

Popular Lecture on Swiss Literature

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freedom! It seems not. Everybody appears to be full of the energy and enthusiasm which usually result from a holiday, even a sunless one. But one feels that the Swiss of London require almost an over-abundance of both to carry them through the lengthy programme of events—social, patriotic and otherwise—which enfolds itself for them at the beginning of next month and continues to do so until they celebrate their National Fête on the 1st of August next year! There are now thirteen Swiss societies in London, each with its different functions in the life of the Swiss Colony, and each with its many and varied calls upon its members. There are those which attend to the poor and charities, those which concentrate on the social side of life, and others which devote themselves to education, music and sport. But there is one Society whose object is perhaps more elusive than these. This is the London Group of the Nouvelle Société Helvétique, and it is indeed surprising to find what strange ideas exist about this organisation and the difficulty there sometimes is in grasping clearly the real meaning of the movement. That the London Group of the N.S.H. arranges lectures, also occasional dinners and concerts, is a fact known to all Swiss of this town. Most of them realise, however, that it does not exist for these alone, though too many seem uncertain for what it really does stand. It is also known that the Group has an excellent library and acts as a kind of "Bureau de renseignement," both to young Swiss coming over to this country and to Britishers going to Switzerland or preparing books or lectures on that country, which is so full of appeal to them. But although that is helpful work and is one of the definite objects of the London Group, yet it is only a fraction of what it stands for. For what, then, does the London Group stand other than for doing its utmost to maintain feelings of understanding and sympathy between this country and Switzerland? What is it that has had the power to inspire Swiss all over the world to found Groups of the Nouvelle Société Helvétique, so that there are now 120 scattered near and far throughout the four corners of the earth?

Love of one's home country is not a thing peculiarly Swiss. Such a feeling is common to all mankind, and even the most casual has hidden away somewhere an affection for the land of his birth, for its traditions, its people and their customs. But in the case of Switzerland, more than of any other country, it is important that this love of the home land should not be hidden away, but should be active, keeping her countrymen abroad—and how many these are!—in constant touch with their mother country, so that she can still regard them as her sons. Those who become members of the different Groups of the N.S.H., then, do so with the idea of keeping in touch with their home country as much as possible, of discussing questions which arise of national importance in the same spirit as is done by the N.S.H. in Switzerland, that is to say, in a national spirit, in a spirit which is above all considerations of party and of religion. The foundation of the *Secrétariat des Suisses à l'étranger* has made this easier of achievement, as it keeps all the different Groups fully documented on matters which arise in Switzerland affecting all Swiss abroad, and they are thus able to discuss them and have made known their opinion at home regarding such questions of national importance as the entrance of Switzerland into the League of Nations, the Capital Levy, and the Military Tax, to mention but a few.

But that is not all. Many of the Swiss abroad have expressed, and probably many more have silently felt, that they are regarded by the home country merely—to put it in rather an exaggerated way, perhaps—as a source of national income, and that, apart from the taxes they pay, no further interest is taken in them. There may, perhaps, have been a grain of truth in this feeling, just as there may have been one in the idea conceived by the Swiss at home that their brothers abroad seemed to consider that the mere fact of their being abroad exempted them from any further consideration of their country. Be that as it may, the War and the first difficult months of mobilisation showed that there certainly was some misunderstanding and want of harmony on both sides. Since its foundation the N.S.H. has worked to clear away all such misunderstandings and to make them impossible in the future. It has worked particularly hard for the Swiss abroad, and now, through the *Secrétariat des Suisses à l'étranger*, how wonderfully has it succeeded in bringing home to Switzerland the importance of her sons and daughters overseas! A few years ago nobody would have believed that a day would ever dawn when the Swiss abroad would have a Parliamentary Group to represent them in Switzerland, to safeguard their interests and advance their views—such an idea would have been regarded as fantastic! Yet now that day has come! This is a tremendous step and to the least imaginative must be full of possibilities. But it now remains for the Swiss abroad to do their part. They have got this unique organisation by means of which they can express their views in the Federal Council with regard to all questions which concern them. It is now up to them to make use of it, for, if it is neglected, one cannot hope that this Parliamen-

tary Group will continue to exist indefinitely, indeed, one knows that it could not!

The London Group of the N.S.H. discusses at its monthly Council meetings and lectures questions of national importance and matters of interest to all Swiss who live abroad. One cannot hope that members will come to all the meetings arranged, but if they would only come to those at which questions of real moment are going to be debated, so that the benefit of their opinion might be had, what a great thing that would be and what a real step towards the ideal for which the Group is striving! And those London Swiss who are not yet members of the Group, perhaps they will become so now and help us to work for the realisation of our motto: *Pro helvetica dignate ac securitate.*

THE SECRETARIAT OF THE LONDON GROUP,
28, Red Lion Square, W.C.1.

POPULAR LECTURES ON SWISS LITERATURE.

