Eidgenössische Glossen

Objekttyp: **Group**

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

Band (Jahr): **- (1927)**

Heft 302

PDF erstellt am: **27.04.2024**

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SWISS GUARD IN ROME.

Address by MR. F. BORSINGER, 27th May, 1927, at 1, Gerrard Place, W.1.

Whether it be due to the excitement of a Swiss Sports' eve or the usual Swiss Institute Friday lecture being billed for the same evening at Fitzroy Square, or the fact that the notice announcing the event had not had time to make its way round the Colony, it is nevertheless much to be regretted that there should have been such a small number to hear Mr. J. Borsinger, First Secretary of the Swiss Legation, speak on the subject of the Swiss Guard in Rome and the "Sacco di Roma" in 1527. Our Minister, Monsieur Paravicini, who was accompanied by MM. de Bourg, Rezzonico and Micheli, honoured the meeting with his presence, and explained the reasons why this lecture had been arranged. A Committee was formed in May, 1926, in Switzerland, with the object of preparing for a fitting commemoration of the 400th anniversary of the Swiss Guards' heroic deed on the occasion of the "Sacco di Roma." This National Committee was assisted by our Minister at Rome, Dr. Georges Wagnière, and public men in every canton, including all our Army Corps and Division Commanders, added their names to the appeal. For some time past funds have been collected under its auspices for the erection within the precincts of the Vatican of a monument which shall remain for ever a testimony of the admiration of Switzerland for the splendid example of heroism, loyalty to duty and military honour which was set by her sons on that tragic day of May 6th, 1527. The monument, already inaugurated on the 6th of May, 1927, is the work of Edouard Zimmermann, the Nidwaldian sculptor established in Zurich. An appeal was addressed last year to our Colony, through the intermediary of M. Paravicini, but the necessary arrangements had to be postponed owing to more urgent and pressing demands in connection with the cyclone which ravaged the western part of Switzerland last June.

In view of the highly historical value of Mr. Borsinger's address, we are very pleased to be able to publish it *in extenso*. Mr. Borsinger spoke as follows: —

"The practical object of this Conference is no doubt known to you, thanks to the letter which M. Paravicini has addressed to the *Swiss Observer* and to the various Swiss Societies in London. I fear, however, that the subject may not have found the general interest which it merits on close attention. I shall try to give you with a few words and a few pictures an idea of a Swiss institution abroad which often escapes being duly judged owing to the fact that it is attached to the Court of the Sovereign Pontiff who claims spiritual allegiance of a minority only of our countrymen—a minority which, however, is almost one-half of the population of Switzerland.

The Swiss Papal Guard was, through the four centuries of its existence, a Body or Palace Guard of the Pope who, besides his spiritual leadership of Catholics all over the world, was a Sovereign with territorial rights up to 1870. The duties of the Guard were, in the nature of things, for decades, generations and even centuries, of a ceremonial nature, and it remains, therefore, all the more remarkable that it proved to be inspired by the character of a real fighting body whenever an occasion presented itself.

The greatest interest of all, however, attaches to the episode, more heroic and truly grand than any other in the history of military honour and courage, which arose four hundred years ago, when Europe was divided into two camps in consequence of the Reformation. Although the Home Government of the commander of the Guard and the very families and friends of a large contingent of the men had embraced the new religion, they themselves presumably being of the same convictions as their countrymen, the oath sworn to the Pope, although he was the spiritual head of their enemies, was considered binding by them as long as his safety was jeopardised.

An institution which was guided by such principles is most certainly worthy of the interest of any Swiss, or any foreigner for that matter, who still knows what is worth while admiring in history.

The Swiss Guard was constituted before the Reformation, Peter de Hertenstein, of Lucerne, taking the initiative for its formation in the time of Pope Julius II. In the spring of 1506 two hundred men, under Caspar de Silinen, of Lucerne, proceeded to Rome, after the opposition at home against the formation of the Guard had been overcome, owing to the solemn declaration of its founders that it had no offensive character and was merely meant as a Body Guard for the Sovereign Pontiff. Difficult times made this reserve, however, illusory, as was soon shown in the conflict which arose between the Pope and the Duke of Urbino in 1518, during which Silinen himself was killed, not at the head of the Swiss Guard as such, but of two thousand Swiss specially mobilised for the occasion.

