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# NOUVELLE SOCIÉTÉ HELVÉTIQUE, (London Group.)

President's Address at the Annual General Meeting, Foyer Suisse, January 15th, 1937.

Another year has been completed and it is my pleasant duty once again to survey the activity of the London Group during that period. In contradistinction to some of my previous annual reports, I am happy to be able this time to say rather more on the work than the good intentions of the Group, and I think you will agree with me when I maintain that we have not only kept our old standing, but have succeeded in gaining new animation and strength during the year. There are a number of reasons for this progress, some of our own volition, some adventitious, and I shall refer to them in the course of the report.

We have held nine regular monthly meetings, some at Swiss House and others at the Foyer Suisse, the latter having proved particularly attractive, as they are preceded by a simple meal, admirably cooked and served. The talks and discussions which we have been privileged to receive on these occasions are briefly and chronologically recorded below:—

February 26th, at Swiss House. A new member, M. J. P. Trembley, in an admirable lecture on *La Pologne d'aujourd'hui* entertained us with a vivid description of life in Poland and the changes which have been caused by the war and its aftermath. Mr. Trembley proved himself to be both a very keen observer and an excellent lecturer.

March 20th at Foyer Suisse. Mr. H. C. Balser, one of the few Swiss lawyers in London, gave us a fine talk on *The English Courts of Justice*. In his excellent description of the constitution and practice of English Law, he excited our admiration for the humanitarian aspect and the jealously guarded independence of the English Courts of Justice. A very fine and scholarly piece of work it was.

April 15th at Swiss House. Mr. Oscar Wetzel, the Manager of the Nestlé Chocolate Factory at Hayes, delivered a paper on the *Emigration of Swiss Industries*. He went right back into the history of the early beginnings of Swiss Industry and informed us upon its progress and growth in the course of the last 400 years or so. The very lucid account and the well reasoned conclusions of the lecturer formed a valuable contribution to our knowledge of Switzerland.

May 15th at Swiss House. Dr. W. Behrens, the Director of the British Children's Home in Davos, devoted part of his visit to London to speak to us of his work and his intention to rehabilitate this station for tubercular children at Davos. Regretting the fact that the home had to be closed during the war, he was eager to enlist our sympathy and co-operation for its re-establishment and he made it quite clear that there was no thought of private gain in his mind.

June 26th at Foyer Suisse. *Twentieth Anniversary of the Birth of the London Group*. The Minister was represented by Dr. Charles de Jenner and the Presidents of the other Swiss Societies in London were present as guests. Many congratulatory messages arrived from Switzerland and the president of honour delivered an excellent speech, full of encouragement and sympathy for the work of the London Group and the N.S.H. in general. Many of the original foundation members were present and spoke of the experiences of the early days and the development of the work of the Swiss Abroad. A gift was presented to Mr. C. Campart in commemoration of his twenty years of faithful service as Honorary Secretary of the Group. Altogether a charming function.

July 17th at Foyer Suisse. The Swiss Drs. Veillard, Rickenbach and Schneider, delegates of Switzerland at the Internat. Congress of Sociology, honoured us with their presence. Dr. Veillard, member of the Lausanne Group, gave us a most excellent, if somewhat pessimistic, talk on the present situation in Switzerland which he called *Coup d'Œil sur la Suisse de 1936*. The two other guests later made their own contribution which was followed by a general and very animated discussion.

September 18th at Foyer Suisse. Our member Mr. Gottfried J. Keller entertained us with a spirited talk on *Printing Ink, Newspapers, Journalists and All That*. A journalist himself, he led us behind the scenes in the production of the great English dailies, laid bare the trenchant personal influences, the blatant appeal to the mass instincts, pointed out the difference between English and Swiss journalism, and was generally most informative.

October 21st at Swiss House. An *Account of the Auslandschweizertag at Montreux*, Sept. 12th and 13th, 1936, was given by the president, who had attended the meeting as representative of the Swiss in Great Britain. He impressed the audience with the inspiration he was able to gather from the speeches of the various delegates,

and the highly interesting accounts of the working conditions in the various Swiss colonies in Belgium, Italy, France and Germany, a specially tragic contribution being the one from Barcelona. The president was impressed also by the great warmth, sympathy and cooperation contained in the speeches of the Heads of Government Departments, and in particular in that of Mr. Motta himself, who is our best friend at home. In short, it appeared to him evident that these annual functions are rapidly becoming the most important cornerstone in the edifice of the Auslandschweizerwerk.

