

Forbidden journey

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NEW YEAR'S THOUGHTS AND WISHES.

The year 1937 has passed; a year which at the outset promised to herald in the "seven fat years." The economic conditions in most countries showed a marked improvement, which in turn created a more optimistic atmosphere.

Alas, those hopes of a better era have not materialised, war, strife and industrial unrest have robbed the past year of its glamour. The spectre of other wars still lies heavy over mankind, suspicion and mistrust keep the Peace, which we all need so badly, from the door.

There will be but few tears shed over the year 1937.

Before the bells herald in the New Year, we would like to glance back, if only for a few fleeting moments.

Thanks to the support of our readers, we have been able to carry on our little venture as usual for the last twelve months, and we trust that this loyal support will also be accorded to us in the present year.

We do not wish to strike a too pessimistic note, but we cannot help but look to the future of our paper with serious misgivings. The costs of production, owing to increased wages and higher paper charges, has substantially increased and a considerable loss seems to be in front of us.

Whilst new subscribers come in very sparingly, we have again lost through death and departure a number of old and faithful subscribers. Although we are quite aware that but few of our younger compatriots are allowed to settle in this country, we nevertheless feel that there are enough of our countrymen still residing here, to make our paper a success, if only they would come forward and give us their support.

We have for the past years in these columns appealed for help for all sorts of charities, collections, etc., both for the Colony and for our people abroad and at home. May we now in turn ask our readers to help us to carry our paper through a difficult time? This can be done in two ways, firstly by inducing your friends to subscribe to our paper, secondly by giving us advertisements. We would especially appeal to our countrymen in the Provinces to give us their support; we feel that with their help we could carry on this paper, which, in all humility, we consider has rendered some valuable services, during the last eighteen years.

We sincerely hope that this Appeal, which necessity dictates, will not go unanswered, and that the support which we so badly need at this juncture will be forthcoming.

The Editor wishes to thank his collaborators, Kyburg, ck., M.G., H.E., Gallus, E.G.L., Dr. E., and a little Lady who shares both work and pleasure with him, for their great and never failing help, without which it would have been almost impossible to carry on. He wishes to thank the Swiss Minister, the personnel of the Legation, and the Swiss Consuls at Liverpool and Manchester for their appreciated and valuable co-operation. The Publisher for his constant help and advice. Thanks are due to all those who have, from time to time sent articles or communications, including those, who, on many occasions have informed him, that they are going to write, and who never wrote, and he sincerely hopes, that amongst their New Year's resolutions will be the one, to honour a long standing promise. Hearty thanks are also due to all our readers and advertisers for their loyal support, and to all and sundry the Editor wishes a:

HAPPY AND PROSPEROUS NEW YEAR!
ST.

CHRISTMAS TREE OF THE SWISS CLUB AND COLONY OF MANCHESTER.

Décembre 19, 1937.

Il faisait un froid de loup, mais aucun brouillard ne s'avisa de bloquer les différentes routes conduisant au Grand Hôtel, point de ralliement des cœurs suisses fidèles à l'appel du Comité du Club suisse de Manchester.

Les peines que s'étaient données les membres dirigeants du Club furent couronnées de succès: les 80 participants en 1936 étaient devenus 140, dont 35 enfants. Le maximum d'années désignant "l'enfance" me semble demander une apologie à ceux de plus de 12 à 14 ans dans un âge comme le nôtre où c'est la jeunesse qui prétend tenir le haut du pavé. — Jeunesse tolérant toutefois les avantages que lui ont procurés ceux d'un âge plus mûr.

Vers les quatre heures, les lampes s'éteignirent: un bel arbre de Noël, élégamment décoré et libéralement chargé de toutes sortes de cadeaux, apparut dans toute sa splendeur: "Sapin de Noël," charmant emblème de Celui dont nous fêtons l'anniversaire; sacrifié dans son bel âge, il vient ranimer en nous la joie et l'espérance, cet espoir de "bonne volonté et de paix" dans ce monde, dans la réalisation duquel nous avons été frustrés, grâce à notre propre incurie.

