

**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:** - (1946)

**Heft:** 1048

  

**Artikel:** Reception and dinner offered to the membres of the Swiss Book Exhibition and members of the Swiss International Football Team by the City Swiss Club

**Autor:** [s.n.]

**DOI:** <https://doi.org/10.5169/seals-689210>

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# RECEPTION AND DINNER OFFERED TO THE MEMBERS OF THE SWISS BOOK EXHIBITION AND MEMBERS OF THE SWISS INTERNATIONAL FOOTBALL TEAM BY THE CITY SWISS CLUB AT THE DORCHESTER HOTEL, PARK LANE, W.1.

Faithful to its traditions to offer hospitality to distinguished visitors, whenever an opportunity presents itself, the City Swiss Club entertained, on Sunday, May 12th, 1946, members of the Swiss Book Exhibition, as well as the officials and the team of the Swiss Footballers at present in this country.

In spite of the fact that this function took place on a Sunday, over 120 members and guests attended this gathering.

The dinner was preceded by a cocktail party, and the animation which soon became prevalent proved that everyone was getting ready for all the good things which were to follow.

Towards the end of the dinner, Mr. A. Bon, the President of the City Swiss Club, proposed the toasts to H.M. the King and to Switzerland.

Before delivering his Presidential address, Mr. Bon heartily welcomed the numerous guests present, which included the following:

Monsieur Paul Ruegger, the Swiss Minister.

*Representatives of the Swiss Book Exhibition:* Professor Faesi, Dr. Girsberger, Director Hess, Dr. M. Hurlimann, Mr. Luthi.

*Official Delegation of the Swiss Football Association:* Mr. J. Krebs, Dr. R. Stadler, Dr. R. Zumbühl, Mr. P. Ruoff, Mr. W. Bögli, Mr. F. Greiner, Mr. H. Walker, Mr. H. Sutter, Mr. G. Tschirren, Dr. H. Käser, Mr. K. Rappan, Mr. C. Dumont, Dr. G. Preiss, Mr. M. Brunner, Mr. G. Wiederkehr.

Mr. S. F. Rous, C.B.E., President of the English Football Association.

*Swiss Team:* Messrs. Aeby, Georges; Amado, Lauro; Andreoli, Franco; Ballabio, Erwin; Bickel, Alfred; Rocquert, Roger; Courtat, Joseph; Fatton, Jaques; Fink, Walter; Friedlander, Hans; Gyger, Rudolf; Maillard, René; Neury, André; Rickenbach, Franz; Ruesch, Tony; Springer, Hermann; Steffen, Willi.

The President mentioned that it might seem a strange mixture to unite at the same table representatives of Swiss intellectual life and sportsmen of repute, but circumstances did not permit arranging separate gatherings, and that he felt sure that an assembly of such extremes was not out of place.

"The City Swiss Club," he said, "is greatly honoured to have you in our midst, and we wish you in your undertakings good luck and success."

"Before I proceed any further, I have the very sad duty to inform the members of the City Swiss Club that our *membre de passage*, Monsieur William Moretti, Counsellor of Legation, has tragically lost his life, together with his wife and son, in consequence of a motor car accident, which occurred in Switzerland, on the occasion of a short holiday."

Mr. Bon then gave a short *resumé* of the activities of the deceased whilst in London, relating how his tact and his hard work had won him the admiration of all those who came in touch with him.

A silent tribute was then paid to this distinguished member of the City Swiss Club.

The President thanked the members of the Swiss Book Exhibition present, for the splendid services they had rendered in bringing the works of Swiss publishers to the knowledge of English people, thus creating a useful link in the sphere of literature and art between the two countries.

Mr. Bon continued in "Schwyzerduetsch," addressing the guests belonging to the Football fraternity. "Although we are just a little disappointed at the result," he said, "we are proud at the way you have conducted yourselves during this most strenuous match. Your sportsman-like behaviour has been commented upon by the entire English Press, and in spite of a reverse, we are proud of you."

He thanked Mr. Rous, the President of the English Football Association, for his endeavours in making this sporting event possible, no easy task under post-war conditions. Mr. Bon also expressed his pleasure in welcoming our member, Mr. F. M. Gamper, who was an old Swiss "International" some thirty years ago.

In conclusion, Mr. Bon, who had just returned from a holiday in Switzerland, related some of his experiences.