As successor to Silinen, Burgomaster Roust, of Zurich, was chosen, political reasons prompting the Pope to entrust him with the command of the Guard in order to counteract the influence of Zwingli at Zurich, who was a close friend of the new commander. Roust was, however, too old a man and too much of a warrior, having fought in the Burgundian wars, the Swabian war and at Marignano, to feel at home at the Papal Court, and he entrusted his son Caspar as acting commander, who succeeded him on his death in 1524 in the effective command of the Guard. The very day of old Burgomaster Roust's death Zwingli proclaimed the Reformation in Zurich, which proves that the Pope's move had had the desired effect of postponing, anyhow for six years, the outbreak of the Reformation in Zurich.

Negotiations continued, however, between Protestant Switzerland and Rome until January, 1527, but on February 19th an envoy of Zurich arrived at Rome recalling the commander and the 43 citizens of that republic. The conflict of conscience which has already been mentioned, ended in the departure on March 13th of the envoy, who took the message home that the Zurich contingent considered themselves bound by their oath until the military situation in Italy had cleared up and the danger menacing the Pope was removed.

The conflict between Austria and Spain on the one side, and France and the Pope in the other camp had reached its height at the time and the unrest of the people of Rome, who were against the French policy of the Pope, aggravated the precarious position in which the latter found himself. In consequence of the stress of circumstances the Pope concluded on March 15th, an armistice with the Emperor Charles V. sending home an army of five thousand Swiss who had come to his assistance. The imperial troops in Italy, led by the Connétable Charles de Bourbon, being dissatisfied at the prospect of peace, decided to march on Rome in order to force the Emperor's hand and arrived on May 4th at the gates of the Eternal City. They negotiated with the Pope, trying to induce him to buy them off, but without success. On May 6th in the morning mist the storming of the city began and Bourbon fell in scaling the Vatican walls at the head of his troops. The Imperials, being infuriated, continued the assault during the whole day and the Pope, having no reliable troops, apart from the Swiss Guard and some weak militian bodies of Roman citizens, divided the former into two sections, of which 147 men were thrown to whatever point of the city seemed to be especially menaced, and the remainder of 42 men were reserved for the Sovereign Pontiff's personal protection. During the afternoon Roust, commanding the main body, was mortally wounded and carried to his apartments at the Vatican. Towards nightfall the Guards' resistance was overcome by the twenty thousand Imperials who penetrated into Rome, killing the Swiss retiring to St. Peter's and following the last of them into the Cathedral, where they were slain at the Altar of St. Peter. The commander not being found amongst the killed, the Imperials looked for him in his room and cut him to pieces, gravely wounding his wife, who tried to shelter him.

By this resistance of the Swiss Guard, who fell to the last man, the Pope was given time to retire from the Vatican to the Fortress of S. Angelo, covered by the detachment of 42 Swiss, who resisted the assault of the Imperials during a whole month under Captain Goedlin, of Zurich. In the meantime the city of Rome, almost defenceless, luxurious like no other capital of the world, of a civilisation far ahead of any other and of an opulence which was an irresistible attraction to soldiery, greedy for booty, slaughter and rapine, was being sacked by the Imperial soldiery and hundreds of unarmed men, women and children were butchered in the streets. Houses and palaces, the latter after having been robbed, were fired, churches and monasteries spoliated, sacred vessels of gold and silver plundered by Lutherians and Catholics alike. St. Peter's was turned into stables, Raphael's tapestries used as covers for the horses and his frescoes besmirched with any filth at hand. The Vatican Library was saved merely by the personal intervention of Philibert of Orange, who had succeeded Bourbon in the command, but whose control over the soldiery was not sufficient to prevent them from burning the palace of Isabelle d'Este, his own mother.

