

Nostalgie du pays

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Objektyp: **Article**

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

Band (Jahr): **- (1934)**

Heft 657

PDF erstellt am: **08.08.2024**

Persistenter Link: <https://doi.org/10.5169/seals-689589>

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ANNUAL CONCERT.

Swiss Choral and Orchestral Society.

On Thursday the 10th of this month, the SWISS CHORAL SOCIETY and the SWISS ORCHESTRAL SOCIETY held their Annual Concert at the Conway Hall.

Those who went to this concert had the pleasure of listening to a programme of well selected choir singing and orchestral music. There can be no doubt, that since the last appearance a year ago, both Societies have made great progress, and it is only to be regretted that the results of what must have been hard work and practice were not enjoyed by a larger audience.

The Choir rendered this time songs of a livelier character which seemed to suit the singers better, judging from their happy countenances when appearing on the platform. Songs like "Der Lenz ist angekommen" and "Im Walde" brought an atmosphere of freshness into the Hall. The "Schifferlied" was undoubtedly written for a bigger choir, but the Choral Society gave by its rendering a vivid impression of the stormy seas, as well as of the pleading strains of the fisherman's singing to his sweet-heart. The "Nachtgesang" was a pleasant contrast to the other songs, but its rendering proved that there is still much room for improvement, as regards piano singing. The last song was a drinking song, depicting the emptying of four glasses for various purposes, and I feel sure, if there had been another glass to be emptied, the members of the audience would have raised it to the further prosperity of the Swiss Choral Society.

The Society is fortunate in having in Mr. Seymour a conductor, who, in spite of the limited number of voices at his disposal, was able to produce some excellent results.

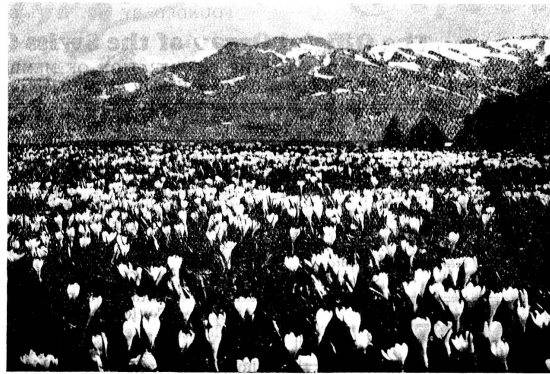
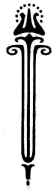
The Swiss Orchestral Society opened with the French Comedy Overture Op. 111 from Keler Bela and Valses-Motives from "Die Fledermaus," and closed the first half of the programme with "Des Wanderers Ziel" by Suppé. The playing of the orchestra was very good indeed, however the gay and happy spirit of the Fledermaus vases was somehow missing. The high ambition of the orchestra was shown by an excellent rendering of the Overture to "Rienzi" by Richard Wagner, and a selection from "Cavalleria Rusticana" Mascagni's master piece.

It may be said, without exaggeration, that the audience enjoyed every item played by the orchestra, which has attained a high standard of competence, and its very capable conductor Mr. Dick has to be warmly congratulated on the achievements of his capable musicians.

Miss Nellie Palliser delighted the audience with the aria "Leise, Leise" from the "Freischütz" and a selection of German and French songs, her splendid voice and fine rendering added greatly to the success of the evening. Altogether it was a most enjoyable affair.

G.

NOSTALGIE DU PAYS.



Looking at a poster welcoming people to Switzerland in the spring, the last line of a well-known Swiss hymn came to mind. "C'est le pays qui m'a donné le jour," and made me wonder on the number of Swiss that have had this similar "nostalgie" whilst looking or thinking of views like this one.

What do I see? I see what I hold to be one of the most beautiful sights that Switzerland has to offer, not only to foreigners, but to all those patriots who have left their motherland for the illusive gold mines of other European powers. A field of crocusi in bloom spreading before me, creating an almost ethereal effect with their delicately tinted petals. It is the end of winter, the awakening of spring. The hard proud snow of the mountains in the background is melting beneath the fatal lure of the young spring sun. No, not even these ruthless looking peaks sharply cutting the sky are immune against God's sun! The pine trees below darkly etched against the snow capped alps, offer a strange contrast in this world of white. They stand upright, unbending, in a regal attitude. They stand for time and loyalty, these trees symbolic of the enduring courage of those who dwell within their protective shade.

Since the beginning, long before man had built his home in these fertile valleys, these trees have stood and watched over God's creation. Throughout the years they have been the silent witnesses of man's work, of man's use of God's nature.

What is their verdict? who can tell? It is an answer that belongs to eternity, and no human shall find the key. Sometimes perhaps a solution may come to those who work at the feet of

these mountains, but so great is this secret, that they keep it safe within their hearts.

It is the gold of the mountains, not that futile gold after which the son of the land has gone to search further afield. It is that supreme happiness that awaits him at the end of his search; that contentment akin to the peace of Heaven that the weary traveller finds at his journey's end.

After having searched the whole world over, it is that he returns to his native-land to discover that which he had devoted his life unto, is here in the forest.

Is it the tender mockery of God that has led him back to his cradle land?

