Basel and Constance, but since the complete reorganization of 1814 they are all in the diocese of Basel, the bishop of which has his chair in Soleure. In 1900 the population was 100,762, of whom 97,930 were German-speaking, 1912 French-speaking, and 829 Italian-speaking, while 69,461 were “ Catholics ” (the census does not distinguish between Romanists and Christian Catholics, who are still fairly strong here), 31,012 Protestants, and 159 Jews. The capital is Soleure, while the only other important town is Olten (6969 inhabitants). Between Soleure and Granges or Grenchen (5202 inhabitants) is the village of Selzach, where since 1893 a passion-play has been performed every summer by the inhabitants.

Till about 1850 the canton was mainly agricultural and pastoral, its pastures numbering 209, capable of supporting 4179 cows and of an estimated capital value of 2,395,215 francs. Nowadays it is distinguished for the variety of its industries, especially in and around Soleure and Olten, among them being watch-making, shoe-factories, cotton-spinning and cement factories.

The canton is divided into ten administrative districts, that comprise 132 communes. The present cantonal constitution dates from 1887, but was revised as to some important points in 1895. The *Kantonsrat,* or legislative assembly, is elected (since 1895 according to the principles of proportional repre­sentation) by all citizens over twenty years of age, in the pro­portion of one member to 800 inhabitants. Since 1895 the people have elected the *Regierungsrat* or executive, consisting of five members. In both cases the period of office is four years, though on the demand of 4000 citizens a popular vote must be taken as to whether the existing members shall continue to sit or not. In the canton the “ obligatory refer­endum ” and the “initiative” have obtained since 1875. By the former all laws passed by the legislative assembly, and all financial resolutions involving the expenditure of 100,000 francs, or of an annual sum of 15,000 francs, must be approved by a popular vote. By the latter 2000 citizens can compel the legislative assembly to consider any proposal for making a new law or for amending an old one. Further, the demand of the majority of the assembly or of 3000 citizens is sufficient to necessitate a popular vote as to the advisability of revising the constitution, the revised draft itself requiring a further popular vote. The two members of the federal *Ständerat* and the five members of the federal *Nationalrat* are also chosen by a popular vote.

Authorities.—J. Amiet, *Das St Ursus Pfarr-Stift d. Stadt Soleure,* 6 pts. (Soleure, 1878-1890), and *Die Gründungs-Sage der Schwester­städte, Solothurn, Zurich, und Trier* (Soleure, 1890); G. Bloch, *Bilder aus d. Ambassadorenherrschaft in Soleure, 1554-1791,* (Biel, 1898); W. Flury, *Die industrielle Entwickelung d. Kant. S.* (Soleure, 1908); K. Meisterhans, *Älteste Geschichte d. Kant. Soleure bis 687* (Soleure, 1900); J. R. Rahn, *Die Mittelalt. Kunstdenkmäler d. Cant. Soleure* (Zürich, 1893); K. E. Schuppli, *Geschichte der Stadtverfassung von Soleure* (Basel, 1897); P. Strohmeier, *Der Kant. Soleure* (St Gall and Bern, 1836); A. Strüby, *Die Weidewirthschaft im Kant. Soleure* (Soleure, 1896); and E. Tatarinoff, *Die Betheiligung Solothurns am Schwabenkrieg, 1499* (Soleure, 1899).

(W. A. B. C.)

