

Book reviews

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air. It is only the combination of this substance with the nitric oxides from inside Switzerland which results in the real danger to the forests.

It has to be stressed that the emission of nitric oxides has increased considerably during the past few years, whilst the proportion of sulphuric dioxides has decreased, mainly due to the stricter control of heating systems and exhaust fumes.

What is the cycle in the decay of a tree?

Air pollution causes chronic poisoning in a tree, which, at first, is not visible and shows only after some time. The symptom of the sickness as well as the extent of the damage can change through secondary influences, such as vermin or other factors. The trees weakened by immissions are particularly susceptible to parasite epidemics. A tree affected by the bark-beetle drives out completely within a few weeks, though the effect of the vermin is only of secondary importance: all the natural factors generally speed up the development.

What are the consequences of decaying forests in the short and the long term?

In the short term the result is above all financial loss for the owner of the forest, who often is compelled to cut down the whole stand of trees before time and to fight vermin. Long-term damage means avalanches, landslides, climatic changes, shortage of wood etc.

How can these effects be mitigated?

The forestry services traditionally responsible for the woods are fully occupied under the circumstances to establish the damage, to check developments

and to cut down the decaying and dead trees; they only fight the symptoms to a large extent.

The real fight against the basic cause of the blight must be carried on by the politicians and the people. All measures taken with regard to ecology in whatever field must have the same aim, viz. to reduce air pollution as much as possible in an economically viable manner.

One often hears that scientists are not in a position to prove con-

clusively that forest decay is connected with air pollution. With this, the delicate question is raised of irrefutable evidence of natural-scientific experiments. Nevertheless, we have a large number of proofs in that direction which at least make it highly probable that the relation as explained is more than justified. We may and must act as quickly as possible, in order to keep any widening of the damage within limits. *Interview: ASS/Franzoni*

Book reviews

All the books reviewed below can be ordered either from the publishing house mentioned or from the Secretariat of the Swiss Abroad, Alpenstrasse 26, CH-3016 Bern, Switzerland.

«Le Tessin dans les relations entre la Suisse et l'Italie 1922-1940»

by *Marzio Rigonalli*

Published by *Pedrazzini, Locarno, 1983*

Price in Swiss Francs: 38.-

In French

Based on intensive research, the book traces the tripartite relationship between Berne, the Ticino and Rome at the time of Federal Councillor Giuseppe Motta.

«In Valmaggia»

by *Aldo Patocchi*

Published by *Pedrazzini, Locarno, 1984*

Format: 30 x 43 cm

Price in Swiss Francs: 120.-

In Italian

This outstanding and carefully compiled book contains reproductions of the twelve woodcuts by the author, one of the most prominent woodcut artists of our times. With these pictures, he let us look into the character of his home valley, the Valle Maggia in the Ticino.

«Très riches Heures du Duc de Berry»

Published by *Faksimile-Verlag, Lucerne, 1983*

One of the most famous manuscripts in the world, the prayer-book (medieval book of meditation) «Très riches Heures du Duc de Berry», jealously protected at the Château de Chantilly, dates back to 1410-1485. The unique beauty of the

paintings made the book world-famous, a beauty hardly achieved again since then. One volume contains the complete facsimile edition with 131 gold-illuminated pictures, as well as numerous manuscripts, a total of 416 pages. This is accompanied by a volume of comment and explanation which present the reader with detailed information on the miniatures (200 pages). The edition is limited to 980 copies. Anyone interested in subscribing to this superb work of art should apply direct to Faksimile-Verlag, Alpenstrasse 5, 6004 Lucerne, Switzerland.

«Qui dirige la Suisse?»

by *Hans Tschäni,*

Published by *24 Heures, Lausanne, 1984*

Price in Swiss Francs: 32.-

In German: «*Wer regiert die Schweiz?*»

Published by *Orell Füssli, Zurich, 1983*

Price in Swiss Francs: 29.80

In Italian: «*Chi governa la Svizzera?*»

Published by *Editions Casagrande, Bellinzona, 1983*

Price in Swiss Francs: 26.80

The book is an analysis of legislation in Switzerland and the considerable influence of interested pressure groups at all stages of the legislative process.

Dürrenäsch

by *Samuel Hochstrasser-Humbel,*

Commune Clerk of *Dürrenäsch*

Published by *Druckerei Baumann,*

Menziken

127 pages in German

Price: Fr. 10.-.

The author presents the history and present life of the Aargau village of Dürrenäsch in this well-illustrated book. The village is remembered by many Swiss from abroad from stays at the «Home» for Swiss abroad, now no longer in existence.

**Gabriel Mützenberg, Anthologie
Rhéto-romane**

Editions «L'Age d'Homme», Lausanne, 1982, 292 pages. Price: sfr. 25.-.
French-speaking readers can now get detailed information on the literature of our fourth national language. Gabriel Mützenberg, has issued a Rhaeto-romance anthology containing text samples of all the literary epochs from the 16th century to the present; the poems are published both in Rhaeto-romance and in French, prose texts only in French. The anthology intro-



duces a total of 49 writers from every part of the Rhaeto-romance speaking area.

«Faut-il brûler la Suisse?»

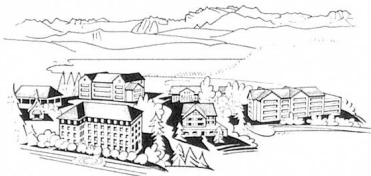
by Edgar Fasel

Published by Editions Juillard/L'Age d'Homme, Lausanne, 1983

Price in Swiss Francs: 24.-

The author analyses the democratic system of Switzerland with humour and depth, which refutes many superficial judgments of our country.

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