He knows not. He is content to refresh his limbs in the physical beauty of his country and to restrengthen his mind in the spiritual life that this land offers to his city-ridden soul.

It is thoughts like these that come over me when I remember the beauty that I left behind, seemingly so long ago. May-be there are others who share this sad "nostalgie du pays," this memory so like a beautiful haunting dream.

To these whom likewise thoughts assail, I send a greeting of understanding. A message of mental telepathy to those walking in the dusty crowded city of London; in fact, to those who are in any kind of walk throughout the world away from familiar fields.

It is a miraculous thought that a memory of snow-capped peaks bordered by dark pine-trees, at whose feet lay large patches of fragile flowers, can unite so many people.

K.E.D.

THE HISTORICAL RELATIONS OF ENGLAND AND SWITZERLAND.

(Translation from a Pamphlet which appeared in the N.Z.Z. in March, 1919, and published in Oechsli's "History of Switzerland." — Cambridge University Press.

(Continued from Previous Number.)

In June, 1847, Metternich invited Guizot to prepare a note for the four Continental Powers, stating that they would not permit a violation of the sovereignty of the cantons or any breach of the peace. Guizot finally consented to advance "from moral to material intervention," but urged that Austria with her troops should start the armed intervention, after which France would come in; in other words, that Austria should take on herself the odium of the intervention, and that France should play the more gracious rôle of the apparent champion of Federal independence. This was the meaning which Metternich at least attached to the clever move of Guizot, for he did not wish to have a repetition of the "Anconade" of 1832. But the protectors of the Sonderbund in east and west deeply distrusted each other, and that as a matter of principle. Hence Guizot applied again to Palmerston, and so gave him the opportunity of watering down the intervention of the Powers to a mediation, to be based on the representations of the Powers in Rome, in order to obtain the withdrawal of the Jesuits from Lucerne. As the Continental Powers did not pay much attention to his despatches, Palmerston acted on his own account, and in September commissioned Lord Minto, then making a journey in Italy, to secure from the Pope the withdrawal of the Jesuits.

In the place of the Conservative Morier (who in 1846 had left Switzerland "on leave"), his young and pleasure-loving Secretary of Legation, Sir Robert Peel (son of the famous statesman),

acted as Chargé d'Affaires at Berne. The Legations of the eastern Powers, following out the aforesaid programme of Metternich, transferred their residence to Zurich at the end of 1846; and the French envoy made a journey the excuse for not paying the usual official New Year's visits in the new capital, Berne. But Peel remained quietly in Berne, and did not hesitate to communicate with the Radical Government there. When the former leader of the Volunteers, Ochsenein, became, on June 1st, 1847, president of the Bernese Government, and so "President of the Confederation," Peel, with the foreknowledge of Palmerston, paid the President an official visit, and in August showed him an autograph despatch of Palmerston, in which he praised the "well-known" energy of the President as forming a guarantee for the preservation of order in Switzerland.

The exchange of despatches between the Courts took a considerable length of time, and this was well employed by the Diet. Dufour's campaign had already begun by the time Guizot had at last prepared, on November 7th, the draft of a note, in which the Powers came forward as mediators between the two warring parties in Switzerland, and proposed to determine its future in a Conference. Palmerston saw in this draft of Guizot a trap to draw "England at the tail of the French Government into the camp of the Sonderbund." On November 18th he put forth an alternative note which watered down the mediated armed mediation into a non-obligatory offer of mediation which would entail no consequences if declined by Switzerland, and by his well-calculated delay nearly drove Guizot to despair.

On November 26th the two Powers were at length agreed as to the text of the note. On November 28th Palmerston despatched the trusty Stratford Canning to Switzerland to deliver the note agreed upon. On November 30th, the day

after the Sonderbund had ceased to exist, the French envoy delivered the note to the ruling canton; and his example was followed by the Austrian, Prussian and Russian envoys. But Canning quietly kept his note in his pocket, since the offer of mediation was now superfluous. The same view was expressed by the Diet on December 7th, when it declined in principle any interference on the part of foreign Powers in the internal affairs of Switzerland.

The Continental Powers, which did not appreciate the derision excited by their diplomacy, now resolved to continue without England. Two special envoys, with full powers, from Austria and Prussia, Colloredo and Radowitz, arrived in Paris, in order to come to a direct understanding with Guizot. Their agreement was to the effect that the "Twelve Cantons" should be required to evacuate the territory of the "Sonderbund" cantons, and to agree to disarmament and the renunciation of any alteration of the Pact of 1815 without the unanimous consent of all the cantons; but that, if these conditions were refused, measures of force would be considered. *Pro forma* Guizot asked Palmerston to take part in these fresh steps; but he declined, because England had not delivered the note of November 30th, and therefore had received no answer to it, while he could not understand how the Treaties of 1815 conferred any right to interfere in this manner. The Paris Revolution of February, 1848, put a sudden end to all further action of the Continental Powers. But Switzerland, by her steadfast resistance to the Sonderbund, which had been protected by these Powers, had won definitive freedom from the yoke of the foreigner, which had weighed upon her since 1798, and also her re-entry into the ranks of the States which were genuinely independent. The service which in this matter free England had rendered her cannot and never will be forgotten.

(To be continued).