He mentioned that he was just a little disappointed in finding that our people at home did not fully appreciate their good fortune in having escaped the horrors and privations of countries which were involved in war, and this lack of gratitude cast a damper on otherwise a very happy *séjour* in the old country.

Dr. Hurlimann, connected with the "Atlantis Editions," then addressed the company on behalf of the members of the Swiss Book Exhibition present, both in English and "Schwyzerduetsch."

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He said :

" I am aware that the popularity of our book exhibition can, of course, not compete with the sporting event of yesterday, an event which was able to put our country in the lime light even of this colossal city of London. Our book exhibition is indeed a much quieter event, but I trust it will prove not less valuable in its way. Our visitors are not coming in big crowds as they were coming yesterday; they are just slowly trickling in, one by one, but every one with his own particular interest and most of them staying quite a long time and coming again. It is really heartening to watch our visitors. Some of them examine with intense interest the show cases with the precious old books, books which left Switzerland for the first time for this exhibition, and it is equally heartening to see them handle with care — and I dare say with delight — our contemporary books which lie open for examination to everybody.

I have been asked to say here a few words about the peculiarities of publishing in Switzerland.

One of the main problems, as you know, is the problem or rather the fact (for us it is no problem, just a fact we wouldn't miss) of our different languages. Most other nations have their language of their own, which is considered one of their national characteristics. In Switzerland, however, we partake in three great language communities of Central and Western Europe, German, French and Italian. We have, of course, our dialects and our fourth language, the Romantch, and we have our poets, like Tavel, Lienert and Reinhardt, who wrote for the very small public who can read their spoken language, but as a general rule we are fortunate to use for writing and publishing one of the great world languages. This is indeed a great advantage for our writers as well as for our reading public, for it saved us, or saved us, from provincialism and it compelled our poets, our writers and scholars, to compete with a much wider community than their own country can offer them. As long as liberal views on cultural relations were universally accepted, and as long as politics did not interfere with free expression of thought, we scarcely cared for having any publishing activity of our own in Switzerland. We just published German, French and Italian books. Many of our publishing firms had a provincial character only. It was difficult to get sufficient sale for a book if it was started from Switzerland only — because a publication coming from Paris, Leipzig or Berlin seemed to be more important even to the Swiss themselves. Our most prominent writers of the 19th century gave their manuscripts to foreign publishers, and some Swiss publishers them-

selves went abroad and found only in Germany, France and Italy that wider possibility of action that their own country could not afford them.

The situation became different, however, when cultural life as a whole and publishing in particular came in some countries under the direct influence of the state as a means of its politics. Then it became necessary for us to rely on our own resources in every respect — also in publishing.

This brings me to the second point of these few remarks, and that is the overwhelming fact of our *smallness*. The German speaking majority of Switzerland does not even reach three millions, and less than one million speak French. Now, for a book, the number of copies which you can sell, is of primary importance for the price of the book and for the possibility to print it at all, and it is evident that you cannot sell in a small country as many books as in a big country. That means that in spite of our present remarkable publishing activity, we have many books less for the choice of our public as long as there is not more import as well as export of books. That is why I would consider it a real misfortune if we would continue to depend solely on our own publications and if, on the other hand, our own publications would depend on the inland market only. We are looking forward to have again the possibility of a free flow of books from one country to another, and we are not afraid of this free competition. That is one of the reasons of our book exhibition.

If we speak of Switzerland, of the Swiss people, of Swiss books and things, I think we cannot do so without taking into account our unique form of national existence. In the shaping of the Swiss national, or rather federal, self-consciousness, books played their important part. Our chronicles of the 15th and 16th centuries endeavoured to commemorate the deeds of the Confederation. And later, in the 18th century, Johannes Müller of Schaffhausen wrote his epoch-making 'Geschichten Schweizerischer Eidenossenschaft,' the first modern national history of a European state and at the same time a great work of art and a creative contribution to our national idea. In the Swiss book exhibition you may also see a history of the Swiss Confederacy, written by Joseph Planta. This distinguished member of the well-known family of Graubünden, was chief librarian of the British Museum, and during the Congress of Vienna he was Private Secretary of the British Foreign Minister. But he also remained a faithful servant of his old fatherland and endeavoured to make its unique history known to the English speaking world.

