

H.C. Anderson and Switzerland

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and human in man. It seems to me that here it is the duty of Christian leaders, be they union leaders, industrialists, teachers, or pastors, to discern critically what is the will of God, what is good, acceptable and serving a real purpose, to make clear that it is the Christian's understanding that the humanness of man is also determined by his will and ability to make responsible decisions. Thus Christian industrialists like Scott Bader look for 'a genuine alternative to welfare capitalism and state-controlled communism'. Ernest Bader says: 'Having observed the paralysis and often the complete failure of so many human institutions in the conduct of vital human affairs — witness the record of the political parties, the churches, the employers' organisations, the trades unions — one is led to the inescapable conclusion, that, in industrial disputes at least, it is the system that is at the root of the trouble, that the division between capital and labour encourages selfishness and greed and that until the two are

united for a common purpose there will be no peace. This was my belief when, in 1951, I relinquished ownership of the business I had built up since arriving in this country in 1912, and thereby showed my faith in the basic goodness of human beings when they are made to feel equal and vital partners in a business."

The speaker was accorded great applause, and a most animated discussion following during which many points were raised and a number of doubts expressed. It was obvious that the serious state of the economy in Britain played a part in the debate. To introduce co-decision would take a very long time. Would it be possible in time to prevent disaster? There was no doubt that the audience was greatly impressed and that Prof. Hollenweger had given a great deal of food for thought.

M.M.

We refer readers to the article on "The limits of common ownerships" in our Christmas issue of 13th December. Ed.

H. C. ANDERSON AND SWITZERLAND

The Danish poet and story-teller, Hans Christian Andersen, was a born traveller. He used to say that travels were what made him enjoy his life to the full. This predisposition made him look for life and inspiration for his many and varied works by criss-crossing Europe throughout his long life. For years he travelled extensively throughout Western and Central Europe as though the wide world were his home. Switzerland was one of the countries he knew and loved the best. He visited it no less than 29 times between 1833 and 1873, two years before his death. The scenes which he so loved in the country, particularly in the Neuchatel Jura and the Bernese Oberland, became the setting of six of his best tales.

A great many of his visits to Switzerland were made in the summer to escape the heat of the low-lying countries to the north and to the west. All his trips were carefully planned and usually followed an itinerary determined by the letters of recommendation which he had with him, and by the friends he had made all over the country. Andersen had a great capacity for friendship and nowhere did he feel more at home than at Brunnen, on the Waldstaettersee, where he counted among his close friends Colonel Xaver Auf der Mauer, owner of the Adler Hotel, Councillor of States, and a friend of Wagner, and at Le Locle, where he regularly visited a Danish watch manufacturer, F. U. Juergensen, who eventually became a naturalised Swiss. Andersen was also at home in Geneva, where he befriended several local writers and artists, and stopped several times at Zurich and Basle.

An account of Andersen's relationship to Switzerland was given in a recent brochure by the Pro Helvetia Foundation.

Andersen made his first journey through Switzerland in August 1833. Heading for Le Locle, he journeyed from Paris to Geneva by stage-coach, and gave a vivid account of his first glimpse of the Alps and the Swiss Plateau from the Faucille Pass in the Jura in his "Tale of my life". From Calvin's city, where he stayed for a few weeks at Madame Achard's Pension, on the Grand Quai, he headed for Lausanne, Vevey and Neuchatel before making for Le Locle, his first destination. He continued his journey towards Italy, crossing the Simplon.

The second lengthy journey in Switzerland took him, in 1846, from Geneva to Vevey, Fribourg, Berne, Interlaken and Basle. Five years later, he explored the eastern part of the country. Following a tortuous itinerary, he successively passed through Rorschach, Chur and Lugano (having crossed the Spluegen via Chiavenna). He then proceeded north to Fluelen through the Gothard, and hence to Weggis, the Riggli, Zurich and Romanshorn. Andersen's other "Swiss years", during which he also discovered Glaris, the Wallensee and the treasures of Einsiedeln, were the years 1858, 1860, 1861, 1862, 1867, 1868, 1869 and 1873. There were many other shorter journeys through Switzerland during the intervening years.

Andersen often made Le Locle his main place of call. With his friend Juergensen, he made several exploration

trips around the small watch-making town. He marvelled at the Doubs waterfalls near Les Brenets, and at the underground mills at Col des Roches. Describing his quiet weeks at Le Locle, he noted in a letter: "What a peaceful existence! from six in the morning to eight in the evening, I have nothing else to do but to ramble, make poetry and sleep!" Some of the most beautiful pages of his "Tale of my life" were devoted to the "sombre and deadly still pine forests of the Neuchatel Jura".

Brunnen also fascinated him. He first put in at this quaint little port in 1855 when he was cruising on the lake in the company of his friend Edgar Collin. The two men were making a tour of Switzerland while at the same time fleeing a cholera epidemic which had spread through much of Europe. Collin suddenly felt sick and the two decided to stop for the night at Brunnen. To his great surprise, Andersen met a close friend of his, the painter Thorvald Laessøe, at Brunnen's "Zum Goldenen Adler", and the hotelier, Colonel Auf der Maur, showed him the year's edition of the Swiss Illustrated Calendar. It contained a portrait of Humboldt, a famed Swiss man of science, and of Andersen himself, described as the "author of many tales". This filled Andersen with a great joy. He became a great friend of the hotelier and returned to Brunnen several times during his ensuing visits to Switzerland. He loved to contemplate the sun rising and setting over the peaks overlooking the lake and admired the changing colours of the lake and the wild chant of the waves during the days of ceaseless Foehn.

When Andersen died in 1875, at the age of 70, Europe was living through its industrial revolutions and all eyes were turned towards Progress. But fairy tales represent an ageless chapter of literature, and Switzerland can be proud to have offered a second home to this prince of fairy tales.

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