After a month had elapsed the Pope had to conclude peace with the Emperor, one of the stipulations being the dismissal of the Swiss Guard, which was reconstructed after twenty years only by Pope Paul III, in 1548, on the basis of a capitulation with the Catholic Cantons exclusively. Jost de Meggen, of Lucerne, was appointed commander, which post was reserved for citizens of the republic of Lucerne, who were, besides invested with additional diplomatic rank, acting as envoys of Catholic Switzerland to the Sovereign Pontiff.

Amongst the most prominent commanders of the times that followed must be mentioned Jost Segesser de Brunegg, who was appointed in 1566 and died in 1592 in Florence. Segesser was a man of great character, and a conflict arose at the Federal Diet owing to his bellicose attitude. He was for using the Swiss Guards for other than protective measures, having fought with volunteers from the Guard in the battle of Lepanto against the Turks, sending home two Crescents taken in battle and acting as the Pope's ambassador in various European capitals.

On his death his successors were deprived of diplomatical functions, these being reserved to the Papal Nuncios. Other prominent personalities amongst the commanders of the Guard were Jean Rodolphe Pfyffer d'Altishofen, a grandson of Louis Pfyffer, "le Roi des Suisses," who saved the King of France at Maux, and his brother Louis Pfyffer, the victor in the first battle of Villmergen in 1656. During the French Revolution period the Swiss Guard passed from one crisis to another, having to accompany the Pope into exile and the commanders being dismissed successively by the French revolutionary Government and by Napoleon I.

The Federal Constitution of 1848 having abolished Foreign Service on an official basis, a new arrangement was concluded by the Pope with the Canton of Lucerne by which the prerogative of Lucerne to command the Guard was dropped and by which the recruiting of the Guard was left to the individual initiative of young Swiss citizens who wished to announce themselves for service on purely ceremonial and defensive lines. During the unification of Italy in 1870, Albert de Sonnenberg, of Lucerne, commanded the Swiss Guard, but he was absent during the conquest of Rome by Garibaldi, the last occasion on which the Guard saw fire, at the defence of Porta Pia.

I hope that I have given you an idea of an institution of the existence of which one may be proud. The empty phrases and affirmations which one so often encounters nowadays with regard to Swiss military service abroad are mostly based on a wrong conception of history. To begin with, institutions must be judged in the spirit of the period to which they belong, which means that the derogatory sense given to the word *mercenary* ought not to be accepted. Up to the French Revolution, wars were fought by professional soldiery and not by national armies, in the interest of Princes and Governments who changed about like chessmen on the board of Europe. Motives, religions, policies, likes and dislikes hardly counted ethically, and the only thing, the only rock which remained in a world of chaos and will remain as long as humanity does not despair of itself, was personal honour dictated by one's conscience, which happily remains the same whether it was in the times of Ancient Greece, of the Roman Empire, of the Early Christian era, of the ideal Middle Ages, of the Crusades, of the corrupted later Middle Ages, of the Renaissance, of the Reformation, of the Counter-Reformation, of the dynastic wars before the Revolution, of the French Revolution itself, or of our modern times."

A number of very interesting coloured lantern slides were shown, illustrating the life, dress and quarters of the Swiss Guard, and at the conclusion warm and prolonged applause showed Mr. Borsinger, who was especially thanked by M. Paravicini, that his audience had thoroughly enjoyed the lecture. Contrary to what had been announced, no charge was made for admission, but as the lecture had been arranged in order to give the Colony an opportunity to contribute to the funds to be raised for the erection of the monument, M. Paravicini informed the audience that voluntary contributions would be gratefully received.

EIDGENÖSSISCHE GLOSSEN.

Rationalisierung.

Unsere Möglichkeiten auf dem Gebiete der Rationalisierung sind immer noch recht gross: Es gibt ein Bäckereiunternehmen in Zürich, das sein Mehl per Lastauto von Solothurn bezieht. Und es gibt eine Müllerei in Zürich, die ihr Mehl an eine Grossbäckerei in—Solothurn liefert. Auch per Lastauto. Es würde sich lohnen, die Begegnung dieser beiden Lastwagen auf der mit grossen Kosten instand gesetzten Strasse zu kinematographieren und in sämtlichen Kinos der Schweiz vorzuführen, zur Belehrung.

