

To all members

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SWITZERLAND AND THE ENGLISH-SPEAKING NATIONS

(Continued.)

Almost three centuries later, the English were the first to discover the scenic beauties of Switzerland and to spread their fame. In the eighteenth century, the Grand Tour of youthful English lords generally included sightseeing in Switzerland; many young Englishmen of good family were sent here to complete their education. A diary of Edward Gibbon, the historian, written during a stay in Lausanne in the winter of 1763-1764, reveals that English tourists and students formed, already then, quite a large colony. The post-chaises have given place to trains and automobiles, but English tourists still flock to this country. Mountaineering is a beloved sport, and the English have reason to be proud of great alpinists like Mummery, Whymper, Leslie Stephen and Coolidge.

The Swiss, on the other hand, have contributed to making English life and letters known on the Continent. In the eighteenth century, Bodmer, the eminent poet of the Zurich School, was the first to translate the works of Milton into German and to encourage the study of Shakespeare. Beat de Muralt published his "Lettres sur les Anglais," the first outspoken comparison drawn between the English constitution and the French "ancien regime"; Jean-Jacques Rousseau gave the first impetus to the movement dubbed "anglomania" by contemporaries. In 1795, Marc-Auguste Pictet and his brother, Pictet de Rochemont, founded the "Revue britannique," whose object was primarily to make English letters and scientific works known in Europe; later, in the name of principles common to the Swiss and the English, this journal fiercely resisted the imperial despotism of Napoleon. It is said that once, when asked whether he intended to go to Geneva, Bonaparte tartly replied: "No, I don't speak English!"

Many generations of English poets, artists and intellectuals have visited and lived in Switzerland. In the seventeenth century, Milton made a short stay in Geneva on his way to Italy; in the next century, Edward Gibbon settled in Lausanne and led a happy life there, surrounded by many Swiss friends and visited by the brothers Wedgwood and the Earl of Sheffield. In the early nineteenth century, Shelley and Byron spent several months on the shores of the Lake of Geneva, where the latter celebrated the Swiss hero Bonivard in the poem "The Prisoner of Chillon," and sang the beauty of the Bernese Oberland in "Manfred." Later in the century, Turner delighted to paint Swiss landscapes. George Eliot and Matthew Arnold spent happy months in Geneva, while Dickens preferred Lausanne, and R. L. Stevenson, Davos. Ruskin's sense of beauty found full satisfaction in this lovely land; he was wont to call

Geneva "my mother-town." Among American writers, Longfellow and Henry James were illustrious visitors of Switzerland, and William James was, in his youth, a student at the University of Geneva.

(To be continued.)

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