mehr, Schweizer Bürger zu sein. Auf das, was man billig erstanden hat, ist ja niemand stolz, ausser dem Makler, der Freude hat, wieder einmal einen überhölpelt zu haben. Die "Gazette de Lausanne" sagt mit Recht, dass es an dem Tage, wo die öffentliche Meinung anhört, gegen eine derartige Erniedrigung des höchsten geistigen Wertes der Nation zu reagieren, des Wertes, der ihre ganze Existenzberechtigung ausmacht, wir das moralische Recht, Schweizer zu heissen, verlieren müssten. Und die Behörde, die es zuliesse, dass öffentliche Beamte das Schweizerbürgerrecht im Kramladen ausstellen und es auf den Markt schleppen, verläre jedes Recht auf ihre Selbstachtung und auf die der andern.

Diese Sprache ist scharf, aber eindeutig und richtig. Der erwähnte Fall ist krass. Aber schon andernorts wurde, nur in etwas vorsichtiger Form, mit dem Bürgerrecht Handel (Kuhhandel)

getrieben. Wenn nur Steuerkapital einwandert, dann kann man ein oder auch zwei Augen zudrücken. Das muss einmal aufhören! Es gibt also Schweizer, die Notare sind, und nicht wissen, welcher Schmach sie sich aussetzen, wenn sie diesen Schacher mit dem Schweizerbürgerrecht treiben. Dieser Notar hat vielleicht nicht aus bewusster Verachtung des Heimatrechtes so gehandelt, sondern geglaubt, er mache Sache für seinen Klienten möglichst schlau. Alles für die Klienten, denn sie zahlen ja! Dass es Werte gibt, mit denen man nicht "Geschäftli" machen kann, wird dem armen Mann gar nicht bewusst. Das ist das Niedrige, das uns empört. Darum wirft die Jugend den Aelteren den und die Geldsäckelpolitik vor.

Rein realistisch gesehen, ist es zu allem oft ein schlechtes Geschäft. Neubürger sind so wenig wie Altbürger gegen finanzielle Not gefeit. Manche von denen, die man unmittlbar nach dem Kriege ins Bürgerrecht aufgenommen hat, müssen heute als Arbeitslose unterstützt werden. Schwieriger aber und noch wichtiger als alle ökonomischen Gründe sind die geistigen.

Manche Ausländer haben sich bei uns niedergelassen und mit der Zeit das schweizerische Bürgerrecht um seiner praktischen Vorteile willen erworben, aber wo es darauf und dran kam, dass man als Schweizer fühlte und handelte, da brach ihre ganze Liebe zum Ursprungsland wieder hervor. Wir zweifeln nicht, dass manche dieser Neubürger glaubten, — oder jetzt noch glauben — sie könnten ihr Ursprungsland und ihr Adoptivvaterland lieben, ohne in Gewissenskonflikte zu geraten. Wenn aber ihr Ursprungsland Ziele verfolgt, welche für das Adoptivvaterland eine Gefahr bedeuten, was dann? Wie stellt man sich ein, wenn das Adoptivvaterland, das allen seinen Bürgern, den neuen wie den alten, Schutz und Recht gewährt, den Einsatz des ganzen Menschen fordert, weil es ihn fordern muss? Dann erst tritt die Gewissensfrage an sie heran. Sie, sollte aber vor der Einbürgerung an sie herantreten. Die Einbürgerung ist zu einer Geldsäckelfrage herabgesunken. Sie muss aber wieder zur Gewissensfrage werden.

Wir müssen ihr mehr Aufmerksamkeit schenken als je. Wir haben in allen Sprachgebieten der Schweiz Neubürger, die nicht nur ihrem Ursprungslande mehr Liebe zollen als der Wahlheimat, sondern die einem geheimen, aber um so gefährlicheren Irredentismus Vorschub leisten, wie dies der Tessiner Brosi in seiner Schrift "Der Irredentismus in der Schweiz" getan hat. Wer darüber aufgeklärt ist, wie gross die Werbekraft totalitärer Staaten, wie ihre rührige Propaganda den Schweizerboden im Süden und neuerdings auch im Norden unterhöhlt, der kann nicht mehr länger zusehen, wie das Schweizerbürgerrecht leichtsinig auf den Markt geworfen wird. Da stellt sich uns die Frage: Was gilt euch euer Schweizer Bürgerrecht?

