

Condensed History

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THE SWISS MINISTER AND MADAME DAENIKER VISIT THE NORTH OF ENGLAND.

The Swiss Minister and Madame A. Daeniker had a full programme when they recently visited the North of England.

On Sunday, June 19th, they attended the "Landsgemeinde" at Hardcastle Crags. The following day they inspected the Swiss Consulate in Manchester, followed by a courtesy visit to the Lord Mayor.

The Swiss Minister visited in the afternoon the Clayton Aniline Company's works, whilst Madame Daeniker paid a visit to the Municipal Art Gallery, and the Gallery of English Costumes, in the company of Mrs. Monney and Mrs. Schedler.

In the evening a cocktail party was given by Mr. O. Schneider, Swiss Consul, at the Midland Hotel, at which the following were present: Mr. H. Monney, President of the Swiss Club Manchester, Hon. Secretary of the Swiss Relief Society Manchester and Mme. Monney, Mr. E. Berner, Vice-President of the Swiss Club Manchester, Trustee of the Swiss Relief Society, Manchester and Mme. Berner, Mr. W. Allenspach, Hon. Treasurer of the Swiss Club Manchester, and Mrs. Allenspach, Mr. H. Scheiwiller, Librarian of the Swiss Club Manchester, and Mrs. Scheiwiller, Mr. A. Bebié, Hon. Treasurer of the Swiss Relief Society, and Madame Bebié, Mr. G. Senn, Consulting Member of the Swiss Relief Society, Manchester, and Mrs. Senn, Mrs. H. Schedler, Member of the Ladies Assisting Committee of the Swiss Relief Society, Manchester, Mr. M. M. Lichtensteiger, Trustee of the Swiss Relief Society, Manchester, and Mrs. Lichtensteiger, Mr. F. Fraefel, Manchester Representative of "Swissair", Mr. T. Voegeli, Chancellor of the Swiss Consulate, Manchester, and Mrs. Voegeli, Mr. P. Bringolf, Secretary at the Swiss Consulate, Manchester, and Madame Bringolf, Mlle. A. Rietmann of the Swiss Consulate, Manchester.

The following were unavoidably prevented from attending: Mr. and Mrs. Beaujon, Mr. A. Knapp, Mr. M. Ludwig, and Mr. and Mrs. Themans.

On Tuesday, June 21st, the Minister and Madame Daeniker departed to Scotland and the Lake District.

CONDENSED HISTORY.

To write competently and with clarity on so complex a subject as the political and constitutional development of Switzerland through seven centuries is no easy task. To do it within the compass of little more than a hundred printed pages is something of a tour de force. Monsieur Charles Gilliard has performed it with considerable skill. His book, translated from the French original into English by D. L. B. Hartley has just been published by George Allen & Unwin Ltd. The title of the English version is "A History of Switzerland", the price 8/6 net.

Like most historical works dealing with Switzerland, Mr. Gilliard's story begins with the events which, in the 13th century, led to the foundation of the first confederation. Thereafter it takes us in rapid stages through the many vicissitudes which gradually made Switzerland what it is today.

Mr. Gilliard's account is, by reason of its terseness, somewhat incomplete and postulates on the part of the English reader a certain amount of historical knowledge. His book makes no attempt at literary embellishment and contains no description of battles or outstanding public figures. It is severely factual, consistently objective and free from personal bias. It forms, in fact, a broad and sweeping outline of Switzerland's political history without being either adorned or burdened by detail.

It shows us how the cantons often quarrelled with and sometimes fought each other and only achieved unity when faced with a common danger. Their extreme autonomy, each with its own legislation, currency and taxation and intensely jealous of its rights and privileges, persisted until recent times. It is only within the last hundred years that cantonal authority became lessened and the power of central Government increased.

That the Swiss people, a mixed population, racially divided and lacking the bond of a common language or creed, should have succeeded in maintaining their cohesion throughout the centuries and evolving the united, peaceful and prosperous political entity it forms today is one of the miracles of history. How this was achieved is told in a lucid and straightforward manner.

The story, if perhaps too much telescoped for the student of history, is certainly presented in a way easily understandable by the general reader and will contribute in no small degree to his knowledge and instruction.

J.J.F.S.

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