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## MODERN SWITZERLAND.

In our issue of the 19th December 1952, we previewed the English version of a work published in Zurich, to which the translators have given the title "Switzerland-Life and activity".

We understand that this publication has had a considerable success. The President of Switzerland is quoted as having written: "This book is so comprehensive and informative that it should be read by everybody". It is certainly a most interesting and, attractive little volume.

The publishing of the English translation has now been taken over by George Allen and Unwin Ltd., and the book is on sale in this country at 15/- net. The text remains unchanged, except that the sequence of the chapters has been re-arranged. There are 165 illustrations and coloured plates, most pleasing and tasteful.

To the French and English versions of the original German text a Spanish edition has been added so that a world-wide circulation is ensured.

We can do no better than re-print our first review:

To the already extensive list of books on Switzerland, written or translated for the English-speaking public, a new publication has been added. Let us hasten to say that this is no unworthy addition.

The newcomer is a synposium to which a number of Swiss writers, mostly prominent professional men, have contributed, each being an authority on his particular subject. Originally written in German, the work was planned and compiled by Werner Reist, edited by Dr. E. Schürch and published by *Verlag Mensch und Arbeit, Zurich*, price Swiss francs 9.60 paper-bound or 12.60 cloth-bound. The German title is *Die Schweiz-Arbeit und Leben*, the French translation is entitled *La Suisse, sa vie et son effort* and the English version *SWITZERLAND, LIFE AND ACTIVITY*. It is with the latter that we are here concerned.

The purpose and scope of the book is to give an overall picture of modern Switzerland, its historical background, its economy, industry, and trade, the peculiarity of its system of government and its position in the international set-up. Much ground is covered, every branch of industry is studied, education and culture, traffic communications and catering, all these find a place in the general survey. There is a short article — too short — on the Swiss army by Dr. Kurz and one by René Bovey on the International Red Cross. Even the recipes for "Berner Rösti" and "Fondue" are included.

One quarter of the volume — it runs to 200 pages — is taken up by an admirable historical survey contributed by Dr. E. Schürch. It is one of the finest digests of Swiss history we have ever come across. Equally well-written and most interesting is Prof. A. Läts's study "Swiss Pioneers Abroad".

On the dust-cover appears the caption "What can the miracle of Switzerland mean to you?" This question Mr. Reist's team of experts attempts to answer. It does so with skill and competence and with a self-assurance which, without being aggressive or boastful, springs from a sober, national assessment of

the existing facts, and a clear insight into their significance and meaning.

The book is well printed, attractively bound and profusely illustrated. Some of the coloured plates are a delight to the eye. It is a fine production, exclusively Swiss, and affording evidence of the fact that the Swiss people can be their own and their best publicity agents.

J.J.F.S.

## HYMNE A LA TERRE.

PIERRE GIRAD.

*Terre de mon pays, nourrie par la lumière,  
sourdement travaillée par les quatre saisons,  
ô terre de la vigne, terre du blé, terre  
vivante comme un corps autour de nos maisons!*

*Tous les souffles du ciel, toutes les énergies,  
les rayons ténèbreux, les secrètes vertus,  
se mêlent dans ton sein pour fomenter la vie,  
qui montera plus tard le long des ceps feuillus.*

*Terre qui reprendras notre chair incertaine,  
nos désirs, nos regrets, nos pleurs et nos espoirs,  
pour que, du lac au mont, de la plaine à la plaine,  
la moisson du matin salue celle du soir.*

*Terre, nous sommes nés de ta force tranquille,  
un peu de ton destin séjourne en notre cœur,  
tes lois règlent nos lois jusqu'en l'ombre des villes,  
par la mort, par l'amour, par le temps et les fleurs.*

*O toi que nous aimons dans les yeux de nos femmes,  
dans le torse doré qui travaillent aux champs.  
tu nous donnes le vin fait de rêve et de flamme,  
ô terre de nos morts, terre de nos enfants.*