St. Galler Tagblatt.

UF EM THUNERSEE.

Will d'Hitz hüt gar so grüsig isch
J'schs em am wöhlste uf em Schiff.
Die fahre doch ietz meistes lär —
Zum Glück marschierd do no derhär;
A Kupele Bursche vo Bärn a der Aar;
A fidel, fröhligi Studenteschaar
Ueberrumple die ganz erstelas vom Schiff,
Rütsche d'Stühl zäme u Tisch a Tisch
Gwüss, a jede, mit dere fixe Idee
Durst lösche, chöu me nur, in corpore
Mit Gsang u Klang, lärets Reih a Reihe
Fläschli, so eifach, im Hand ume dräie,
U fö mit g'hobene Stimme
Vom frei, schöne Läbe a singe,
Vo Fründschaft, vo Liebe u Wy
Schwärmerei, schöne Meitli; a chly
Es dänkt mägne, vo de andere, im Härze
Mit dene, möcht i au lache u schärze.
De alt Herr dert, wüschd öppis vom Gesicht
Lang isch's sit ä ebeffalls gmütlig gsi isch,
Bevor Chummer u Sorge hei bleicht sini Haar;
D'z Läbe, hef für ihn, weni Sunne meh gha
Syt sinere schöne Studentezyt
Die liegt, ihn dunkts an Ewigkeit wyt
U het, doch nid gänderet alli die Jahr,
Ufs Mol packt die alt Stimmig ihn b'sunderbar
Wie denn, so au hüt, de Sorge entbunde
Het ne, si goldiggi Jugend, doch wieder g'funde.
H. E.

Telephone Numbers:
MUSKUM 4502 (Fistors)
MUSKUM 7055 (Office)
Telegrams: SOUFFLE
WESDO. LONDON

"Ben taranno! Pagani.
Purgatorio C. xiv. Dante
"Venir se ne dee gid
tra' miei Meschini."
Dante. Inferno. C. xxvii.

Established over 50 Years.

PAGANI'S RESTAURANT

GREAT PORTLAND ST., LONDON, W.1.

LINDA MESCHINI } Sole Proprietors.
ARTHUR MESCHINI }

ARMS OF BERNE.



Gules, on a Bend or, a Bear Passant Sable, Langued and Armed of the Field.

In the first centuries of the existence of heraldry, the charge chosen for an escutcheon was, whenever possible, one whose name bore sufficient resemblance in sound to suggest the name of the bearer. A large number of early insignia, both of families and kingdoms, were *armes parlantes*, and the bear of Berne (old Swabian *bern*, 'a bear') is a typical example.

History has proved over and again the appropriateness of this well-chosen and redoubtable charge, and the arms of Berne are deservedly among the most popular of Switzerland.

Originally the bear was *passant in fess* in a field argent.

At the battle of Schosshalden in 1289, the banner of Berne was rescued, stained with blood, from Rudolf of Habsburg in whose hands it had fallen. To commemorate this feat of arms, the banner was tintured red and the bear placed on a *bend or*, thus giving it an ascending attitude, which is a sign of victory.

Those beautiful arms are often seen with supporters, ordinarily bears gilt with belt or clad of armour, and holding sword, halberds, or sceptres.

Berne, founded in 1191, was made a free imperial city in 1218, and gradually extending its possessions, became an independent and powerful state. With Zurich, it successfully helped to maintain the neutrality of Switzerland. Berne entered the Swiss Confederation in 1352, in which it now holds the second rank.

On account of the traditional derivation of its name, bears have for several centuries been maintained in Berne, and the bear-pit is still one of the "sights" of the city.