Following a suggestion made by members, the Council of the N.S.H. has decided to offer its resources and organisation to the other societies of the Colony for the purpose of introducing and popularising the works of modern Swiss writers. Lectures of this nature have, of course, already been held in the past, but owing to local considerations have not attracted a sufficiently large audience to justify the not inconsiderable expense incurred thereby. Little causeries or recitals are to be arranged in the homes of the other societies for the benefit of their respective members: though such conferences could fill a whole evening, it is intended that they should follow, for the present, ordinary routine meetings only occupying an hour or so.

This scheme is to be inaugurated at the City Swiss Club, when after the usual Souper Familier on Tuesday, October 7th, Monsieur Hoffmann-de Vismé will give some readings from the works of Philippe Monnier.

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Le Ministre de Suisse et le Personnel de la
Légation de Suisse ont la douleur d'annoncer la
mort de

Mons. John Walter Sterchi,

Secrétaire de Chancellerie, Chef de Chancellerie de
la Légation de Suisse en Grande Bretagne.

survenue le samedi, 20 septembre 1924, à 3 h.
du matin après une courte et pénible maladie à
l'âge de 30 ans.

L'incinération a eu lieu au Cimetière de Golders
Green, mardi le 23 septembre.

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CITY SWISS CLUB.

Messieurs les membres sont avisés que la
prochaine

Assemblée Mensuelle

aura lieu le MARDI, 7 OCTOBRE au Restaurant
GATTI et sera précédée d'un souper familial à
6.45 h. (5/- par couvert).

Après l'assemblée Mons. R. Hoffmann-de Vismé
nous fera le plaisir de lire quelques pages des
oeuvres du distingué écrivain suisse, Philippe
Monnier.

Pour faciliter les arrangements, le Comité re-
commande aux participants de s'annoncer au plus
tôt à M. P. F. Boehringner, 21, Garlick Hill, E.C. 4.
(Téléphone: City 4603).

Ordre du Jour.

Procès-verbal. Admissions. Dmissions. Banquet Annuel.
Divers.

Divine Services.

EGLISE SUISSE (1762), 79, Endell St., W.C.2
(Langue française.)

Dimanche, 28 Septembre, 11h. et 6.30.—M. R. Hoff-
mann-de Vismé.

Jeu. 2 Octobre, 8.30.—Réunion de prières générale.
Invitation à chacun.

BAPTEMES.

Marie Anne JACOTTET, née le 18 Oct. 1923, fille
de Gustave et de Marguerite née Campiche, de Haute-
rive (Neuchâtel)—le 3 Août 1924.

Marguerite Gertrude BAERLOCHER, née le 24 Nov.
1923, fille de Charles et de Marguerite née Leuch, de
St. Gall—le 17 Août 1924.

Francis Hector ERNST, né le 6 Avril 1924, fils de
Hector et d'Isabelle née Wilson—d'Aarwangen (Berne)
—le 31 Août 1924.

MARIAGE.

Eugène WEIBEL, de Zurich, et Muriel Ethel WIL-
SON, du Suffolk—le 2 Août 1924.

SERVICE FUNEBRE.

Madame Gustave AGUET, née Elvira Pasquali, dé-
cédée le 16 Sept. 1924, dans sa 80e année—enterrée à
Kensal Green le 19 Sept. 1924.

Pour tous renseignements concernant actes pastoraux,
etc., prière de s'adresser à M. R. Hoffmann-de Vismé,
102, Hornsey Lane, N.6. (Téléphone: Hornsey 1798.)
Heure de réception à l'Eglise: Mercredi 10.30 à 12h.

SCHWEIZERKIRCHE

(Deutsch-Schweizerische Gemeinde)

St. Anne's Church, 9, Gresham Street, E.C.2.

Sonntag, 28. September, 11 Uhr vorm.—Gottesdienst.
Pfr. W. Dietsche.

6.30 abends ("Foyer Suisse").—Bibelstunde.
Micha. Pfr. W. Dietsche.

Requests for Pastor's visits, Baptisms, Weddings, etc.,
can be made on Sunday morning after the service,
or to the Treasurer, C. Bertschinger, 114, Fore St.,
London, E.C.2.

FORTHCOMING EVENTS.

Tuesday, October 7th, at 6.45.—CITY SWISS CLUB:
Monthly Meeting, preceded by a Souper, and fol-
lowed by Readings from the works of Philippe
Monnier, at Gatti's Restaurant. (See adv.)

Friday, October 10, at 8 p.m.—NOUVELLE SOCIÉTÉ
HELVÉTIQUE: Lecture by the Rev. R. Hoffmann-
de Vismé: "De Rousseau et de certains aspects de
la pédagogie moderne," at Ashburton Hall, 28, Red
Lion Square, W.C.1.

Friday, November 28, at 6.30.—CITY SWISS CLUB:
Annual Banquet and Ball at Victoria Hotel, North-
umberland Avenue, W.C.

Every Saturday and Sunday (weather permitting).—
SWISS RIFLE ASSOCIATION: Shooting Practice
at Hendon (opposite Old Welsh Harp).