

Geneva - from Cezanne to Picasso

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Finally, there was an article in the "Times" on 29th April, in which Andrew Graham writes on "A Taste of Swiss Wines". He says that the Swiss are great wine people and that Swiss wines reminded him of "happy holidays, of railway stations as clean as clinics, efficient hotels, sparkle of sunshine on snow, dream views of lakes, and wild flowers". The writer referred to a wine tasting organised by the Swiss Wine Growers Association in London and mentioned such tasty wines as the *Fendant* made from the Chasselas grape, the *Johannisberg*, the *petillant* Neuchâtel wine and the famous *Dôle*.

THE NEW CENTRE LE CORBUSIER

According to the prominent daily "Neue Zürcher Zeitung", on 1st February, 1912, the Board of Directors of the *Ecole d'Art* at La Chaux-de-Fonds decided to reimburse 25-year old Charles Edouard Jeanneret, *Professeur au cours supérieur*, the sum of 20 francs for a trip he had made to Zurich to visit the director of that city's Museum of Applied Arts. Fifteen years later, the same man from the Swiss Jura — now known as architect Le Corbusier — left Paris for Zurich to deliver a series of lectures there and in subsequent years made frequent appearances in that city on the occasion of exhibitions and other events connected with his work. Two years ago the world-famous architect and artist died and now, thanks to the tireless efforts of Swiss interior decorator Heidi Weber, an impressive memorial to him has been erected on the grounds of the beautiful lakeside Zurichhorn Park — a memorial which is also Le Corbusier's last architectural creation. Recently dedicated before prominent personalities from throughout the world, the *Centre le Corbusier* will house collections and exhibitions of the master's work, including paintings, sculptures and tapestries, and also has facilities for lectures and film showings. The structure features a "free-floating" roof, which offers protection from both rain and sun, and represents the first realisation of a project which Le Corbusier conceived and developed in the course of several decades.

[S.N.T.O.]

GENEVA—FROM CEZANNE TO PICASSO

Artistic activity in Geneva grows more intensive from one year to the next. Such is the pace that most of the important European galleries seek a place where they can put up their signs or, more precisely, their paintings with easy access to one of the streets of Geneva where the art business is remarkably in vogue. When one speaks of business one implies exhibitions. With its more than thirty private galleries, its museums and permanent exhibits, Geneva has now moved to the forefront of the international art movement. Last year, Geneva presented a superlative exhibition of ancient Iranian art organised by a scholar with an international reputation, Mr. Nicolas Durr, Curator of the city's museums. He succeeded in assembling within the walls of the Rath Museum a collection of extraordinary sumptuousness. This year, the directors of the major galleries are preparing a number of exhibitions bound to attract large numbers of art-lovers. Among the most remarkable of these will undoubtedly be the one which opened its doors on 5th July, at the Athenée Museum and which will be dedicated to drawings and graphics from Cézanne to Picasso. The recent sale in London of an *aquarelle* by Cézanne for the price of 1.400.000 francs and

of a Picasso for more than two and a half million Swiss francs—a price never before obtained by a living artist—speaks eloquently of the standard of the exhibition which, during the whole of this coming summer, will draw connoisseurs of modern art to the Athenée.

[S.N.T.O.]

"RENCONTRES INTERNATIONALES" IN GENEVA

Created after the last war in the interests of better understanding among nations, the *Recontres Internationales* of Geneva are held during the first half of September. In the past 20 years, highly topical themes have been discussed, such as: "The European Spirit" — "For a New Humanity" — "Technical Progress and Moral Progress" — "Man and Science", etc. This year, the Organising Committee selected the subject "Art in Today's Society". This is a theme very much in the public eye these days, which deals with the social obligations of the writer and artist; art and culture; the transformation of forms in modern art, etc. Architecture and the film will take a prominent place in the discussions to be held in Geneva by leading personalities from all spheres of the arts.

[S.N.T.O.]

UNIFORMS WERE FIRST SEEN IN SWITZERLAND

Books of reference give the second half of the fourteenth century as the time when uniforms were first used. The Turkish Janissary force, a noted corps of foot soldiers who acted as the Sultan's body guard — the earliest standing army in Europe — was fully organised by Amurath I, in 1362. The formation of standing armies among the Western powers, which may be said to have introduced the modern military system, dates from the establishment of "compagnies d'ordonnance" by Charles VII. of France in 1422.

In England, the Yeomen of the Guard constituted by Henry VII. and at whose coronation they made their first appearance, on 30th October, 1485, is the oldest corps in the British service. The Honourable Corps of Gentlemen-at-Arms, formerly called the Gentlemen Pensioners, was instituted in 1509 by Henry VIII and formed the Sovereign's bodyguard.

The Beefeaters or Warders of the Tower, whose Tudor uniform has had much to do with their attractiveness to sightseers, wear the Yeoman's uniform, without the shoulder-belt, and had their origin in the reign of Edward VI in 1547.

France is generally believed the first country to adopt uniforms for soldiers, in 1422; now in Switzerland this custom is much more ancient. At the battle of Morgarten in 1315, the troops of Zurich were all dressed in white and blue. A corps of Bernese Troops, in 1365, wore a white costume with a bear of black cloth sewed on the breast. Troops from St. Gallen were all clad in red at Grandson in 1476, etc., etc.

It is thus fully established that Switzerland already had uniforms more than a century earlier than France and long before the Janissaries existed.

P.S.

("Swiss Observer", 19th June 1937.)