Doch es gibt bei uns sogar Syndikate, denen Aehnliches passiert. Sie bringen es nur bis zur Kontingentierung und Preisnormierung, doch nicht zur zentralen Verkaufsstelle und Spezialfabrikation. Das heisst: ihre organisatorische Arbeit macht gerade dort Halt, wo sie beginnen könnte, zum Vorteil der Allgemeinheit zu wirken durch Verbilligung der Produktion und der Verteilung.

Je kleiner ein Land ist, umso grösser scheinen die Schwierigkeiten zu sein, die sich einem rationellen Wirtschaften in den Weg stellen. Vielleicht

ist auch die berühmte Schweizerfreiheit daran schuld!

Landwirtschaft.

Im letzten Jahresbericht der Strafanstalt Witzwil, die bekanntlich eine musterhafte Landwirtschaft betreibt, sind zwei Tatsachen verzeichnet, die man sich getrost in sein Notizbuch schreiben darf. Erstens: Zu einer Zeit, da die Bauern berechtigter Weise über schlechte Rendite klagen, meldet Witzwil eine Mehreinnahme für landwirtschaftliche Erzeugnisse im Betrage von Fr. 51,455. Zweitens (Und hier liegt vielleicht ein Teil der Erklärung, wenn sie nicht in der ausgezeichneten Haferernte zu suchen ist): Eine bestimmte Zahl Schweine bringt gleichviel ein wie die gleiche Zahl Rindvieh! Diese Tatsache "wäre noch vor kurzem kaum glaubhaft erschienen. Sie wird dadurch um so auffallender, als für die Pflege, die Unterbringung und das Futter des letzteren wohl zehnmal grössere Aufwendungen nötig sind. Zu dem Erfolg in der Schweinezucht trägt in erster Linie die naturgemässe abhärtende Aufzucht bei, dann auch die Ernährung, für deren sachgemässe Zusammensetzung wir die neuen Forschungen der Fütterungslehre genau verfolgen."

Man braucht also an unserer Landwirtschaft nicht zu verzweifeln, man müsste denn der Meinung sein, naturgemässe Aufzucht und Berücksichtigung der neuesten Forschungen seien Kunststücke, die nur einem Manne wie dem Direktor Kellerhals möglich seien.

Theater.

Im ersten Vierteljahrsbericht des Statistischen Amtes der Stadt Bern ist zu lesen, dass die Zahl der Theaterbesucher in den Monaten Januar bis März gegenüber dem Vorjahre (ohne Berücksichtigung der Inhaber von Abonnementen) von 38,704 auf 34,302 zurückgegangen ist. Gleichzeitig machte sich auch im Kino eine kleine Abnahme der Frequenz geltend: 266,385 Besucher statt 268,903! Gestiegen sind die Zahlen für das Alhambratheater (früher Operettentheater) und das Variété. Das Stadttheater scheint also rettungslos gefährdet, die Kinos haben mit einer deutlichen Sättigung zu kämpfen, während die leichtere Kunst lebendiger Art neue Besucher erobert. Doch kommt sie mit 56,000 Billettkäufern erst auf zwei Neuntel der Kinobesucher. Zum lebendigen Bild gehen achtmal mehr Menschen als zum lebendigen Spiel im Stadttheater, ohne dass wir die geringste Möglichkeit besässen, auf das Wesen dieses lebendigen Bildes im Sinne unseres schweizerischen Wesens einzuwirken. Oder gibt es kein schweizerisches Wesen mehr?

