

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: - (1941)

Heft: 992

Rubrik: Swiss Mercantile Society

Nutzungsbedingungen

Die ETH-Bibliothek ist die Anbieterin der digitalisierten Zeitschriften auf E-Periodica. Sie besitzt keine Urheberrechte an den Zeitschriften und ist nicht verantwortlich für deren Inhalte. Die Rechte liegen in der Regel bei den Herausgebern beziehungsweise den externen Rechteinhabern. Das Veröffentlichen von Bildern in Print- und Online-Publikationen sowie auf Social Media-Kanälen oder Webseiten ist nur mit vorheriger Genehmigung der Rechteinhaber erlaubt. [Mehr erfahren](#)

Conditions d'utilisation

L'ETH Library est le fournisseur des revues numérisées. Elle ne détient aucun droit d'auteur sur les revues et n'est pas responsable de leur contenu. En règle générale, les droits sont détenus par les éditeurs ou les détenteurs de droits externes. La reproduction d'images dans des publications imprimées ou en ligne ainsi que sur des canaux de médias sociaux ou des sites web n'est autorisée qu'avec l'accord préalable des détenteurs des droits. [En savoir plus](#)

Terms of use

The ETH Library is the provider of the digitised journals. It does not own any copyrights to the journals and is not responsible for their content. The rights usually lie with the publishers or the external rights holders. Publishing images in print and online publications, as well as on social media channels or websites, is only permitted with the prior consent of the rights holders. [Find out more](#)

Download PDF: 05.04.2026

ETH-Bibliothek Zürich, E-Periodica, <https://www.e-periodica.ch>

Rembrandt, Rodin, Verdi, Schubert, Chopin, they are not owned by anyone nation, they are the property and the glory of all men.

Take technical achievements, radio, cinema, lighting, heating, building, production methods — take anything you like, they are not the work of any one nation and any one State, they are as much the result of international co-operation as of the efforts of individual persons. May I remind you of the illustration Mr. Streit has given in his book: "Anyone can make himself a megaphone and extend his voice a little. But to make a telephone that will extend his voice to anywhere, one needs generations of scientists and inventors of many nations. One needs to comb the world to get all the little things required to make a telephone. And if a man could find them all in his backyard and invent the whole thing himself — to use it he would need another man and to make the most of it, he would need all mankind." Similar pictures could be drawn on subjects such as finance, commerce and the press.

This entrenched and barricaded nationalism makes no longer sense in terms of either culture, economics or communications. Partly it is the result of loose feeling and vague emotions. I was caught in this trap myself the other day. I was reading through a recent number of "The Listener," when I came across the report of a speech made by the First Lord of the Admiralty entitled: "Each for all and all for each." I must confess my first reaction was: How dare he pinch our national slogan, and then I realised, of course, that such manifestations of the moral sense must not and cannot be the property of one group only, but are part of the common heritage of mankind as a whole.

Chiefly, however, modern nationalism is the result of the materialistic approach to any problem of this age; where an expression like "sovereign rights" has lost its creative connotation and become a politely legal phrase for anarchy between the States, where the political relationship between groups and races is on the level of a lawless wilderness and where we cling desperately to outworn institutions — for fear that we might lose — something. What can we lose by establishing some sort of law and order between peoples? What in terms of human values did we lose in Switzerland by subordinating our States to the common desire to create a new world for us? We had but gain from it!

And so it is with the world to-day. In Europe, Asia, Africa, in the Americas there is a growing body of public opinion which is fed up with all the waste of labour and material, with the futility of economic nationalism. It recognises the fact that the interdependence of the world to-day must inevitably lead in time to some form of world community. World Order is in the air to-day. What form or forms it will take in the end no man can say nor will it help to be dogmatic on some rigid scheme. It's not for us to shape the fruit that's carried in the womb of time. But we must take care and not let the fear and apprehension of possible economic consequences frighten us away from making the attempt. Whatever difficulties may arise, the human mind will find a way to cope with them; the chief thing is *to do it*, and leave the worry about problems to be solved till later. The world needs the conviction that a new order compatible with national pride and honour can be built.

But most of all it needs the *courage* to take the decisive step.

And so it seems that the time has come when we Swiss abroad should conceive it as our duty to support that conviction and to strengthen that courage. We, who had the temerity to attempt it; We, who have gained that greater strength and greater freedom; We, who like no other nation are of different race and creed and tongue and yet speak the same language at heart; We can help the world to reach that common goal if we but told every man, woman and child we meet:

It has been done
it is done now
it can be done again.

SWISS MERCANTILE SOCIETY.

The meetings of the Society were held regularly during the summer months and, generally speaking, were well attended.

At the August meeting, the members, on the proposition of the Council, unanimously decided to elect Mr. Alfred Gubser an Honorary Member of the S.M.S. Mr. Gubser, on the occasion of the recent Delegates' Meeting of the S.K.V. at Berne, relinquished his office of President of the Central Committee. For nine years he guided the destinies of the association and, it will be remembered, it was he who headed the delegation from Switzerland when the S.M.S. celebrated its 50th anniversary in 1938. The honour bestowed on Mr. Gubser was in recognition of his outstanding services rendered to the S.K.V. as a whole, as well as to the London Section, and it was decided that he be informed of the election in a suitably worded telegram.

Mr. W. Meier, Vice-President, gave some interesting data regarding an English Centre in Switzerland, formed under the auspices of the S.K.V. in conjunction with the Bundesamt für Industrie, Gewerbe und Arbeit. The course, formed on the lines of the S.M.S. College in London, is being held at Frohburg (Solothurn). The Centre was opened on August 4th and we understand that the first course of 4 months' duration is being attended by 30 students. It is a full-time course, with all the students in residence, and the Head of the Institute is Mr. R. Haas-Hämig.

The Society's activities during the coming winter were then discussed at length. In view of the black-out and the attendant difficulties in travelling, it was decided to revert to the practice adopted during the last two winters, i.e., to hold the meetings on the second Saturday of the month. The programme will include lectures, film shows, a social function, etc., which will, however, be decided on from month to month according to altering circumstances. There will also be opportunities for recreations such as philately, table-tennis, darts, cards, etc.

At the meeting on September 13th, Dr. E. M. Bircher addressed the members. As the lecture is published in extenso in this issue, suffice it to say that all present spent a most interesting and instructive afternoon at Swiss House. A very animated discussion followed Dr. Bircher's address and the hope was expressed that he would come along on some future occasion to give another of his interesting talks.

The next Monthly Meeting will be held at Swiss House on Saturday, October 11th, at 2.30 p.m. *WB.*