

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

Herausgeber: Federation of Swiss Societies in the United Kingdom

Band: - (1930)

Heft: 463

Artikel: Lecture by Prof. Dr. C. Schroeter

Autor: [s.n.]

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.5169/seals-695224>

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LECTURE BY PROF. DR. C. SCHROETER

The organisers of this lecture, the Swiss Merchantile Society and the Nouvelle Société Helvétique, are to be congratulated on the happy way in which this most enjoyable and interesting talk was introduced to a large gathering at St. George's Hall, Tottenham Court Road, on Thursday August 28th.

The Swiss Choral Society had given us much enjoyment by the excellent rendering of three popular Swiss songs, thus creating the right "Stimmung" for listening to a narrative about the beauty and splendour of our homeland. The last notes of that beautiful song "Teure Heimat" had hardly faded away, leaving us with that great longing for the land of our fathers, when M. M. Paschoud, President of the S.M.S., rose amidst cordial applause, to introduce the lecturer of the evening, Prof. C. Schroeter of Zurich.

It was indeed a pleasant surprise when the Chairman mentioned that the lecturer had just been honoured by the senate of Cambridge University, who had bestowed on him the degree of *Doctor honoris causa*, in recognition of his numerous works on biological and botanical subjects, for which he enjoys an international reputation. This announcement was greeted with long and hearty applause. Owing to his departure for Switzerland our Minister, Monsieur C. R. Paravicini, was unfortunately prevented from being present, the Legation was however adequately represented by Monsieur Th. de Sonnenberg, Conseiller de Légation and Monsieur L. Micheli, Secrétaire de Légation.

Prof. Dr. Schroeter, who received a warm ovation from the audience, commenced his lecture, entitled

NATURSCHUTZ IN DER SCHWEIZ UND DER SCHWEIZERISCHE NATIONAL PARK.

by a few introductory remarks as to the aims and the progress which has been made in Switzerland for the preservation of natural beauty spots by the *Schweiz. Bund fuer Naturschutz*, a Society which has a membership running into several thousands, and which is subsidised by the federal and cantonal authorities as well as by numerous private and public bodies. They do not, he said, confine their activities to the Swiss National Park, an area of over 30 square km. situated in the Canton of Graubünden, between the villages of Schuls-Tarasp and Zernez, alone, but are also interested in the preservation of natural beauty spots all over Switzerland. Countless objects of natural beauty have been saved from destruction through the timely intervention of this Society, which has become a factor of great national importance.

The address was accompanied by a great number of exquisite coloured lantern slides of our beautiful alpine flora, trees, birds and animals as well as of many snow capped mountain tops. More than once these reproductions on the screen caused the audience to express their admiration by loud "oh's" and "ah's."

For those amongst the gathering who have not had the good fortune to visit our beloved country for some time, it was a great pleasure to see once again those snow covered giants and those peaceful villages. Memories of long ago of happy rambles through the valleys and highways of that unforgettable country came back to one's mind; it was as if one could hear the church bells once again ringing—calling you to come back home.

Those who stayed away, on account of the heat wave which lay heavy over London that night, will be interested to hear that the Hall was splendidly ventilated and it was considerably cooler indoors than outside. The only victim of the heat seemed to be the manipulator at the lantern, who, on various occasions, showed us what views upside down would look like, this however hardly interfered with the performance as the lecturer was ever ready to counter the mishaps with a witty remark.

Now, Herr Professor, you have profoundly shocked me, yea my heart stood nearly still, as never in these forty years of earthly pilgrimage have I heard a University Professor "yodelling," so my dear readers try to imagine the shock which your reporter felt when the venerable lecturer closed his talk with a hearty "yodel" which found an equally hearty echo from the audience. How things must have changed in the "old country" since those far-away days when I listened to the learned and sedate lectures of stately University Professors; well, they could hardly smile, let alone "yodel." But all the same, Herr Professor, it gladdened my heart to see that your love for the beauties of our wonderful country has kept you young in body and spirit, and I feel sure that those who spent this enjoyable evening at St. George's Hall will unite with me in the wish that we may have the pleasure of hearing you again soon.

Before parting, Monsieur de Sonnenberg expressed in a few words the appreciation of the audience for the most interesting lecture, calling for three cheers for Prof. Schroeter, which were willingly and heartily given. It was one of those evenings which bring one ever nearer to one's native country.

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