Das Zürcher Stadttheater muss ein Defizit der Spielzeiten 1923 bis 1926 durch ein städtisches Darlehen von 200,000 Fr. decken. Eines fällt mir bei dieser Gelegenheit wieder auf: Man unterstützt die Reproduktion in grösserem Masse als die Produktion, und doch ist die Reproduktion ohne die Produktion undenkbar, ist der Erfolg der Reproduktion von der Art der Produktion abhängig, wenn auch nicht ausschliesslich. Das Theater verkauft Waren, doch es macht keinen Versuch, auf die Herstellung dieser Waren fördernd einzuwirken. Das heisst mit andern Worten: Die schweizerische Allgemeinheit unterstützt die Städtischen Theater mit einer Summe, die den Betrag einer Million übersteigt. Mit welchem Betrage unterstützt man die schweizerische Dramatik? Es dürfte sich lohnen, einmal den Versuch zu wagen, ob dem schweizerischen Theater nicht auch durch die Förderung der schweizerischen Dramatik geholfen werden könnte, vielleicht überhaupt erst entscheidend geholfen werden könnte. Wie wäre es, wenn man einmal 100,000 Fr. an die Produktion wendete, statt mehr als eine Million sozusagen ausschliesslich an die Reproduktion?

Berufswahl.

Die Berner Statistik (Beilage zum Vierteljahrsbericht) meldet, dass von 584 schulaustretenden Knaben nicht weniger als 132 Mechaniker zu werden wünschten. Dabei wurden im ersten Vierteljahr bei der Zentralstelle für Berufsberatung alles in allem zwei Mechaniker-Lehrstellen angemeldet und in der ganzen Stadt werden überhaupt nur 256 Lehrlinge dieser Art beschäftigt, was pro Jahr einem Freiwerden von rund 70 Lehrstellen entspricht.

40 wünschten sich dem Bahn- und Postdienste zuzuwenden. Dabei steht in den Zeitungen zu lesen, dass die Bundesbahnen mit einem nahezu beschwerlichen Ueberangebot an Arbeitskräften zu rechnen haben. Wenn sie 30 Stationsgehilfen brauchen, so melden sich—600 Bewerber!

Elektrische Frühbeete.

Es werden Frühbeete gewärmt mit elektrischem Strom neben dem Schnee—in Lappland.

Es werden Kartoffeläcker geheizt mit elektrischem Strom—in Mittelschweden.

Auf der Maizusammenkunft der Landwirtschaftsakademie in Stockholm wurde gesagt, dass man dank des billigen elektrischen Stromes demnächst vom Norden, nicht vom Süden her das Gemüse nach Stockholm schicken werde...

Und bei uns?

Müssen uns Leute hinter dem Polarkreise im notwendigen und vollen Ausmasse zeigen, dass man Frühgemüse und Frühkartoffeln nicht unbedingt aus dem Süden zu beziehen braucht? Doch lieber glauben sechshundert junge Schweizer an das Heil durch die Bundesbahnen als sechs an das Heil durch den Schweizerboden!

Felix Moeschlin in "N.-Z."

FETE DES VIGNERONS, VEVEY,
AUGUST 1st to 9th.

As the participation for this year's festival in Vevey will probably show record figures, thus making it advisable to book seats well in advance, the City Swiss Club has secured a block of seats in a favourable position for the performance of Tuesday, August 2nd, on which day one of the three great cortèges will also take place. Most of the tickets for these seats have already been applied for by members of this Club; at the present time a few of them still remain unsold, and it is essential that the necessary arrangements for accommodation at or near Vevey on that particular date should be made without much further delay. The few remaining tickets are offered to readers of the *S.O.*; the price is 27/6 (which should be remitted). The hotel accommodation at or near Vevey for two days will be extra, and the Committee of the Club will secure the necessary rooms. If a sufficient number can be found to travel together, a special party will be arranged to leave London on Saturday, July 31st. Application should be made at once to Mr. P. F. Boehringer, 23, Leonard St., E.C.2. 'Phone: Clerkenwell 9595.

SWISS MERCANTILE SOCIETY.
Education Department.

In connection with the scholastic programme the following lectures were given by the students during last week:—

Miss Ruth Matter, Aargau: "The English Theatre." Mr. Rudolf Bek, Schaffhausen: "Savage Survivals." Mr. Otto Boesiger, Langenthal: "The International Economic Conference in Geneva." Miss Elsie Moser, Bern: "Girls in Business." Miss Odette Pfaehler: "Dante and his Divina Commedia." Mr. Ernest Schneider, Biglen (Bern): "Leather Manufacturing." Mr. Rudolf Maerkle: "A Swiss Town Boy, his Mountains and his Sport." Mr. A. E. Wirz, Schöftland: "Machines and Mankind." Mr. E. Bader, Frauenfeld: "Don Quixote." Mr. A. Attinger, Zurich: "Heinrich Pestalozzi." Mr. B. Muller: "Bern." Mr. Adolf Wegmann: "Republic or Monarchy."