P. S.

THE SWISS NATIONAL LANGUAGES.

With the fury of a tornado and the desolation of its aftermath a wave of intense nationalism is sweeping across the countries of the European Continent. Overnight it tries to set aside what tradition, common outlook and common sentiment have established; overnight it attempts to overthrow centuries of history and set in their place a new conception of nationalism — the ownership of the same language.

In its drive towards linguistic domination this movement does not halt before an edifice of statesmanship which is as solid as the rocks on which it is built, but tries to penetrate its fastness by means which are as distasteful as they are repulsive.

Switzerland resounding, as it does, from the turmoil of a number of neighbouring countries has not been able to escape the unpleasant reactions which the propagation of such a new creed is bound to leave in its wake. Yet, in spite of the fact that among its population of about half that of London no fewer than four languages are spoken, there is not the least desire even among the most reactionary of its citizens to forego their present status in exchange for a new partnership.

Just as a house could not endure without a sound foundation, so the Swiss people could not weather the storm of the never-ceasing European entanglements if only common speech and not a common goal coupled with a highly inspired loyalty to their own country would unite them.

Seven hundred years after its foundation the Swiss Confederation looks back upon a history dyed red with the blood of conquests and resounding with the clash of arms and the woe and the glory of countless battlefields.

Throughout these years of struggle, liberty and equality — the government of the people by the people — have been the key-note of the evolution from a country administered by feudal lords to one ruled by the principles of democracy.

It was this aim which inspired the three communities round the Lake of Lucerne, when, in 1921 they swore mutual assistance in joy and sorrow and thereby gave birth to the Swiss Confederation. Having successfully rid themselves of the yoke of the German Emperor, the three confederates — Uri, Schwyz and Unterwalden — were soon joined by the inhabitants of mighty towns such as Lucerne, Zurich, Berne, etc., who, actuated by the same desire for autonomy, rebelled against their oppressors. Together they engaged in what was to become an endless series of wars, in which the Swiss extended their sway over German territories in the North and East and French soil in the West.

Drink delicious "Ovaltine"
at every meal — for Health!

In the South, the Swiss, who in the middle ages were the most feared warriors on the Continent, were equally successful. At one time their rule extended far into present day Italy and for ever brought under the Swiss Government the lovely town of Lugano as well as Locarno, of Peace Treaty fame.

In 1815 Geneva became a Swiss Canton and thereby added to the circle a place of learning and culture, which is now known the world over as the site of the League of Nations.

Nearly 600 years were needed to give Switzerland the contour which it holds to-day. The 22 cantons which now go to make its constitution have in nearly all instances retained their peculiarities, their age-worn customs and, above all, their languages.

Just as in years gone by, cities like Neuchâtel, Lausanne and Geneva are still celebrated for the pure French, which is spoken in them and which, in England, could be compared with the King's English.

Around the Lake of Lugano, the melodious burble of Italian tongues still fills the picturesque houses, the narrow streets and the vinecellars and is a fitting corollary to the same romantic south which used to delight our ancestors.

The industrialised German speaking part of Switzerland prides itself on as many patois as there are cantons. Though German is the written language and is taught in school, the patois differ from it to such a degree that they cannot, or only with difficulty, be understood by German visitors. This peculiarity becomes even more evident, when we realize that very often the inhabitants of one canton find it almost impossible to follow the conversation of persons from a neighbouring department.

While German, French and Italian are the three official national languages, it is interesting to note that a fourth and very little known language is also in existence. It is called Rômanche and the district in which it is spoken lies high up in the beautiful canton of Grison, famous for its holiday resorts, such as Davos, St. Moritz, etc.

There a small community of approximately 40,000 persons still converses in this peculiar language which, it is said, traces its origin from a race who invaded and lived in Switzerland round about 100/200 B.C. This language has never spread and while maintained by the local press and society, most of the people also know Swiss German, of which they avail themselves in communication with the outer world.

