

S W I T Z E R L A N D.

January 3, 1894.

Political History - - - - - Mrs. Stella B. Morse.
Social and Industrial - - - - - Maj. S. H. M. Byers.

Committee for the Afternoon.

Mrs. Bina M. Wyman,	Chairman,
Mrs. Stella B. Morse,	
Mrs. Ella W. Warfield,	
Mrs. B. E. Israel,	
Mrs. Henry Plumb,	
Miss Ella McLoney.	

As Chairman of the History Committee for the afternoon, Mrs. Wyman said:

This afternoon we are to devote to Switzerland. We are all interested in that brave little sister republic, nestled in among the Alps, rivalling the world in the magnificence of its scenery. We love it because it too has had a struggle to maintain its identity as a republic, and succeeded. It has tried many different kinds of government, and speaks many languages. We love it for its music boxes and its watches, its glaciers, and its industries and arts.

There is a bit of history connected with its president that may interest you. This same president, Col. Frey, was once a citizen of the United States. Although a born Swiss, he came here a few years before the war, and lived quietly in Chicago.

When the war broke out he joined an Illinois regiment and marched in the ranks as a private soldier. He fought at the Battle of Gettysburg, was there taken prisoner, and was sent first to Andersonville and afterwards to Libby Prison where he was confined for seventy days as hostage for Confederate prisoners. When he was at last paroled he was a broken down man and went back to

Switzerland where he regained health and strength.

He soon became the editor of one of the leading newspapers, and later was elected to Congress. In 1882 he was sent as minister to Washington, which position he held five years, when he was elected to the Swiss Cabinet in charge of military affairs, corresponding to our Secretary of War. And now he is President of the Swiss republic. Col. Frey made many friends while in Washington who cabled their congratulations when they heard of his election.

Now I have the pleasure of stating that Mrs. Stella B. Morse will read a paper on the political history of Switzerland, comparing it with the United States.

After her, I am happy to state Major S. H. M. Byers, our late consul to Switzerland, will give a talk on the social and industrial features of that country. As he and his family resided there some seventeen years, I am sure he can tell us all about it.

I wish to call attention to these beautiful pictures and wood-carving, as they were kindly loaned by Major and Mrs. Byers for this especial afternoon.

There are some other members of this committee who had prepared short papers who very graciously give

their place to Mr. Byers.

And now, I have the pleasure of introducing
Mrs. Morse.

As a people we have just-finished
celebrating the discovery of this continent.

We are proud of the progress we have made
and justly too. We have a right-to full pleasure when
we think of our institutions and our people, and
to show delight; when we remember that from a
few ports on the Atlantic coast; we have grown
into a country upon which the ^{sun} never sets.

We are great in many respects but
we ~~are~~ so large and so young, we cannot
fail to be helped by the study of the methods
of self control which have been tried in
the little republic which sits perched upon
the Alps secure in a government; which
two years ago celebrated ~~the~~ "6th Centennial"
of its existence as a nation. It is of Switzerland
we speak, a country which has settled questions
both political and social that other nations
are only just-beginning to consider: and
since she of all confederations of

If history, bears the closest resemblance in institutions to the United States, her example can surely be of good to us. Indeed a people, which has been self governed so many years challenges attention. The difficulty is to make her fund of knowledge available to us, so little has been written on this subject; that - it can be said with truth, that Switzerland is both the best and the least known of all the countries of Europe - Her mountain lakes and other physical features are familiar to many, her system of government - known only to a few. It is plain why this is, so. She has been visited by the tourist and sightseer, for rest and pleasure but not for study; so the student of social economy finds it hard to take advantage of her example "which presents to us, in its growth every phase of government, from the very rudiments of liberty to its full flower in the present day." It is not true as

many suppose, that Switzerland has
~~existed~~ from time immemorial, a regularly
organized government. - It really made its entry
upon the historic stage, as a nation, in the 13th century
by the binding together of Uri, Schwyz, and
Unterwalden, three small peasant-communities
and by adherence it grew until it reached
its present size of twenty two cantons. From the
Commune to the Canton, the Canton to the Confederation
these were the steps by which the Swiss State was
formed. In my reading for this paper I found
this illustration - "In the animal world, there is a
process, which in its various phases nearly resembles
the development of the Swiss Confederation. The old
confederation which lasted about one hundred
and thirty years seems like the caterpillar,
destined in dying to give place to something
better, the Helvetic Republic like the chrysalis
acting as a means of transformation, and
the present confederation like the butterfly,
which finally emerges the fair product