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in the 16th and in the 18th centuries. In the 19th century they showed no such activity, it is true, but it is only fair to recognise that at that time they just did not have their proper chance, situated be-

Our political existence cannot be denied. Six hundred years of common history proved indeed to be stronger than the doctrine of race and blood and the magic of shere power. It is no more difficult to prove that we have a right to a cultural life and existence of our own. It has, indeed been severely contested to speak of a Swiss culture. But I think we need not worry about this controversy, because it seems to be rather a struggle about words. Anyhow, it can to-day no more be denied that since about ten years we clearly have a publishing activity in Switzerland of our own, and that this activity has played once more an important part in our resistance to foreign doctrines. But we may ask if this display is not only just a clever improvisation of enterprising people who saw their chance? I hope that a look at the historical section of the Swiss book exhibition may give the answer, namely, that Switzerland has an old tradition of her own in publishing. It is certainly more than a happy coincidence that the present flourishing of book production in Switzerland shows almost the same characteristics as the former golden ages of printing and publishing in Switzerland.

The Swiss predilection for compiling and collecting, for educating and reforming, for discussing and enlightening made the Swiss the ideal publishers

tween the growing and crushing big modern national machineries.

I hope our exhibition may show that the Swiss publishers of to-day are faithful again to our own centuries old mission of freedom, enlightenment, tolerance and mediation.

With particular pleasure I mention now a characteristic which turns up with surprising regularity when publishing in Switzerland had and has an opportunity to develop on its own lines. That is our friendship with England, and our admiration of the British nation and its great poets, philosophers and statesmen. In the age of the reformation, as well as in the age of enlightenment, the cultural relations between England and Switzerland were particularly strong in giving as well as in receiving what was to be expected, due to the geographical position. The historical section of our exhibition gives ample evidence for these relations, for there you can see English books printed in Basle, Zurich and Geneva, almost since the days when books were printed there at all, and you see some of these translations and other Swiss books which spread the knowledge of the great English writers over the Continent. We know that already in the 15th century, as early as 1482, if I am right, two Swiss bookmen brought their first printed books to England.

I must not remind you what the attitude of Great Britain and of this proud city of London in particular, meant to us in Switzerland during the last years of danger and trials. And I can only confirm that our affinity — and I may add our gratitude and admiration — is again truly reflected in our books. For never before have so many English authors been published in Switzerland, in German and in French translations and not a few also in English.

To conclude these few and superficial remarks you may expect me to say something of our present endeavours and about our hopes for the future. I think I can speak for all my colleagues, when I say that we Swiss, and we Swiss publishers in particular, are prepared to collaborate in the endeavours for a renaissance of humanity to the best of our possibilities. We hope that the free flow of books from one country to another may play an important part in the rebuilding of a new — and we may hope better — world which has to arise out of the present ruins. And we hope that our Swiss books will be able to play their part in these endeavours according to their own merits. We are very glad that our recent commercial agreement with Great Britain made it so much easier for our friends in this country to obtain Swiss books after we on our side had already taken great advantage of the fact that there were never any commercial restrictions to prevent the import of English books into Switzerland. The commercial importance of our book trade may seem negligible if you compare the figures with other branches of our national income and foreign trade, still are the most important messengers of thoughts but the books are not mere commercial goods, they and ideals."

Dr. Huerlimann's learned and interesting address received the acknowledgment it deserved.

Mr. J. Krebs, the President of the Swiss Football Association, was the next speaker. In eloquent French he paid a warm tribute to his colleagues of the Swiss



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Book Exhibition for their fine collection, shown at present in London, and said that they were happy, as representatives of Swiss Sport, to be in such good company.

"We owe a great debt," he continued, "to England, never before did we realise how much we owe them. The destruction of this ancient city so vividly brought before us, has been a great eye opener to us and at the same time a useful lesson."

Mr. Krebs also mentioned that the run of the match at Stamford Bridge had been a useful experience for the Swiss team; although they had not been successful, they need not be ashamed of their performance; they had put up a fine and sportsmanlike display. (Loud applause.)

The President of the Swiss Football Association said that this important sports event has naturally been followed with great interest at home, but its importance should not be exaggerated; whether winning or losing, the Swiss flag now, as before, will proudly fly, and the honour of our country will not have suffered one iota through losing a game of football.

As a vivid example of overstating the importance of an International Sports event, he mentioned that he had received this morning a telegram from Switzerland, in which the result was acknowledged, with the concluding phrase "Pleurons." "Surely, gentlemen," he said, "this is putting things rather out of place."