Statistics show that 70% of the inhabitants of Switzerland speak German, 21% French, 8% Italian and 1% Rômanche; truly a mixture which is as varied as the Swiss scenery which holds within its reach everything that is scattered all over Europe from the arctic solitude of snow-fields and glaciers in the North to the palm-, olive- and orange trees reminiscent of the tropical vegetation in the South.

This diversity in language has also led to a position which is unique in the legislation of European countries. Whereas the Supreme Court in England admits only one language, in Switzerland the cases are tried in the language of the interested parties.

In respect of commerce, the mastery of several tongues has greatly assisted the Swiss export industry to penetrate foreign markets and has enabled approximately one tenth of its population to find remunerative occupations abroad.

In politics the predominance or subordination of any of the three official languages has never been a point of issue. Large sections of the inhabitants of Switzerland being bilingual, the fact that it harbours a variety of races, languages and traditions has never been found a disadvantage but rather an asset, whose singularity has even more closely united the people.

Thus it happened that while recent history saw Europe repeatedly reverberating with the din of never-ceasing wars, Switzerland has preserved peace — adored and protected by a people, small in number, but great in their loyalty to their own country.

WHAT IS THE SOURCE OF SWITZERLAND'S ATTRACTION?

For almost two centuries Switzerland has been visited by travellers from all lands and spheres; by wanderers and mountain-climbers, by scientists and pleasure-seekers, working people and convalescents. It was out of the happy recollections of these thousands that Switzerland's reputation as a tourist centre grew. Yet it requires powerful, natural, perpetual forces to enable a country to retain this reputation in our times, when distances are as nothing and journey's end may mean some alluring spot in the farthest corner of the world. Wherein, then, lies the source of this legendary reputation, which to-day seems to be as much alive as ever before?

The inevitable and spontaneous answer is bound to be: "The mountains allure us!" So it was in the middle of the 18th century, when the Alpine world still appeared sinister and menacing to the superstitious. And the same natural enthusiasm and satisfaction which Goethe felt when, in Schwyz, he came really close to the mountains for the first time, is still predominant in the hearts of the plain-dwellers and townsfolk when they see the rocky fastnesses rise above them in their awe-inspiring magnitude.

Never shall I forget the bright curiosity of the Hungarian father who, on visiting the Lower Engadine with his family for the first time, put his head out of the carriage window and asked excitedly: "Are there any glaciers in St. Moritz?" — Many a traveller who at first believed he would find glaciers spread out before his hotel windows, was in no way disillusioned when he saw how simply and pleasantly the glacier grottos can be reached from the largest resorts.

A visit to Switzerland has enriched and widened the geographical knowledge of innumerable people; they have looked, enjoyed and learned. Other countries also possess mountains and Alpine resorts, but the extraordinary attraction of our country lies in the unique magnitude and multifariousness of our mountains. Alpine beauty-spots follow one upon another from Piz Bernina to the Matterhorn and Monte Rosa, from the Jungfrau massif to the Mont Blanc district. Tourists who have travelled considerable distances to see Switzerland find a special charm in being able to visit the most varied kinds of mountain scenery during one stay, and all in the one small country.

They derive from it a wealth of impressions which are a source of happiness to them for many a long year. And they come back again, realising well enough that during one single visit one cannot drink one's fill of the inspiring view of the mountains. Thus the travel pictures are kept alive and glowing from visit to visit, from traveller to traveller, from generation to generation, impressing themselves upon the memory of a whole world of tourists. And from this springs that mysterious attraction which tempts ever new people in the farthest lands to visit Switzerland, the most famous land of travel.