Le Président ouvrit la soirée par une courte lecture de la Nativité; puis toute l'assemblée entonna l'hymne favori: "O, du fraîche, O, du selige!" qui fut chanté avec entrain. Sans doute, inspiré par le message des Anges, Monsieur Kuebler s'adressa tout spécialement aux enfants: comme illustration il leur raconta comment, le 22 décembre 1481 — (il y a de ça juste 456 ans) — après des années de guerre, les Confédérés, furieux les uns contre les autres, étaient sur le point de se battre. Au Grund, curé de Stanz, apporta aux députés de la Diète assemblée à Stanz, le pacifique message de l'ermite de Sachseln du vénérable Nicolas de Flue, les exhortant à se faire des concessions mutuelles, et à se garder des divisions entre eux. Les Confédérés suivirent son conseil: la paix se rétablit.

Après ce petit discours, stancé de temps en temps par les exclamations soit d'approbation soit d'impatience de petits enfants, deux jeunes garçons nous chantèrent très bien "Der Winter ist gekommen." Notre accordéoniste, Werner Hirs, capable de remplacer tout un orchestre, nous joua un morceau très exécuté; il fut suivi par "l'Ave Maria" de Gounod, chanté avec beaucoup d'expression par Monsieur Luisoni.

Un tressaillement de plaisir agita les enfants; les yeux grands ouverts, ils étudiaient tous les mouvements du Président. L'heure de la distribution des cadeaux, heure fatidique, avait sonné. Personne ne fut oublié; même les grandes personnes reçurent chacune son cornet de ces fameux biscuits préparés avec talent et les plus grands soins culinaires par d'habiles Suissesses.

La tombola usuelle suivit: tous les billets furent achetés. Elle fut un grand succès, excepté peut-être pour ceux qui avaient tiré des blancs. Il faut bien que quelqu'un perde, pour qu'un autre puisse gagner. Il y avait des billets rouges, des jaunes et des blancs. Les jaunes et les blancs pris séparément paraissaient être de la même couleur, ce qui causa quelques désappointements assez amusants pour les spectateurs, mais non pas pour les porteurs de billets jaunes prétendus blancs ou vice-versa.

Prenant congé du beau Sapin, grands et petits se trouvèrent bientôt réunis au tour de nombreuses tables où chacun sembla faire de son mieux pour soulager ces dernières le plus vite possible de leurs fardeaux appétissants. Notre enthousiaste accordéoniste, Werner Hirs, nous joua avec un toucher remarquable et heureux une suite d'airs suisses fort appréciés. Que notre bon ami avait chaud! C'est vous dire avec quel entrain, quelle énergie il avait joué!

Monsieur le docteur Schedler, notre aimable et vigilant consul, remercia l'infatigable organisateur de cette soirée si bien réussie sous tous les rapports, Monsieur Kuebler, notre président dévoué. Monsieur Kuebler lui-même ajouta quelques mots de remerciements aux membres du Comité et du Club qui l'avaient soutenu et assisté de leur poche et de leurs mains.

Cette belle soirée, pleine de "Gemütlichkeit" vraiment suisse, se termina au milieu de cordiales poignées de mains, des "Prosit," des "Uf Wiederluege" et d'un bon souhait pour le bonheur de la petite patrie éloignée.

S. E. B.

THE ARTISTS' ROOM AT PAGANI'S.

On Sunday evening, January 2nd, at 7 p.m., Mr. Edward Cecil will be showing to some friends the walls of this famous room and he will be delighted to welcome members of the City Swiss Club and their ladies. The 5,000 autographs which adorn the walls of this historic room together with the many sketches will be the subject of an interesting narrative dealing with the many great artists, musicians, actors and actresses who have made 42, Great Portland Street, W.1, their regular rendez-vous in the course of the last 60 years.

MILITAERISCHE PFLICHTEN VON SCHWEIZERN IN AMERIKA.

Durch eine Botschaft beauftragt der Bundesrat der Bundesversammlung die Genehmigung eines Vertrages zwischen der Schweiz und den Vereinigten Staaten von Amerika über die militärischen Pflichten von Personen, die Doppelbürger sind.

Die Einziehung der Militärpflichtersatzsteuer von den in den Vereinigten Staaten ansässigen Schweizern stösst seit langem auf erhebliche Schwierigkeiten. Sie erklären sich aus der Tatsache, dass viele unserer Landsleute, die auch das amerikanische Staatsbürgerrecht besitzen, die Heimat ohne Rückkehrabsicht verlassen und ihr ursprüngliches Staatsbürgerrecht lediglich auf Grund des Grundsatzes bewahrt haben, wonach das Schweizerbürgerrecht nur durch förmliche Entlassung verloren werden kann.