The debating classes dealt with the following subjects:—

"Is Suicide justifiable or not?" Proposer, Mr. Rud. Bachmann, Luzern; Opposer, Mr. Kurt Widmer.

An evening debate was held. Subject: "Is it possible to create a United States of Europe?" Proposer, Mr. Hug, Bienne; Opposer, Mr. Vogel, Zurich.

ERRATA.

We regret that in the advertisement appearing in our last week's issue with reference to the "Fête Suisse" the date was erroneously given as Mercredi, le 26 juin, instead of Mercredi, le 22 juin.

The "Anniversaries" also contained an error. It was Basle, and not Bern, as printed, which joined the Confederates on June 9th, 1501.

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de jeunes gens de langue française (fondée en 1883), groupe de jeunes — Suisses, Français et Belges —
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Cordiale invitation à tous les jeunes gens.

CITY SWISS CLUB.

Messieurs les membres sont avisés que la prochaine

Assemblée Mensuelle

aura lieu le MARDI 14 JUIN au Brent Bridge Hotel, Hendon. Cette assemblée sera précédée d'un souper familier à 7 h. précises (7/6 par couvert) et suivie d'une danse.

Pour faciliter les arrangements, le Comité recommande aux participants de s'annoncer au plus tôt à M. P. F. Boehringer, 23, Leonard St. E.C. 2. (Téléphone: Clerkenwell 9595).

Divine Services.

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

Dimanche, 12 Juin, 11h.—M. R. Hoffmann-de Visme, Actes 26/24: Savoir et Sagesse.
6.30.—14e Etude sur le Symbole: "La résurrection des morts."
7.30.—Répétition spéciale du choeur.

Dimanche, 19 Juin: **Hospital Sunday.**

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

SCHWEIZERKIRCHE
(Deutschschweizerische Gemeinde)
St. Anne's Church, 9, Gresham Street, E.C.2.

Sonntag, den 12. Juni 1927.—11 Uhr vorm.: Predigt; 7 Uhr abends: Predigt.

TAUFE.

Walter Theodor Engelbert Albert EGG, Sohn des Theodor Egg von Zürich und der Hermine geb. Streicher. Geboren am 10. April, getauft am 4. Juni.

Sprechstunden: Dienstag 12—1 Uhr in der Kirche. Mittwoch, 3—5 Uhr, im Foyer Suisse.

Anfragen wegen Amtshandlungen etc., an den Pfarrer der Gemeinde C. Th. Hahn, 8, Chiswick Lane, W.4. Telephon Chiswick 4156.

FORTHCOMING EVENTS.

Saturday, June 11th, at 2.45 p.m.—SWISS BANK CLUB: Sports Meeting at Preston Rd., Wembley.

Tuesday, June 14th, at 7 p.m.—CITY SWISS CLUB: Monthly Meeting, preceded by a Supper, at the Brent Bridge Hotel, Hendon (see Advt.)

Wednesday, June 15th, at 7.15 p.m.—NOUVELLE SOCIETE HELVETIQUE: Monthly Meeting, preceded by a supper, at 34-35, Fitzroy Sq., W.1.

Wednesday, June 22nd, 6 to 10.30.—58th FETE SUISSE, Caxton Hall, Westminster.

Sunday, June 26th.—UNIONE TICINESE: Annual Summer Outing.

SWISS CHORAL SOCIETY.—Rehearsals every Friday evening. Every Swiss heartily invited to attend. Particulars from the Hon. Secretary, Swiss Choral Society, 74, Charlotte Street, W.1.

Printed and Published for the Proprietor, P. F. BOEHRINGER, by THE FREDERICK PRINTING CO. LTD., at 23, LEONARD ST., LONDON, E.C. 2.