

Correspondence

Objektyp: **Group**

Zeitschrift: **The Swiss observer : the journal of the Federation of Swiss Societies in the UK**

Band (Jahr): - **(1921)**

Heft 28

PDF erstellt am: **27.06.2024**

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CORRESPONDENCE.

The Editor is not responsible for the opinions expressed by his Correspondents.

A SWISS WREATH AT THE CENOTAPH.

To the Editor "The Swiss Observer."

Sir,—I beg to make use of your columns to refer to some correspondence which appeared in your last issue. This took exception to a wreath placed on the Cenotaph in memory of Swiss citizens who laid down their lives whilst fighting for the Allied Cause, and as a supporter of the movement I cannot let your correspondent's remarks go unchallenged.

While agreeing with "I enclose my card" that in a legal sense some of these compatriots (i.e., those, if any, who were incorporated in a Swiss unit) failed to respond to the call of their country, I should like to inform him that any Swiss who had not done military service before the war, and was not attached to an auxiliary unit, was under no obligation to return to Switzerland during the war. He was, therefore, at liberty to help defend a just cause. I have no doubt that the majority of the Swiss who fought with the British Armies, for instance, were either born and brought up in this country, or enjoyed its hospitality for many years. Can we blame them if they thought they saw their duty clear?

But do we really want to blame those others who, strictly speaking, failed to fulfil their duty to their country? Was a wreath placed on the Cenotaph to their memory too much? While they were alive we could, no doubt, have pointed out to them the inconsistency of their action with their duties to their country, but most of us are accustomed to overlook mistakes made by people who have passed away, and instead to memorize their good deeds and intentions. Is it for us, who at the outbreak of the war followed the proper, and incidentally safer, course of returning to Switzerland, to judge these men? No, without arguing whether they fought for a cause which was, or was not, their own, their spirit was truly Swiss, and their action brought no dishonour to their country. I think they deserved a wreath on the Anniversary of the Armistice.

As to the remarks made by your correspondent with regard to the mentality of the Swiss who supported the idea of placing a wreath on the Cenotaph, he is at liberty to preserve his state of mentality; I, for one, do not envy him for it!

Yours faithfully,

E. WERNER.

* * *

To the Editor "The Swiss Observer."

Sir.—The unintelligent criticism by your correspondent re the A.O.D. Helvetia Lodge No. 621 in their appeal to the Swiss Colony on the object of placing a floral tribute at the Cenotaph on November 11th in memory of the Swiss Soldiers who fought and fell for their respective adopted countries was most uncalled for.

I should like to point out to your correspondent that the instigator of the advertisement was the A.O.D., inviting members of the Swiss Colony to subscribe and to inform him that Druidism favours no nationality.

I sincerely hope that the feelings of no Swiss man or woman have been hurt by reading your correspondent's article, especially those whose sons joined up and never returned.

History tells us over and over again of the glorious records of the Swiss Soldier of Fortune.

Sorry to disappoint your correspondent, but the subscriptions were beyond our expectations, and we were able to place at the Cenotaph a magnificent floral cross (see "Daily Telegraph" Nov. 14th) which still stands there in honour of those brave boys who gave their lives for an ideal.

In conclusion I should like to add one more remark, that although the subscribers of the floral tribute may suffer from a deplorable state of mentality, I prefer to associate with them rather than with a man having a heart of stone, without sentiment or gratitude.

I enclose my card, and also sign my name and address.

1, Gerrard Place, W.1.

A. WYSS.

SWISS MERCANTILE SOCIETY.

On occasion of the last Monthly Meeting, which took place on the 9th of November, a lecture was given by Mr. Pachoud on "A Visit to Frozen Meat Works in the Argentine." This very interesting exposé was greatly appreciated by a numerous audience.

LA NOUVELLE SOCIÉTÉ HELVÉTIQUE
GROUPE LONDONIEN.

(Communicated.)

MEETING OF THE COUNCIL

on November 16th at 74, Charlotte Street, W.1.

1. Four members were admitted, and notice was taken of three resignations.

2. The new Central President at Geneva, Prof. Bohnenblust, complimented the Group in an eulogistic letter on the occasion of its dinner on Nov. 11th. He was thanked for it by the President and at the same time congratulated on his election.

3. An extensive report by the Secretary on his trip to the Provinces was read. Successful lectures were delivered by him at Bradford and Manchester, and an informal gathering was arranged at Nottingham. The Council decided to endorse the Committee's proposal that henceforth the Secretary should visit the Groups in the Provinces twice a year, finances permitting. His first visit will accordingly be repeated next spring.

4. The Secretary made a few communications with regard to the activity of the Secretariat. His lecture, "Some Modern Swiss Writers," is now appearing in the "Anglo-Swiss Review" in three instalments (October, November and December issues). Copies can be obtained from the Secretariat at the price of 7d. for one, or 1s. 9d. for the three.

5. The Council agreed to the provisional programme of lectures for December, January, February, March and April. Professor Borel's lecture, which unfortunately had to be postponed owing to his unexpected trip to Switzerland, will now take place on December 16th. He will speak in French on "The Problem of Naturalisation and Nationalisation in Switzerland—Its Actual State and Solution." On January 20th the Secretary will speak on "Modern Tendencies in Swiss Education and Instruction." On the 17th of February we shall have the General Assembly, and on March 16th we shall probably have a lecture in German or German-Swiss, and it is hoped that we may have the pleasure of listening to an orator from Switzerland on April 20th.

6. An oral report given by the President of the Entertainment Committee showed that our first dinner, which took place on November 11th, had been a conspicuous success. About fifty members were present and enjoyed themselves thoroughly, as is proved by the article by a "Satisfied Participant" in No. 27 of "The Swiss Observer."

7. The Treasurer reported favourably on the financial state of the Society.

It gave the Secretary great satisfaction when he was asked in Manchester, after he had repeated his lecture, "Some Modern Swiss Writers," to draw up a list of books by modern writers with a view to their being bought for the Library there. Is the intellectual hunger greater in Manchester than in London? The Library of the Secretariat, which contains nearly seven hundred books, has been remarkably little frequented of late. Neither has the price list of books on economic, political and literary subjects, which the Secretary invited the members to apply for in a footnote on the last convocation slip, been in great demand. This is perhaps also a good opportunity to reiterate that the forty odd reviews and papers to which the Secretariat subscribes are, of course, at the disposal of all members daily, except on Saturdays, between 10 a.m. and 5 p.m.

D. PAUL LANG,

London. November 26th, 1921.

Secretary.

SWISS YOUNG MEN'S CHRISTIAN ASSOCIATION
28, RED LION SQUARE, W.C. 1.

Members and Friends meet every Thursday at 6.30 p.m. for a **Bible Study**, followed by a free discussion.

Rambles are arranged monthly, and **Social Gatherings** occasionally. . .

All compatriots and friends are welcome. Our aim is **FRIENDSHIP AND BROTHERHOOD.**

The Restaurant of the Ashburton Club at the above address, affords an excellent opportunity as a place of rendez-vous.