One of the secrets of Swiss scenery is its richness in unexpected contrasts. From the highest passes, where the Alps become a vivid experience, a comfortable journey of a few hours brings one to lake shores possessing all the enchantment of a Riviera. A wonderful spectacle on the flower-decked shores of Lugano and Locarno, are the near-by mountains glistening with their new-fallen snow. From window, balcony and garden, beautiful contrasts intermingle to form the charm of the complete picture. On the Lake of Geneva a magnificent series of bays opens out between Vevey, Montreux and the Castle of Chillon, radiating the magic of the Southern clime and at the same time conveying the knowledge of mountains within easy reach. Even the large Swiss towns are not immune from this element of contrast. Berne lies as a historic settlement of

unique architectural beauty in the heart of Switzerland. But one has not merely to suspect the presence of the mountains here: their panorama unfolds itself triumphantly in the full glory of its lovely charms. In Lucerne, Zurich and Geneva one admires the beauties of a garden city on a lake, and everywhere it is the mountains that give to the picture a brilliant background.

Switzerland's powers of attraction as a land of travel, however, are not only based on the quality of the scenery. It is known and acknowledged throughout the world that Switzerland is the land of pleasant travel and comfortable resorts. The points of interest in the landscape have been developed from the traffic point of view in a manner unequalled in any other country. In former years this development chiefly concerned the mountain railways and their ambition to open up more and more sightseeing points. Then the increasing attention paid to the traveller's comfort led to the establishment of a surprisingly large number of communicating lines between the separate traffic areas, and the arrangement of the communications in as convenient a manner as possible. The express train lines, running through the most beautiful mountain districts and connecting the Bernese Oberland with the Lake of Geneva, Davos with St. Moritz, the Engadine with Zermatt, are unparalleled feats of modern railway technique. In addition, there are innumerable routes over the passes, made possible by the Swiss Alpine postal service.

As regards the care expended in making her resorts pleasant, comfortable and refined places to stay in, Switzerland has always been to the fore. This is not only a question of individual concerns and holiday resorts, but of every place catering for the visitor: hotels of every class — sanatoria, pensions, etc. Thus the possibility of disagreeable surprises is entirely excluded, whatever eventuality the journey may bring. This gives the traveller a feeling of security. It is not only round about the valley stations and touring centres, of which Interlaken was formerly the most outstanding example, that resorts have sprung up during the course of the last century — resorts that are unexcelled the wide world over, but also high up in the beautiful Alpine passes themselves. Davos, Arosa, St. Moritz and Pontresina, as also Zermatt, offer the travelling public every comfort and convenience that even the city can give. Switzerland is thus a real international land of travel, and everyone knows in advance that he will find there resorts and accommodation, charming educational facilities and all possible amenities for sport. These are the qualifications which Switzerland has developed as an international travel centre during the course of decades. She has built them up by constant labour and care, and now they form the foundation of her permanent power of attraction.

Swiss National Tourist Office, Zurich.

PAGINE DI STORIA TICINESE.

By E. EUSEBIO.

(Continued).

I SETTE BALIAGGI.

Con l'occupazione definitiva di Mendrisio e di Balerna nell'anno 1527 risultò costituito territorialmente l'attuale Cantone Ticino, allora conosciuto come i Sette Baliaggi italiani. Poco dopo vi si aggiunse Stabio.

Negli anni susseguenti i nostri avi furono costretti a riprendere una lotta simile a quella vinta nelle epoche feudali per conservare la propria libertà, i privilegi avuti e soprattutto la giustizia popolare nell'istituto dei congiudici, contro i landvogti mandati a governare dai Cantoni confederati. Il Dr. Otto Weiss nel suo libro intitolato "Baliaggi Ticinesi" ci dà il

Tell your English Friends
to visit

Switzerland

and to buy their Tickets
from

The Swiss Federal Railways,
Carlton House, 11b, Regent St., S.W.1

Special Reduction on Fares in Switzerland
30% from June 15th until October 31st.

Kunzle

4/- LB.

OBTAINABLE AT ALL HIGH-CLASS CONFECTIONERS.

SPECIFIC GUARANTEE OF PURITY
WITH ALL OUR PRODUCTS.

C. KUNZLE LTD., Five Ways, BIRMINGHAM, ENGLAND.

London Branch — 101, REGENT STREET, W.1.

"Check"

**Assorted
Chocolates**

In new pack with every
Flavour Indicated.