of the decay which has preceded it." Through all these stages of growth, the idea of liberty, of man's divine individuality was nurtured on the mountains, where the herders lived then, as they do now. How could it be otherwise? No man could feel or think of class distinctions in the midst of God's eternal snows and unchanging heights, these pastures were really training schools in the true principles of democracy. The position which Switzerland holds geographically is most remarkable. In the midst of Europe, protected by natural defences of high mountains and deep lakes, her location alone would help her towards importance, this with the trait of character, which she early learned and acted upon, that peaceful agreement is more noble than conquest in war has given her a position among nations quite unparalleled and most enviable - Since Napoleon (1815) every one of the

States of Europe have waged war, most of them several times against her neighbor, Switzerland has remained at peace and thus forms a strange contrast to these great powers. She alone, of all has no standing army and can think of nothing so horrible as war, or at present so unlikely, for she has made her declaration of war a matter upon which the representatives of the people must decide and has bound herself by her constitution to put forward no pretensions to foreign conquest, and to make no alliance with any other power. While she has no standing army and makes preparation only to protect her frontiers in case of menace, every citizen must consider himself a soldier and is trained a few weeks every year, after becoming efficient - he is subject to reviews and inspection. The cost of these fall upon the government - and amount to about [#]35 per annum for every soldier. While Great-Britain's Army costs her

#322 per soldier, besides leaving it a question of
doubt - whether in case of war Great-Britain could
put into the field an army more efficient than
the men which Switzerland could mobilize
within a week. This is an important fact - and
strengthens the idea, that as education
advances all difficulties will be settled by
arbitration. Just here, one word on Switzerland's
neutrality. Her geographical position imposes
upon her the choice between two foreign
policies. She must either cast her lot with one
of the rival powers, or else observe strict
neutrality towards them all. for many years
she has adhered to the latter policy - thus providing
in the midst of armed Europe neutral territory
and of representing the principles of democracy
on the continent. This essential or guaranteed
peace which belongs to Switzerland alone, is
essential to the very existence of modern
Europe, and this strategic importance of
this country out of all proportion to her size
has made her the recipient of such a favor.
She is thus a neutral meeting ground and as
such is valued by the States of Europe. It

hardly seems possible that any one of the rival powers would be the first to break this agreement. With a small and useful state and bring upon itself public censure.

The ideal of Swiss Statesmanship is thoroughly democratic. Plain living and small reward for public services, this is clearly shown in Article XII of their constitution which reads: "No members of the departments of the federal government, civil and military officials of the confederation, federal representatives or commissioners, shall receive from any foreign government - any pension, salary, title, gift or decoration - such persons already in possession of pensions titles or decorations, must renounce the enjoyment of pensions and the bearing of titles and decorations during their term of office." Our distinguished fellow townsman - Ex Consul Byer says "greater individual liberty exists nowhere - a more complete government of the people, by the people is not to be found, and nowhere in the world are state officers, law makers, and courts so absolutely the servants of the people." The head of the Swiss Government is -

a Council - This Council selects one of its members as Chairman, who thus becomes President - of the Republic and assumes a Cabinet - portfolio, usually that of foreign affairs. Doubtless many of you have read in the papers of the election of Col. Frei to this position. This ought to be of interest to us as "he has been an American Citizen, a gallant - volunteer soldier in the Union Army and a sufferer for the Nations sake in a rebel prison pen". The salary of this official is not high as we pay our president; only about three thousand per year, and no official residence. All members of the Cabinet - and judges of the Supreme Court are elected, hence he is clothed with no power of appointment. Being freed from this great pressure of office seekers, and having for his helpers trained statesmen, the country possess a long tried and firmly established civil service system, the president is free to give his time and ability to the duties of his country. Promotion is attained only on proven merit and the term politician is neither well nor favorably known.

