

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: 993

Rubrik: From our Letter-Box

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: 16.01.2026

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

tions dealing with the care of humanity essential during a war.

The speaker, on resuming his seat received a long and sincere ovation. His excellent *exposé* rendered without reverting to one single note was listened to with the greatest attention, he was in fact one of the best lecturers who have ever addressed the members of the City Swiss Club.

Monsieur de Jenner, Counsellor of Legation, thanked the lecturer on behalf of the company for the brilliant way in which he accomplished his task.

The President concurred with the last speakers allusions and he too thanked Mr. Lawrence Howard for his most enjoyable address.

And so ended the second Luncheon Party of the City Swiss Club held this year at the Dorchester, which will leave behind nothing but pleasant memories.

ST.

FROM OUR LETTER-BOX.

Our last issue (September 26th) was a "best seller." We have received many expressions of opinion. One correspondent says that we have rightly lifted the veil from the state of affairs imposed on our country and stimulated by the necessity of keeping the wolf from the door; unfortunately we cannot gratify his wish of substantiating some of the statements brought forward in the article entitled the "Beleaguered Country." The opening lines misrepresenting such established data as to size and population of our country seem to cast justified suspicion on the veracity of the whole article. Another reader states that it is high time that we should realise the exorbitant premium extracted from Switzerland to insure our neutrality. A third one strongly objects that we should reprint such an "instructive survey" containing an accumulation of inaccurate statements. We hold no brief for the author and we should certainly love to refute some of his offensive assertions if reliable information were at our disposal. It has always been the policy of the S.O. to reprint outstanding articles from our English contemporaries and so enlighten our readers "how others see us." We have never adopted the tactics of the ostrich of burying our head in the sands when an attack is launched.

* * *

With many thanks we acknowledge contributions from the following: J. R. Oderbolz, O. Worth, J. Stettler, W. Schedler, J. Zimmermann, H. Schenkel, E. P. Dick, C. J. Bernheim, L. Guggenheim, F. Wechsler, W. Flory, A. Meschini, Ch. Chapuis, E. Widmer, P. W. Troxler, F. Beyli.

* * *

"The Swiss Observer,"

23, Leonard Street, London, E.C.2.

9th October, 1941.

Dear Mr. Böhringer,

Referring to the reprint from the "Sphere" of September 6th in the "Swiss Observer" of September 26th of the article headed "The Beleaguered Country," I have pleasure in sending you herewith copy of a letter I am addressing to-day to the Editor of the "Sphere." I would be glad if you could find space for same in the columns of your valued "Observer."

Yours sincerely,

G. Wüthrich.

Dear Sir,

We read the article in the issue of the "Sphere" of September 6th: "The Beleaguered Country," with very great interest. The writer of same has collected a lot of information about Switzerland and its position since the outbreak of the war, particularly since the collapse of France, but many of the facts and figures have been mis-stated or wrongly interpreted. An endeavour to correct it in every particular would lead too far, and we propose therefore to deal exclusively with what directly interests us as the representatives of a Swiss Electrical Engineering and Contracting concern.

Besides other things, the article states:

" . . . and the Oerlikon Corporation in Zurich are going full steam, but they are working exclusively for Germany. . . . the Oerlikon make arms, above all anti-tank and anti-aircraft guns — defensive weapons whose quality is said to be unsurpassed anywhere."

We are here only concerned with the "Oerlikon Corporation," in other words the "Maschinenfabrik Oerlikon" registered also as "Ateliers de Construction Oerlikon."

Oerlikon is a village — now a suburb of the City of Zurich — from which the Oerlikon Company derives the name. The Company was founded in 1876 and in the early years largely manufactured Machine Tools, promptly followed by Electrical Machinery and Apparatus, quickly however giving the electrical lines more attention than that of manufacturing Machine Tools, so much so that the latter section separated from the Electrical Department.

Competition, particularly German competition, in the manufacture and selling of Machine Tools, induced our principals, the Ateliers de Construction Oerlikon, in 1905/6 to dispense with this section to a new concern the "Schweizerische Werkzeugmaschinenfabrik Oerlikon," nowadays also known as the "S. A. de Machine Outils Oerlikon."

The fact that both concerns are situated in Oerlikon occasionally leads to confusion between the two:

- 1) We affirm most categorically that the companies have absolutely nothing in common.
- 2) The statement that the Oerlikon Company are working exclusively for Germany is quite incorrect. Never during its long history has the Oerlikon Company been able to export any of its products, namely: Electrical Machinery and Apparatus worth mentioning to Germany. The powerful Tariff and the State sheltered German Electrical industry saw to this, and all your readers, in the least acquainted with international trading conditions, will readily appreciate this.
- 3) The Ateliers de Construction Oerlikon does not make anti-tank and anti-aircraft guns as mentioned in your article.

May we ask you to be good enough to publish these disclaimers in your valued columns.

Thanking you in anticipation.

We are, dear Sir,

Yours faithfully,

OERLIKON LTD.,
General Manager and Chief Engineer,

G. Wüthrich.