SOLEURE, the capital of the Swiss canton of that name, is an ancient little town, almost entirely situated on the left bank of the Aar. It was a Roman *castrum,* remains of which still exist, on the highway from Avenches to Basel, while its position at the foot of the Jura and close to the navigable portion of the Aar has always made it a meeting-point of various routes. Five railway lines now branch thence, while a sixth has been recently added, the tunnel beneath the Weissenstein to Moutier Grandval having been completed. It was strongly fortified in 1667-1727, but since 1830 these defences have been removed for reasons of practical convenience. Its chief building is the minster of SS Ursus and Victor, which dates from the 18th century, though it stands on the site of a far older edifice. Since 1828 it has been the cathedral church of the bishop of Basel, but in 1874 its chapter was suppressed. The ancient clock tower has a quaint 16th-century clock, while the older portions of the town-hall date still further back. The early 17th-century arsenal contains the finest collection of armour and old weapons in Switzerland, while the modern museum houses a splendid collection of fossils from the Jura, the specimens of Alpine rocks collected by F. J. Hugi (1796-1855), a native of Soleure, and a Madonna by the younger Holbein. The building now used as the cantonal school was formerly the residence of the French ambassadors to the Swiss confederation from 1530 to 1797. There are some fine 16th-century fountains in the little town, which in its older portions still keeps much of its medieval aspect, though in the modern suburbs and in the neighbouring villages there is a certain amount of industrial activity. The Polish patriot Kosciusko died here in 1817; his heart is preserved at Rapperswil, but his body is buried at Cracow. In 1900 the town had 10,025 inhabitants, almost all German-speaking, while there were 6098 “ Catholics” (either Romanists or Christian Catholics), 3814 Protestants and 81 Jews. In 1904 there were twenty churches or chapels in the town itself. One mile north of the town is the Hermitage of St Verena, in a striking rock gorge, above which rises the Weissenstein ridge, the hotel on which (4223 ft.) is much frequented in summer for the air and whey cure as well as for the glorious Alpine panorama that it commands.

A 16th-century rhyme claims for the town of Soleure the fame of being the oldest place in "Celtis ” save Trier. Certainly its name, “ Salodurum,” is found in Roman inscriptions, and its position as commanding the approach to the Rhine from the south-west has led to its being more than once strongly fortified. Situated just on the borders of Alamannia and Burgundy, it seems to have inclined to the allegiance of the latter, and it was at Soleure that in 1038 the Burgundian nobles made their final submission to the German king, Conrad II. The medieval town grew up round the house of secular canons founded in the 10th century in honour of St Ursus and St Victor (two of the Theban legion who are said to have been martyred here in 302) by Queen Bertha, the wife of Rudolph II., king of Burgundy, and was in the diocese of Lausanne. The prior and canons had many rights over the town, but criminal jurisdiction remained with the kings of Burgundy, then passed to the Zähringen dynasty, and on its extinction in 1218 reverted to the emperor. The city thus became a free imperial city, and in 1252 shook off the jurisdiction of the canons and took them under its protection. In 1295 we find it allied with Bern, and this connexion is the key to its later history. It helped Bern in 1298 in the great fight against the nobles at Dornbühl, and again at Laupen in 1339 against the jealous Burgundian nobles. It was besieged in 1318 by Duke Leopold of Austria, but he was compelled to withdraw. In the 14th century the government of the town fell into the hands of the gilds, whose members practically filled all the public offices. Through Bern, Soleure was drawn into association with the Swiss Confederation. An attempt to surprise it in 1382, made by the Habsburgs, was foiled, and resulted in the admittance of Soleure in 1385 into the Swabian League and in its sharing in the Sempach War. Though Soleure took no part in that battle, it was included in the Sempach ordinance of 1393 and in the great treaty of 1394 by which the Habsburgs renounced their claims to all territories within the Confederation. In 1411 Soleure sought in vain to be admitted into the Confederation, a privilege only granted to her in 1481 at the diet of Stans, after she had taken part in the Aargau, Italian, Toggenburg, and Burgundian Wars. It was also in the 15th century that by purchase or conquest the town acquired the main part of the territories forming the present canton. In 1529 the majority of the “ communes ” went over to the reformed faith, and men were sent to fight on Zwingli's side at Kappel (1531), but in 1533 the old faith regained its sway, and in 1586 Soleure was a member of the Golden, or Borromean, League. Though the city ruled the surrounding districts, the peasants were fairly treated, and hence their revolt in 1653 was not so desperate as in other places. Soleure was the usual residence of the French ambassador from 1530 to 1797, and no doubt this helped on the formation of a “ patri­ciate,” for after 1681 no fresh citizens were admitted, and later