Die Gesandtschaft der Vereinigten Staaten in Bern, lenkt die Aufmerksamkeit des Bundesrates auf das Gewicht, das ihre Regierung auf die Beseitigung dieser Schwierigkeiten durch den Abschluss eines Abkommens über Staatsange-

hörigkeit mit der Schweiz legte. Auf Grund dieses Abkommens sollte die Einbürgerung des Angehörigen des einen der beiden Staaten im andern ohne weiteres den Verlust des ursprünglichen Staatsbürgerrechtes zur Folge haben. Der Bundesrat liess die Gesandtschaft der Vereinigten Staaten wissen, dass das in der Bundesverfassung verankerte Prinzip der Unverlierbarkeit des Schweizerbürgerrechtes ihm den Abschluss eines solchen Abkommens nicht gestatte, dass er jedoch kein Bedenken gegen ein Übereinkommen hätte, das sich auf die Befreiung der Angehörigen beider Staaten, die Doppelbürger und auf dem Gebiete des einen von ihnen geboren und wohnhaft sind, von den militärischen Pflichten im andern beschränkte.

Im Mai 1936 benachrichtigte die Regierung der Vereinigten Staaten den Bundesrat, dass sie grundsätzlich den Gedanken des Abschlusses eines sich auf die zuletzt genannte Bestimmung beschränkenden Vertrages beipflichtete. Sie äusserte zugleich den Wunsch, dass die Befreiung bereits auf die erste Generation Anwendung finde, damit sie den Amerikanern schweizerischer Abkunft, die in den Vereinigten Staaten naturalisiert sind, zugute komme. Der Bundesrat glaubte indessen nicht, soweit gehen zu können. Es wäre nicht angängig, dass ein Schweizerbürger sich seinen militärischen Verpflichtungen durch eine eigennützige Willenshandlung entziehen könnte. Als Regel muss vielmehr gelten, dass diese Befreiung nur als Folge eines vom Willen des Befreiten unabhängigen Tatbestandes eintreten kann. Dieser Regel wird Genüge geleistet, wenn die Befreiung vom Militärdienst von dem Umstände abhängig gemacht wird, dass bereits der Vater einer in den Vereinigten Staaten geborenen Person das amerikanische Staatsbürgerrecht besass.

Ein dahin gehender Vertrag, dessen Dauer auf drei Jahre bemessen wurde und der alsdann sechs Monate zum voraus gekündigt werden kann, ist in Bern am 11. November von Bundespräsident Motta und von dem Gesandten der Vereinigten Staaten von Nordamerika in Bern unterzeichnet worden. Der Bundesrat ist überzeugt, dass der Vertrag der Schweiz keine irgendwie in Betracht kommende Leistung militärischer Art entziehen wird; denn er findet auf eine Kategorie von Landsleuten Anwendung, die schwerlich noch anders als dem Namen nach Schweizer sind und die zur Zahlung der Militärpflichtersatzsteuer wirksam anzuhalten kaum möglich war. Der Vertrag ist andererseits dazu geeignet, den Anlass zu häufigen Beschwerden von seiten der amerikanischen Behörden zu beseitigen. Unter diesen Umständen glaubt der Bundesrat, den Räten die Gutheissung des Vertrages empfehlen zu sollen.

FORBIDDEN JOURNEY.

By Ella Maillart.

In a recent survey of the year's best books published in the English language the "Times" gave the place of honour in two important groups of books to two Swiss authors: A. F. Tschiffely for his biography of Cunninghame-Graham and Ella K. Maillart for her account of a memorable journey through Central Asia, entitled "Forbidden Journey." It almost goes without saying that both these books were published by William Heinemann's — the one British publishing firm who can always be relied on to give Swiss authors the most favourable consideration and who rescued Tschiffely's first book "From Southern Cross to Pole Star" from the waste-paper basket and made a success with it after dozens of American and British publishers had turned it down.

Tschiffely's new book about Cunninghame-Graham stands as an important contribution to British literature, a masterly biography of an acknowledged master of the English tongue. Of more direct interest to us, the Swiss, is Ella Maillart's book recording as courageous and interesting a journey through a different and even more lonely part of the world as her senior compatriot and travelling explorer Tschiffely has accomplished some ten years before her. Her "Forbidden Journey" like "From Southern Cross to Pole Star" belongs to world literature as her journey like Tschiffely's famous ride represents the accomplishment of something everybody, no matter of which nationality, would wish to have accomplished himself. But it is literature as well, in the best sense of the word, as it is written in the most vivid, telling yet simple language, though translated from the previously published French original entitled "Oasis interdites." And it is a picture-book of the highest order as well, containing as it does hundreds of beautifully chosen photographs of the land and people of whom the story is composed. Although Ella Maillart's English fellow traveller Peter Fleming forstalled her with his own "News from Tartary" and seemed to have skimmed the cream off the market, "Forbidden Journey" is already in the seventh impression and has thus become one of the season's best sellers in its class.

