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Autore	Herold J. Christopher
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Sommario/riassunto	<p>A fascinating and unbiased account of the Swiss people, their history and customs, their literature, art and science, religious turmoil and economic problems."Don't sell this as a travel book. Actually, I could wish for a little more of that aura, but since it is not intended as such, that is mere quibbling. For here is an intellectual approach to the history, the geography, the political structure of a country that in many ways might serve as a microcosm of world federation in action. But the author has approached the subject realistically, and torn off the overlay of legend and story, showing a small country, protected from encroachments by its geographic expression, but far from being an oasis of peace. The cantons warred one with another; religious wars and civil wars tore them internally; the Catholic cantons attempted secession in 1848 and only then were the two major segments-- Catholic and Protestant, brought together under one constitution. There were internecine class wars constantly. But by the end of the 15th century common sense dictated a common military organization of defense only to have the Reformation rip them asunder again. Finally the Congress of Vienna established the boundaries. Successive popular legends are gently dissected and disproved, and full circle is traced to Switzerland progresses from a peasant economy, to conquerors, soldiers of fortune, state monopolies, and back to unity of farmers and merchants. Names in the hall of fame, Voltaire, Rousseau, Amiel, and other writers; Pestalozzi, Henri Dumon, Zwingli--names internationally</p>

known in their fields; brief biographies integral to the overall picture of a people in a chronic state of political excitement, but yet able to evolve an aesthetic and cultural life, and a reputation for stability... Plenty of controversial but revealing material here; scholarly without being pedantic in style."-Kirkus reviews