I fully agree with the speaker. I can hardly imagine that 4½ million Swiss burst into tears, when the result became known over the wire; it would have been a sorry sight, and would not have been a credit to our folks at home.

Mr. Krebs's address was loudly cheered.

The Swiss Minister, Monsieur Paul Ruegger, wound up the oratorical part of the function, in congratulating the President and the Committee of the City Swiss Club on having arranged this most successful gathering, and thus a pleasant evening spent amongst our compatriots from home came to an end.

ST.

### A SWISS VISIT TO BIRMINGHAM.

To promote closer relations between Swiss and English industrial circles, the "Tube Investments Ltd." a concern which exports nearly half of their entire output to Switzerland, invited Monsieur E. de Graffenried, Counsellor of Legation, Mr. A. J. Staehelin, representative of the O.S.E.C. in London, as well as a number of Swiss journalists to a visit to their works in Birmingham on May 14th.

In honour of the Swiss guests the Swiss flag was hoisted over the principal works buildings. During a luncheon, Mr. Wolf, Chairman of the Board, expressed his pleasure in welcoming the Swiss visitors, and during his address expressed the gratitude of the British people for the humanitarian work our country had rendered during the war, and hoped that the commercial relations between the two countries would become closer for the benefit of both parties concerned.

Monsieur de Graffenried replied in the name of the Swiss visitors, and expressed the admiration of the Swiss people for the enormous efforts the British Empire had made for the liberation of Europe.

The works, which employ altogether 20,000 workhands, were then inspected.

### PROFESSOR DR. ARNOLD LAETT'S ADDRESS TO THE SWISS CLUB, MANCHESTER, MIDLAND HOTEL, MAY 3rd, 1946.

Mr. F. Heinrich, Vice-President of the Swiss Club, occupying the chair, introduced our guest, expressing at the same time his regret at the enforced absence of Mr. A. F. Suter.

In opening his address to a very representative auditorium, Dr. Laett briefly referred to his activities during the war, to his first visit to Manchester 29 years ago when he was delegated to address Swiss audiences in the provinces. He mentioned names which our older members will recall, such as Hoegger, Merz, Zellwegger, and touched upon his final return to Switzerland in 1926. In 1939 the Manchester people had again the pleasure of hearing from him, since which year however, his short addresses in the services to the "Swiss Abroad" were the only contact which we enjoyed and which in the dark days did so much to put heart into us, to believe in the wise steps and firm attitude taken by the Swiss Government and in the final victory of Great Britain and her Allies.

The N.S.H. during the last war and since the cessation of hostilities is finding increasing support in many towns at home. Young people, Dr. Laett mentioned, are eagerly forming groups under very able guidance of outstanding men and the great hardship of Swiss returning from all over Europe, and those citizens staying bravely in the war-ravaged countries, are getting increased support from this Society. It has, for instance, been agreed that three-quarters of the collect of 1st August 1946 will be employed towards assisting the suffering Swiss abroad.

Pro Helvetia and the Auslandsforschung Institut are striving for improved relationship between the Swiss abroad and the Mother Country. The history of the Swiss living abroad and their achievements is being collected; issue of literature to them in, we hope in future, in our case, the English language, is another item in their programme, and any constructive suggestions which we can submit to these Societies which are, in fact, our representatives in Switzerland, will eventually prove of lasting benefit to all Swiss Colonies wherever they may be.

Dr. Laett told us of his radio experiences and of those of his colleague — Dr. Buechi, and then went on to describe the various factors which have helped Switzerland, in face of overwhelming difficulties, to come through what will no doubt prove the greatest crisis that ever faced our little country.

The preparedness of the Swiss Army was coupled with the names of Minger and Kobelt, the splendid spirit of the troops, the fact that over 800,000 men had gone through the mill, the wonderful leadership of General Guisan, and of the wages compensation agreement, which did so much to allay the fear of the families of our soldiers.

The preparedness on the economic side was also stressed and it was pointed out that even to-day food is still coming forward from the Reduit Nationale. Mention was made of Mr. Wahlen — a Swiss from Canada — who was asked to improve the grain production of Mr. Muckli — an organiser of outstanding ability in introducing a very sound rationing system, of the Swiss Merchant Navy, which owed so much to the considera-