*O morts qui reposez tout autour de l'église,  
tandis que le clocher promène chaque jour  
l'ombre de l'heure bleue, l'ombre de l'heure grise,  
sachez que nous prenons la tâche à notre tour.*

*Notre pays, c'est vous qui nous l'avez donné  
avec sa vigne abrupte auprès de l'eau tranquille,  
et nous le léguerons à nos fils, à nos filles,  
pour que demain s'ajoute à son noble passé.*

**Kettner's Restaurant** has no music and is not luxurious . . . but the Food and Wine are superb.

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## HOME AFFAIRS.

by MAX NEF.

On August 1st, the day of the Swiss National Holiday, the "Swiss National Fund for the Promotion of Scientific Research" was solemnly inaugurated and proclaimed at a session held in the hall of the Council of States, in Berne. It was not by mere chance that this day was chosen for the foundation of this Society. As Federal Councillor Etter remarked, when he transmitted the greetings of the Federal Council on this occasion, it should always recall the fact that Swiss science must always remember its loyal duty towards its country. The true greatness and significance of a nation, especially of a numerically small nation, is conditioned by the importance and the strength of its spiritual yield. For it is in that, that we find lasting values, as opposed to power, wealth and political influence, which are all subject to the buffets of fate and to the tragedy of history. And, although science is not bound by any political frontiers, the scientist remains indebted to his home-land.

The Confederation is granting one sole subsidy of a million francs towards the foundation of this society; it will then contribute 2 mill.frs. towards its maintenance the following year, 3 mill.frs. the year after, and then 4 million francs per annum as from the third year. Both the Federal Assembly and the Swiss People have approved this appropriation without any objections being raised, recognising, as they do, that our country which is so poor in natural wealth depends to a large extent for its well-being from the scientific research work which goes on in the laboratories and research centres, the libraries and the clinics. Economy and technical progress are directed by means of fundamental research. It is true that big industrial undertakings have realised this a long time ago and that considerable success has been achieved in this domain as a result of the important financial support brought to it by private enterprise and personal donations. There are also the universities and the Federal Technological Institute which are also doing very good work in this respect. Unfortunately, however, in view of the fact that the Swiss universities rank as autonomous Cantonal

secondary schools, their financial means are not sufficient to cover all that they are able and desirous of accomplishing in the domain of science. As a result, Switzerland is menaced by the flitting to other countries of her young research workers, if they cannot find sufficient means of existence when carrying out their pioneer work at home.

On the Roll of Honour of those whose discoveries in the past have been epoch-making, there are a good many names of Swiss to be found, and during the last few years numerous Nobel prizes have found their way to our country. The generous action of the Confederation in regard to Swiss science will serve to maintain and to promote the Swiss reputation abroad, in this particular field of labour. The Swiss National Fund for the Promotion of Scientific Research is not only in respect of natural science, but also juridical and economic science and even the so-called science of the Arts.

The Organisation intends to establish research Committees in all the Swiss Universities. The co-ordination of all these endeavours will be the task of the Foundation Council, consisting of members of Science, politics and Economy. A Committee of 7 to 9 members will be set up, to serve as a national Research Council, which will carry out the principal work and will take decisions regarding the distribution of the various subsidies.

Although the Confederation is also represented in the National Fund as a donor, this does not mean in any way that the freedom of research activities will be in the slightest curtailed or hampered in its independence. Two outstanding scientists have been appointed as delegates of the Government, in this way showing quite clearly that the authorities have no intention of interfering or attempting to give any State direction to this organisation.

The pillars of the newly created Institution are the well-known private scientific associations, such as the Swiss Society for Natural Science Research, the Academy for Medical Science, the Swiss Society of Lawyers and similar associations. It is stated in the Statutes that the National Fund shall give financial assistance in such cases where scientific research work cannot receive the requisite means from any other source.

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