November 20th at Foyer Suisse. Dr. Eric Kessler, our member and Correspondent of the N. Z. Z., opened a discussion on *Topical Swiss Questions* which was eagerly taken up by the assembly and became soon general. Perhaps the point of greatest importance in Dr. Kessler's exposé were his suggestions for a more active and effective spiritual propaganda for Switzerland in England and, particularly, his idea to re-animate the *Anglo-Swiss Association* which had been in existence at one time. This suggestion is now being followed up and we trust will bear fruit in its time.

A *Special Meeting* was held by the Group on April 3rd at Swiss House, to receive the visit of the Central President of the N.S.H., Dr. H. P. Zschokke from Basle. His treatment of the subject *Situation Politique et Economique de la Suisse* was most illuminating and held the attention of the meeting until a late hour. The freedom and force of his delivery, the ever ready fountain of his practical knowledge, the humour of his outlook as well as his width of vision endeared our Central President to us as nothing else could have done.

When you cast your eye over this list of pronouncements you will agree with me that their diversity of subject, their expert and authentic information and their general high level was more than pure enjoyment for us. This part of our activity is worth cultivating not only for its own sake, as it has always been the cachet of the N.S.H., but I am proud to state that in this direction we have surely made progress this last year, being particularly fortunate in the choice of our lecturers. I know for a fact that a proportion of our new members joined the Group directly after listening to one of the lectures or discussions.

As is our custom now, we have offered the Colony again two film shows, one in February and the other in November, and both of them have fulfilled their object in bringing together large numbers of Swiss with the friends and families to enjoy *A Travers La Suisse*. The English attendances at these shows become constantly more numerous and appreciative. In the course of the year, I have had the honour to represent the Group at various dinners given by the other Swiss Societies, at some of which (Unione Ticinese London and Grutliverein Manchester) I was given the opportunity to talk about the Auslandschweizerwerk. A similar opportunity, and one which I treasure very highly, exists in my association with the Rotary Club of London, where I have frequently been asked to speak on Switzerland, The Swiss Abroad or The Swiss in England. I recommend you to undertake a similar campaign wherever opportunity offers among your own circle of friends, as you may feel assured of keen interest and lively sympathy of our English friends for this most interesting subject.

We have taken part also at the Fête Suisse at Central Hall, Westminster, in June last. The Secretariat at Berne again sent us by Swissair a large consignment of mountain Gentians to be distributed as a gift at the Fête, regretting the fact that the late spring of this last year had made the gathering of Alpenrosen impossible. We also participated in the *Sport Suisse* in the same way as hitherto. I have found that this activity outside our immediate Group radius always brings us new friends and patrons, and it is a particularly valuable contribution towards the general cohesion of our Colony in London. A new and very pleasant task has been to get in touch with the two new Swiss colonies in *Dumferline* and *Balloch* in Scotland, to initiate a close intercourse with our Group from the very outset. Their head, Mr. E. Hofstetter, the Consular Agent in Scotland, has received these suggestions with the readiest sympathy, so that we may look forward to an active development of this new association.

On the administrative side of the year's work, there is nothing much to be said; it is being done thoroughly and conscientiously. The financial statement will have shown you another turning point in our history:—we have lived within our income. The fact that the annual contributions come in so steadily and that only eight are outstanding for the year 1936 is an achievement in which there is clearly visible the constant vigilance of Mrs. A. C. Muller, the "honorary secretary to the honorary treasurer."

We started the period under review with a membership of 131: we have gained 13 new mem-

bers, but have lost one (Mr. A. Baume) through death and six through repatriation, so that the present roll call stands at 137.

We have sold 186 copies of "*Mon Pays*," and about 600 Calendars to date. The demand for the latter is constantly growing; their importation and distribution must in future be simplified into one single transaction of a sufficient number to satisfy all demands and we must allot agreed quantities to club secretaries, who will be made responsible for distribution and payments.

We also have again dispatched Christmas Cards to all Groups outside Switzerland — this year in the shape of a selection of Pro Juventute issues — and by the replies received (mostly also in Pro Juventute Cards) these annual greetings seem to be much appreciated.