Officials receiving small salaries cannot assume such an extravagant-manner of living which many of our officials do and which is always harmful to the people. Writers claim that this system of Civil service has not only saved millions of money, it has also increased the patriotism of its citizens and brought honor on the country. When it cost Switzerland \$3 per capita for all government-expenses it cost England \$12, France \$15, and our own beloved land nobody knows how much.

Mr Howells gives us this description of an election, he witnessed one Sunday after Church in one of the Cantons. On the Church door a summons to the electors was posted - tickets were

enclosed in envelopes and sealed. On a table before the pulpit the ballot-box, a glass urn, was placed, and beside it sat the judges of elections with a list of voters. The church bell rang for the people to assemble, the voting began and ended in perfect quiet. I could not witness an election of this ancient people, where freedom was so many centuries old without strong emotion, it had from its nature and the place the consecration of a religious rite.

The Swiss Citizen is noted for his desire for association, as the Englishman for self-reliance and independence. One way which this national trend shows itself in is the absence of party government. Under the Swiss system leaders are regarded not as the leaders of a party and the originators of a policy but as the highest servants of the people chosen to carry out such a policy as the people or their representatives may decide upon as just. This would not do in every country, but it does in

Switzerland because the patriotic feeling of the people is so highly developed and because there is in the people this instinct for association - Besides these, the peculiar Swiss institution, known as the Referendum helps to make this possible. Since advanced thinkers on economic questions are discussing the feasibility of introducing the referendum into England and the United States, it may be well for us to enquire about it - It is simply this - Every change of the constitution and new laws must be put to the vote of the people, and must be put in force on every occasion where there is a revision of the constitution and then a majority of the cantons as well as a majority of the people must vote for the measure, this form is called the obligatory. When the signatures of 30000 voters are appended to a petition asking that any particular decision of the federal council be submitted to the people, it is called the facultative form, such a

petition must be presented within three months of the passing of the law to be subjected to the referendum. A third form also exists, that of the initiative. This means that the majority of the federal assembly or 50000 voters, may demand a total or partial revision of the constitution in any particular sense, which is then submitted to the popular vote of the referendum. This is supposed to apply only to constitutional amendments but since in Switzerland the line between statute and common law is so loosely drawn, the people through the initiative will be able to propose legislation upon almost any subject. Let me refer you to Mr. H. McCracken - the author of the new book - The Rise of the Swiss Republic, and many magazine articles. He says: "The initiative is the corollary of the Referendum, by means of which laws framed by the representatives must be submitted to the people for final acceptance or rejection - both institutions are mediums for the expression of the

popular will. The Referendum is a passive force, it says aye or nay, and is essentially judicial in character. The Initiative is an active creative force - it supplies the progressive element in the process of legislation. The Referendum acts as the critical controlling check upon the adoption of laws. Taken together these two institutions form the most perfect contrivance so far devised by a free people for the conduct of self government. They create a sort of political pendulum, which oscillates in a groove strictly marked by the constitution, a continual to and fro movement, which carries certain expression of the public will directly from the people to the legislature, and back again to the people for their verdict. He further says that "they are the noblest political achievements of this waning century, capable of supplying our decaying democracy with the powers necessary for its redemption. They are the final perfected contrivance of a modern direct government enabling the

people to be in power, not this or that party"

The Cantons, which correspond to our States, except in size present most remarkable contrasts to one another but all are equally Swiss and alike patriotic ~~patriotic~~. Experiments are first tried in one Canton, as was the progressive income tax, the making of voting at election compulsory, the principle of the initiative referendum, and temperance legislation. The States are small and the results made on a small scale rapidly assert themselves, so with appropriateness Switzerland has been called a nursery of politics. This position which Switzerland has earned for herself by her proud history and the moral and social qualities of her citizens, tells without further comment that they are a people of superior education. And in speaking of the education of Switzerland it brings to mind a name dear in many lands - Pestalozzi! To again quote Consul Byers he says "When Switzerland

would honor Pestalozzi's name, the monument
she built - was more than brass or bronze,
it was a school - and over the door
were written in letters of gold - dedicated
to the children of the town. A school
where memories of the man were carved
not - on the wood, the stone, but - in
the minds of happy growing youths." (1)
In no country is elementary
instruction more widely diffused -

