

To our readers

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neutrality — as expressed by 'Bruder Claus' even before Marignano, and even more purified, as it may be in future, ranks, surely, highest, amongst any maxims of States so far existing in history.

To those who criticise this status, we may humbly before the Almighty, proudly in the face of mankind, put this question: How many lives has your nation's attitude saved or benefited? Switzerland's barely more than four million inhabitants in sheltering the International Red Cross and through their own humanitarian activities have surely benefited *several* times their number. Of these other countries, which may say the same? Yes, there is surely one: Great Britain. By the sacrifice of her sons, the splendid spirit of her people and her constant striving for liberty for all, she has saved far more souls from moral annihilation than the sheer number of the population of the United Kingdom. Everlasting gratitude is due to her. Are there other countries? There may surely be. But those who have responded most to highest moral standards appear also nearest to understand our point of view.

The Swiss of Great Britain, who are grateful to their country of residence, may well be proud too of their country of origin. As to the London branch of the 'Nouvelle Société Helvétique,' its members also will follow the glorious motto of the Association: *Pro Helvetica securitate ac dignitate.*"

When the storm of acclamation which followed this magnificently rendered address had died down, there was yet another treat in store for the audience. Every member, and especially every lady member of the N.S.H., was eager to listen to an address by the principal guest, Professor William Rappard, who volunteered to express the thanks of the guests. He elected to talk about the history of the Helvetic Society in Switzerland, of the original stages going back to the 18th century, when its members had a great deal to do with the shaping of the country's destiny, of the time when the old Helvetic Society died an undeserved death on account of the absence of the young people, and of its being reformed, though not without encountering similar difficulties for the same reason. When, just before the first world war, the same necessity for closer patriotic co-operation became again urgent, the daughter of the old Society, under the name of the Nouvelle Société Helvétique, was born and has held its important position to the present day. When he went on to compare, in a brilliant causerie interwoven with many an amusing anecdote, the political conditions of 27 years ago with the state of affairs to-day, he held the audience spell-bound for the better part of half an hour. Whilst he jokingly mentioned that it was considered more respectable to be neutral in 1918 than to-day, he ventured to say that during this last war Switzerland had the salvation of many thousands of human lives to her credit, giving the audience sound advice with the words: "Don't be ashamed of your Swiss neutrality."

Prolonged applause greeted this address. Hardly at any time before has a visitor brought home to the Colony Switzerland's spirit in a more inspiring and convincing way than this great warrior on the battlefield of politics and economics.

The Treasurer's Annual Report, presented by Mr. Renz in an exemplary manner, and the Auditor's Report voiced by Mr. Röthlisberger, were heard and ac-

cepted. The usual votes of thanks were proposed and seconded.

The resignation of the Councillors and Auditors followed. Under the able leadership of Col. Anton Bon, as President pro. tem, the routine business was proceeded with on the usual lines. Col. Bon took the opportunity whilst in the interim chair to express his personal opinion that Mr. Suter should be encouraged to stand for re-election for the whole term of 1946 instead of for six months only, in order to allow sufficient time to choose the future President of the Society. It would appear that this view was shared by the majority. The newly elected Council will no doubt bear this in mind when confirming Mr. Suter's appointment for the chair for the current year.

At about 5 p.m. this most interesting meeting came to its end. The assembly once more settled down in groups in the ballroom where tea was served. Mr. Suter then announced the result of the election, appointing the following members to the Council for 1946: Mrs. O. M. Bolla, Messrs. Werner Gamper, Wm. Renz, M. Röthlisberger, W. Schedler, Wm. B. Sigerist, A. Fred. Suter, W. C. Weilenmann. As Auditors, Mr. Röthlisberger and Mr. Weber were re-elected.

A homely and animated atmosphere prevailed for the rest of the afternoon. Mlle. Margret Uden at the piano delighted the party with brilliantly played selections from Schubert and Chopin. It is a pleasure to follow from year to year the progress of this young and promising artist. The Swiss Male Choir, conducted by Mr. E. P. Dick, paid our Society the compliment of turning out in full strength. Nothing is more refreshing than to listen occasionally to the old Swiss folk songs, of which we all keep an echo in our hearts; nothing seems more Swiss to me than to see these sons of the mountains grouped around their leader. Our thanks go to all the artists for their fine performance.

By about 6 p.m. — and all too soon — with the tune of the "Brienzerburli" still ringing in the ears, everyone brushed gaily through the swing doors out into the dark, to take up his or her stand in one of those "fascinating" London queues.

W.B.S.

SWISS BANK CORPORATION.

The Swiss Bank Corporation announce that the accounts for the year 1945 show net profits of S.Frs. 10,627,647 including the carry-forward from the previous year, against S.Frs. 10,510,496 for 1944. The total assets at the end of 1945 amounted to S.Frs. 1,826,427,161 against S.Frs. 1,540,016,463. At the General Meeting, which is to be held in Basle on the 1st of March, 1946, a dividend of 4% will be proposed as for the previous year. The carry-forward will amount to S.Frs. 4,227,647 against S.Frs. 4,110,496 for the previous year.

TO OUR READERS.

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