It is my privilege now to express our thanks publicly to all those who have, in the course of 1936, assisted us actively in one way or another. In the first line stands our beloved Minister, Dr. Charles R. Paravicini, together with his staff at the Legation. Twice a year at least, at the film shows, the Minister attends our meetings and addresses the audience for the N.S.H., and we are deeply grateful to him for this consideration on our behalf. At quite a number of our monthly meetings he has been represented by one or other of his colleagues at the Legation and, in this connection, we would particularly remember the splendid speech of Dr. Ch. de Jenner at our Anniversary in May. The good relations between our Sister Societies and ourselves have been untroubled and in fact intensified, but I would again urge them to honour the old agreement to send their appointed delegates to our monthly meetings regularly in recognition of the truth UN POUR TOUS, TOUS POUR UN.

I am pleased to express, on behalf of the Group, our special thanks and admiration for an outstanding piece of good work to Mr. A. R. Stauffer, the Editor of the *Swiss Observer* who undertook a collection in favour of the Swiss damaged in the Spanish revolution and who made an astonishing success of this work of charity. We are indeed proud of our member Mr. Stauffer. We are grateful also to the Central President, Dr. Zschokke, to Drs. Veillard, Behrens and the other lecturers who have contributed so much to the success of our session. Naturally we must not forget our indefatigable two secretaries, Mr. C. Campart and Madame A. C. Muller, both of whom do very much more work for the Group than we imagine, and for whom no task connected with the Auslandschweizerwerk is too much trouble. We thank Mr. Hausermann, the retiring council member, for his many years of co-operation, and we thank the management of the Foyer Suisse for their kindly and tasteful care of our physical needs.

It is my pleasant duty also to refer briefly to the relations between ourselves and the Secretariat in Berne, with whom we are in constant touch. I have made a point of visiting Berne at least once per annum and these contacts have become very dear to me. You know, of course, that without the help of the Secretariat it would be quite impossible for us to attempt to show Swiss films in London, while most of our other activities could only be of local importance. We in London do not make much use of the newspaper service of the Secretariat, who will supply at cost price and often gratuitously any Swiss newspaper.

I am grieved to hear that the official N.S.H. organ, the *Echo Suisse*, is in danger of becoming extinct for financial reasons. This bi-monthly journal is one of the finest publications I know, presenting an enormous fund of specialised knowledge of the Swiss Abroad and their achievements, profusely illustrated, side by side with the most useful information on the important phases of Swiss political and economic life. I feel sure that you all join me in my sincere hope that ways and means may be found to preserve the life of this publication.

You must never forget that the only voice we Swiss Abroad have at home is the Secretariat. In the Houses of Parliament, in the Press, at the monthly meetings of the Groups, by means of the Swiss Rotary Clubs and in every other way possible, the Secretariat informs the Swiss public of the activity, the well-being, the power and the value of the Swiss colonies abroad, and stimulates the national fight against the progressive loss of this vital Tenth of the population. Whatever we Groups abroad do or leave undone, we earn approval or blame at home, but it is the highlights of our activity, actions such as the participation in the national loans, the collection for the Swiss in Spain, the cultural propaganda we are enabled to make here, etc., which provide the proof that we are still Swiss and intend to remain Swiss.

It behoves us therefore to study carefully the programme of the Secretariat, to assist the organisation wherever we can, financially if necessary and if possible, and to co-ordinate our activity without necessarily losing our identity. Dr. H. P. Zschokke has stated in his annual report of this year that the main reason for the

foundation of the N.S.H. in 1914 was the fear that the great catastrophe in Europe might find Switzerland spiritually unprepared for the coming trials. This fear was the main spring in the rapid growth of the Society, and it is naturally in times of political danger that our work is most appreciated. We are then most susceptible to the dictate **UNITY IS FORCE**.

But we must not leave the growth of our Group to chance alone. I would like to see much greater propaganda made for our Group here and for the N.S.H. generally. If we each made sure of introducing at least one new member each session and saw to it that these new members regularly attended the monthly meetings, I believe this would be the beginning of a large influx of new blood, particularly younger men with new ideas and different conceptions. We want a leaven of the "post-war" generation, of youth with all its fiery impatience and eagerness to tell us how they look at the world and its problems. We shall be criticised and we shall be the better for it. We are perhaps apt to think that we are the only guardians of the jewel of patriotism, and we should at least be put right on that particular point.

In conclusion, may I remind you that Switzerland looks to us to represent her with dignity in this country, to give an example in citizenship, rectitude and charity and to strengthen the bonds of friendship which have existed between the two nations for centuries and which have been founded on mutual respect and admiration. The greatest friend we Swiss Abroad have stands at the head of our nation again this year and this fact should be another incentive to us to renew and edouble our efforts to advance with all our power the cause of the Swiss Abroad and that of our Homeland, **SWITZERLAND**.

