

# Geneva in modern fiction

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Objekttyp: **Article**

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

Band (Jahr): **- (1949)**

Heft 1110

PDF erstellt am: **07.05.2024**

Persistenter Link: <https://doi.org/10.5169/seals-690747>

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The second item played consisted of a selection of melodies by Tchaikowsky, well played, but somehow too long; for my part, I would have preferred to hear the whole Piano Concerto instead of only the first movement.

Ruth Huggenberg, followed by playing Chopin's Polonaise Fantaisie, Op. 61, again her technique was faultless and her execution without a flaw. As an *encore* she played a Mazurka by Chopin. Amidst loud applause she was presented with a lovely bouquet of flowers. The Colony possesses in Ruth Huggenberg a capable and earnest artiste.

Once again the Swiss Male Choir appeared, they lined up to sing "La Chanson du Ramoneur" by Doret and "Zieh' mit mir in den Lenz hinein," both very well sung and with feeling, I especially liked the latter, the baritone solo was finely rendered by Mr. G. N. Ross. It is a sheer delight to listen to this Choir.

The Concert concluded with a few numbers played by our accordionists, their performance was again delightful and most enjoyable, and both Mr. Gandon and his youthful players are to be heartily congratulated.

In concluding this report, I wish to pay a special tribute to Mr. E. P. Dick, the conductor of the Swiss Orchestral Society and the Swiss Male Choir, who has given us an evening full of delight and enjoyment.

ST.



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## GENEVA IN MODERN FICTION.

"By the Lake," a novel by Kay Dick.

William Heinemann 8/6.

Geneva, that lovely city on the banks of the Rhone, is made to serve as the background to this, Kay Dick's first novel, entitled "By the Lake."

The action — such as it is — takes place in the period during the two world-wars. Robert, an English boy who is an illegitimate child, is sent to a school in Geneva and lives in the house of an old watchmaker and his wife. He provides the subject for a psychological study of mental development from childhood to adolescence, and his feelings and emotions are dissected and analysed.

Through his adoptive father the boy is connected with an old Swiss family, the members of which are introduced in turn. The author, who was herself educated in Switzerland, seems at ease in her descriptions of Geneva and of its inhabitants whose volatile gallic temperament she contrasts with the stolidity of the German-speaking Swiss. When, however, she ventures on German-Swiss localities and people, she is on less familiar ground and the result is a travesty.

The story is of the slightest and consists of trivialities interspersed with lengthy depressions into metaphysics. These are dexterous efforts, not without literary ability, but their style, ornate and flowery, is often laboured and turgid.

The characters are somehow unreal and their conversations stilted and unnatural. Perhaps the most skilfully drawn is that of the boy's frivolous and wayward young mother. The narrative is completely devoid of humour.

In fairness to the author it must be said that the diffuseness of the work and the absence of a plot are not accidental. She has made an attempt at Flaubert's ideal of literary composition and she quotes, in fact, the great French writer's saying that he could think of nothing more beautiful than to write a book on nothing, with scarcely a subject, sustained by the strength of its style alone.

Whether she has succeeded, let the reader judge.

J. J. F. S.

## SWISS CLUB BIRMINGHAM.

The Annual General Meeting of the Swiss Club Birmingham was held at the Midland Hotel on Monday, March 21st. The new Committee elected is as follows:— *President*: Mr. F. E. Brunner. *Secretary*: Mr. P. Duvoisin. *Treasurer*: Mr. A. Klötzli.

*Delicious*

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