Instead of giving an account of the book of our own, the reader of the Swiss Observer will be more interested in what the English critics have said about this new Swiss literary work.

Dr. E.

Sir E. Denison Ross writes in the "Sunday Times":

This book is Mlle. Maillart's own account of the now famous journey she made overland from Peking to India with Peter Fleming. Many English readers are familiar with "News from Tartary"; but although the journey and the travellers are the same in both books, to have read and enjoyed Peter Fleming in no way spoils one's pleasure in reading Ella Maillart: on the contrary, the latter serves as a delightful complement to the former — it may indeed be fitly described as the Companion Volume.

The two accounts have obviously been written quite independently — there has been no collusion between the writers, and it is a tribute to their powers of observation and their good memories that there are no inconsistencies.

We have revealed to us two individuals who by birth and education are as far apart as two Europeans could well be — who have certain rare gifts and characteristics in common. Chief among these are iron constitutions, indomitable courage, and a positive love of discomfort. As one reads of the risks they took to satisfy their hunger and thirst one realises the amount of trouble involved once we begin to take precautions. These young travellers remind one rather of the famous adventures of a dog who, it was claimed, "would eat anything." And they had not a topee between them! But their outlook on life was fundamentally different, and one imagines that they emerged from their great adventure mentally exactly as they had started. As she herself writes:—

Peter thought me too serious, and I did not understand British humour; I had the bad taste to lay down the law about the art of living. Peter was bored by my craving to understand the thousands of diverse lives that make up humanity, and bored too by my need to relate my own life to life in general. ... Peter was troubled by none of these things. In his imperturbable wisdom he looked on human beings as characters in a comedy. As to his deeper feelings his timidity usually made him hide them beneath a facetious dignity. Except at rare intervals, he seemed persuaded that his concerns were of no interest to anybody.

Hardship and Danger.

Peter Fleming, as we know, cares little for archaeology or past history — he is engrossed in the present and in the shape of the future: Ella Maillart, we feel, has some hankering after the past, and would have made as good a companion to an explorer as she did to this traveller. When she is passing through the sites uncovered by Stein, such as Keriya, Niya, and Endere, one can fancy her casting a longing glance and wishing she could do some digging herself. But in the land of rebellious Tungans our two travellers were far too busy in providing food and safety for themselves to worry about silk routes or Kharosthi tablets.

In a journey involving every kind of hardship and danger nothing can have been more trying than the medical attendance which was demanded of Mlle. Maillart by the helpless and credulous inhabitants of out-of-the-way places, who could not be induced to believe she was not a doctor, and the wonder is that her medicine chest should have lasted out. Her duties as a veterinary surgeon were often arduous and sometimes most disagreeable, but usually successful.

Special attention must be called to chapter nine, in which Mlle. Maillart has temporarily abandoned her personal narrative to give us a most illuminating sketch of the history of Sin Kiang, with special reference to the events of the last five years. The Tungans, Chinese Muslims, who are a constant trouble to the Chinese Government, have recently been again figuring in the news, and many will be grateful to the writer for this digression, which explains one of the most confusing features of Central Asian politics.

The translation by Thomas McGreevy is wholly admirable, and the photographs are excellent. Perhaps the best picture is that of the two travellers which bears the caption "Delhi: The Expedition Breaks Up." This offers a most striking likeness of Ella Maillart and Peter Fleming, who look as if they had just returned from a quiet holiday by the seaside.

The accomplishment of this journey is enough to place Ella Maillart among the great travellers of the world, and her delightful book should have a secure place in the literature of travel.

EMIGRATION OF SWISS INDUSTRIES.

By OSCAR WETZEL.

(Continuation.)

After the war, we find, naturally, the country of Vorarlberg in a position to work very much cheaper owing to the depreciated value of its currency, and this at certain periods was so bad that serious disturbances happened at the frontier. This especially so when big firms of St. Gall moved their entire installations over the frontier.