#### THE STOCK EXCHANGE OF ZURICH.

(By **Leu & Co.'s Bank Limited, Zurich**).

Zurich, January 12th, 1937.

During the month of December and in the first part of January the stock exchange developed in a very promising way. In spite of the civil-war in Spain, which often enough gave reason to serious anxiety for European peace, or labour-troubles in a number of countries, prices were rising steeply on the whole line. Especially the last few sessions in the old year brought big turnovers and bullish markets. After the holidays the good trend kept on and new heights were reached with quite a number of shares. Presently the movement turned somewhat slower and a slight setback in various groups of stocks are noticed. Nevertheless the general atmosphere remained optimistic, especially since the foreign markets joined lately with considerable strength.

Greatly favoured were first of all those shares that are paying dividends, namely bank- and insurance stocks. Among the trust companies, **Electrobank** advanced from 540 to over 600. **Electrowerte** improved from about 240 to 270. **Transportwerte** from 210 to 240. **Elektrizitäts- und Verkehrsgesellschaft** from 210 to 250, etc. A considerable impetus to the Swiss markets proved to be first the fact that the Swiss-Italian clearing system is functioning extremely well and secondly that the Argentine Government revaluated the **Peso** by several percents. Under these circumstances it is comprehensible that stocks like **Motor-Columbus** showed a very strong and active market. The gains amount to about 60 Fr. while the present price is approximately 325 Fr. **Italo-Suisse** improved from 155 to 178. **Indelec** from 425 to 490, **Saeg A** from 59 to 86½ etc. Similarly looked for were **Chade** and **Italo-Argentina** that rose from 1340 to over 1660 resp. from 192½ to over 250. Although this firm position could not be maintained wholly, on account of a slightly weaker **Peso**, their quotations read still well above beginning prices. Owing to increased dividends, bonus distributions and interim-dividends within the **Royal Dutch** concern, same encountered great interest and rose to over 1000 Fr. Almost spectacular advances viewed the majority of Swiss industrials, amongst which **Aluminium** gained in one session almost 150 Fr. A short table of a number of stocks will illustrate the situation best:

	1st Dec. 1936	31st Dec. 1936	12th Jan. 1937
Aluminium	2,455	2,545	2,750
Bally	1,210	1,260	1,260
Brown Boveri	168	222	245
Masch. fabr. Oerlikon	465	480	520
Stahlwerke Fischer	465	500	566
Lonza	106	119	127
Stickereien	192	235	290
Sulzer	665	710	775

Almost as an exception brewery shares were depressed on fears of increased taxation. On the whole the bonds were very well disposed too. The great liquidity of the capital market created a big demand in practically all fields that could be satisfied only by rising prices. Swiss Governmental and Federal Railways noticed further advances and 3½% loans are well above par. The time seems very close when the Government is able to convert higher yielding issues into such with lower interest rates. Similar conditions prevail for cantonal and municipal bonds.

Among foreign bonds the French ones were uncertain, while the Italian ones showed improvement. German bonds do not find any interest and vary slightly.

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(Mary E. Brandwood.)

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#### FORTHCOMING EVENTS.

Tuesday, January 26th — Swiss Mercantile College — Students' Dance at the Royal Hotel, Russell Square, W.

Tuesday, February 2nd — City Swiss Club — Monthly Meeting (preceded by dinner 7.15 sharp) at Pagan's Restaurant, Great Portland Street, W.

## CITY SWISS CLUB.

Messieurs les membres sont avisés que

### L'ASSEMBLEE MENSUELLE

aurailieu mardi 2 Février au Restaurant PAGANI, 42, Great Portland Street, W.1. et sera précédée d'un souper à 7h. 15 précises (prix 5/-).

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### SCHWEIZERKIRCHE

(Deutschsprachige Gemeinde).

St. Anne's Church, 9, Gresham Street, E.C.2.

(near General Post Office.)

Sonntag, den 24. Januar 1937.

11 Uhr morgens, Gottesdienst und Sonntagsschule.

7 Uhr abends, Gottesdienst.

8 Uhr, Chorprobe.

#### BESTATTUNG.

Am 21. Januar wurde beerdigt: Jacques Schmid von Glarus; geb. am 10. 1. 1852 — gest. am 15. 1. 1937.

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