Parents are
compelled to send their children
to school or have them privately taught -
between the years of six and twelve - but
these people have so well learned the lesson
set by the great - object - teacher that school
has become a co-operation of play and
work. The teacher is paid by the year.
The work his chosen one for life, consequ-
ently the one he loves, only those who can
rule by moral force are allowed to teach and
the pupil who continuously neglects his
studies or is disobedient is expelled. These
school-houses are built for the children's
comfort - and convenience and always -

have large shady yards. Perfect freedom exists between teacher and pupil. They laugh, dance, sing and learn - together. They spend many happy hours out-of-doors learning their lessons from plant, rock and tree. Intelligence is widely spread, only one in every thousand who cannot read and write. The country has more circulating libraries than any other country of equal population in Europe. One Canton alone having 267 public libraries, while every inn, Café and eating house has piles of newspapers.

The position of neutrality of which we have spoken, strengthened by the patriotism and eagerness for national honor and social distinction explains why Switzerland was selected by the United States as the meeting place for the arbitrators in the "Alabama Claims," indeed she is the home, the headquarters of the international agreements which seem destined to develop into a world wide confederation - The offices -

on the battle field. In 1864 certain conditions were agreed upon among the military powers by which the ambulances and attendant doctors and nurses are protected by being regarded as neutral by the combatants & wear the red cross on a white ground a badge adopted from the Swiss flag, which is a white cross on a red ground.

In 1886 Switzerland made an agreement with the United States that all and every difference arising between these two nations in the course of the next thirty years should be submitted to arbitration. These facts & movements show that the Swiss are far in advance of any other European nation in grasping the idea of the confederation of nationalities, and of the value of mutual cooperation among civilized governments.

Switzerland has no sea coast, has a barren soil, is intersected by mountain ranges, does not possess a single coal mine, canal or navigable river, yet the commerce of Switzerland per capita is five times as great as that of Italy. This is true because she does not support an expensive court-

or a luxurious aristocracy, spends comparatively little on war preparations - is justly governed and has her affairs economically administered; these with vast sums from tourists every year, and her immense power, supplied by the streams utilized by factories - these advantages backed by the social and moral development and flowing from these to the political and international preeminence of the Swiss Confederation account for the greatness of her commerce. One aspect of the deeper side of her religious and national character is seen in her numerous philanthropic and religious societies and associations - One institution peculiar to Switzerland and which might be copied in other lands is the Society of Public Welfare - This seems to me to be that from which the modern idea of the associated Charity movement must have originated. Almost every town in Switzerland has one of these societies, the oldest and still the leading one is that founded in 1777 by the town

clerk of Basel - its activity has been given to many and various objects, these projects which if started are managed by a special committee or separate commission, which reports to the central committee but still has independent power of action - Some of the objects dealt with, are religious, such as special committees for Sunday school work, for promoting good church meetings, for the diffusion of good literature, some are general and philanthropic, as the building of orphanages, workmen's dwellings, popular and temperance eating houses, savings banks, providing and sustaining bathing places and skating rinks, and humane societies. A society of this nature prevents the clashing of competing organizations and unites men and women of different views in common philanthropy.

No other nation in Europe has so fully realized the principle of religious liberty - Some cantons are almost exclusively Catholic, some Protestant, religious liberty they found early to be the only peaceful method - In Glarus there is one great Church for the town

which is used in common by Catholics and Protestant. Last year a Protestant synod met in a town which had a small Protestant congregation in an Italian Canton almost wholly Catholic. The members of the synod were entertained during their stay (some five days) at public expense, the person telling this asks, is there any other country in the world in which a Catholic town would pay from its public purse the cost of a Protestant synod held within its walls? Apostolic Creed to these people, is almost unintelligible and though both people and clergy are devout no subscription of the creed is ever required from any Swiss pastor.

Switzerland's greatest danger is one common to us, danger of losing her individuality in becoming so cosmopolitan and so weaken her nationality. She sees her danger and works to counteract it. One of her men of ideal life and aim says "Ever and always our nation must have men whom the life and the comforts of the

world will not-satisfy: men who can say,
I believe therefore I speak, men who will not-
suck their life by the pools and drink there
the stagnant-water, but who will mount up
at sunrise to the highest spring of all, and
will, with hallowed hands drink from that
as it gushes forth cold and fresh. This
highest-spring is God."