In the 19th century Swiss manufacturers had already penetrated further into the country, and we find establishments in the Tyrol and Bohemia.

At the end of the 19th century and beginning of the 20th century, as well as in the years after the War, there was continuous emigration of the St. Gall Embroidery industry to the north. Firms were established in the Black Forest, and Swiss went to Plauen where a big industry was started and later on developed into a serious competitor of Switzerland. We find the same industry emigrating to Prussia, Saxony, etc.

Also to the west we find developments of Swiss firms, and a number of Swiss companies settled in St. Quentin to work for the French market.

Up to the beginning of the 20th century the United States of America were some of our very best clients, but from this time onwards they produced their own requirements on a successively bigger and bigger scale.

Switzerland exported a large number of machines, and Swiss interests were distributed all over the American Continent in newly erected factories.

In spite of the fact that undoubtedly the participations of Swiss firms in establishments of the Embroidery industry abroad have brought about a great reduction in exports from Switzerland, it must be said that right up to the War, the St. Gall industry played a still very important, if not leading part, in the world production. The crisis that hit our country so severely, especially during 1921, is recognised not only by the fact that factories have been established abroad, but to a very great extent due to the requirements of the "mode" and also to the depreciation of currency in a great many countries.

It is interesting to note that not only the Swiss Embroidery industry was hit very badly, but in the same way the secondary centres in Germany, France, America, etc., were dragged into this crisis.

4) KNITTING INDUSTRY.

This industry is naturally much younger, and still follow the track of the silk industry.

SHOE MANUFACTURERS.

The greatest Swiss enterprise in the Shoe industry — the firm of Bally — has followed the example of so many other more undertakings by starting abroad, in support of their sales organisations, subsidiary companies for the manufacture of their products.

To-day, this firm has established abroad the following companies:—

Bally, Paris.
Bally Camsat, Lyons.
Bally, Brussels.
Bally, London.
Cutlbert & Co., Cape Town.
Bally Shoe Factory, Cape Town.
Bally, New York.
Bally, Buenos Aires.

What has been said in connection with other trades is repeated in the Shoe industry. We find in this particular case a big firm which has worked up a good business and a good name with its clients, so to say, all over the world. For various reasons it gets more and more difficult for them to sell their goods in competition with local manufacturers, although they are well known and appreciated by their customers who are willing to pay a certain extra price for their products. But there comes a point when even gold is too expensive, and these firms are faced with the problem of either losing their long established markets or trying to produce in the country of destination.

(To be continued.)

FORTHCOMING EVENTS.

Tuesday, January 4th — City Swiss Club — Monthly Meeting — (preceded by dinner at 7.15 sharp) at Pagani's Restaurant, Great Portland Street, W.

Wednesday, January 5th, at 8 p.m. — Swiss Mercantile Society — Meeting of the Philatelic Group, at "Swiss House," Fitzroy Square, W.

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Vendredi, 31 déc. à 8.30: Culte Liturgique suivi d'un culte de Ste. Cène. L'arbre sera rallumé.

Dimanche, 2 janvier: Culte du Nouvel-An 11h. et 6h.30: Mr. Emery.

(L'école du Dimanche est supprimée).

SCHWEIZERKIRCHE

(Deutschsprachige Gemeinde).

St. Anne's Church, 9, Gresham Street, E.C.2.
(near General Post Office.)

Sonntag, den 2. Januar 1938.

11 Uhr morgens, Neujahrgottesdienst.

7 Uhr abends, Neujahrgottesdienst und Feier des Heiligen Abendmahls.

Dienstag, den 4. Januar 1938.

3 Uhr nachm., Nähverein im "Foyer Suisse."

TAUFEN.

Am 25. Dezember, Christtag, wurden getauft:

John Ralph Meier, geb. am 20. September 1937; Sohn des Fritz Meier von Diessenhofen (Thurgau) und der Margrit geb. Stadelmann von Frasnacht (Thurgau).

Erich Wilhelm Wagner, geb. am 23. November 1937; Sohn des Wilhelm Karl Wagner von Basel (Stadt) und der Susanna Angelina Inöz geb. Vallerani von Sorriso, Provincia di Novara (Italien).

VERDANKUNG.

Die Kirchenpflege und der Pfarrer danken allen freundlichen Gebern, die mitgeholfen haben in den vergangenen Tagen Freude zu bereiten, recht herzlich. Die gütigen Geber können des Dankes auch der Empfänger versichert sein.

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