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SWISS Y.M.C.A. Annual Report 1958.

The year 1959 has opened before us with new prospects of adventure — the adventure of working with God. At this point we also look back to see what we have achieved. The ultimate questions will be: Have we done His Will? Have we placed Him at the centre of our work? What have we done for Him?

Divine help and guidance is always offered to men, but the question is whether they are able to discern it and act upon it. If we are willing to be used, then God does also provide opportunities for us. Opportunities in the last twelve months were offered to us in meeting young men who came here to study or to work. We have invited them to our meetings on Thursday evenings, and to other activities, and they have become interested. But the adventure with God does not end there. For many of our young men it was a beginning to study the Word of God, which led to a growth in faith and ultimately to a knowledge of God and His Son Jesus Christ. We trust that those who returned to Switzerland in the course of the year have taken an active part in local Christian work and become a blessing to friends and relatives.

Owing to a change in the management of St. Anne's House in April last we were compelled to seek new accommodation. Our Association had then reached its 70th anniversary, and we felt that we had no right to lose courage and give up our work. For seven decades christian men had assembled week after week, and over 3,000 meetings must have been held. How could we possibly think that the Lord's providence would cease after this long span of life? At this juncture we decided to write to the Secretary of the Metropolitan Union of Y.M.C.A.s, with a view to getting a room at the Central Y.M.C.A., the headquarters of the Y.M.C.A. work in London. Our request was granted and in July we moved into a large room on the first floor of the building. Additional advantages were offered to us at the same time. They comprise the use of the swimming pool and gymnastic hall against payment of a moderate fee. Thus God had opened new opportunities in the adventure of winning young men for Christ. The average attendance of fifteen men has been maintained at the Thursday evening meetings. Once a month we arrange a Bible study, when a team of three members prepares a chapter. Besides this we had lectures in English by members or by outside speakers. An extract of the subjects we had under discussion is given hereunder:—

George Muller, Friend of the Orphans of Bristol (E. Adams); The Magna Charta (A. Bertin); The Bible and Modern Heresies (Jim Timson); Life's Pro-

gramme (W. H. Ellis); The Psychological Effects of Atomic Warfare (W. Fischer); Czechoslovakia, Past and Present (Rev. K. R. Kulik); The Publishing Trade (E. A. Bollinger); Experiences in the U.S.A. (with slides) (Hans Hauri); Visit to the General Post Office, London E.C.; War and Peace (R. S. Alderson); The Sermon on the Mount in the 20th Century (H. C. Wilson); Called to serve (W. J. Smaje, G.M.); The Alpha and the Omega (E. Adams); Christian Warfare (N. Davies); The Valdensian Valley in Northern Italy (A. Bertin); Visit to "The Times" Printing Press, London E.C.; The Story of the Church (Jim Timson); The Letter to Philemon (Stephen Hawes); Ancient Rome and the Witness of the Catacombs (W. Fischer); Our Times. What is our Place in them? (Rev. K. R. Kulik); English Poetry and Places (Wm. Stanley); Experiences in Colour Photography (D. Eichenberger); International Week of Prayer (9th — 16th November) (Joint Meeting) (Present: English, German and French Y.M.C.A.s); David Livingstone (E. Adams); Look at Britain (Film); Praise in Hymns (N. Davies); The London Stock Exchange (W. M. Strub).

I should add that although these subjects cover a great variety of themes, the spiritual aim of our meetings was never lost sight of.

Through the Metropolitan Union of Y.M.C.A.s we have been able to meet representatives of other Y.M.C.A. groups, and at the same time we got acquainted with the Overseas work. Our contact with the Swiss churches, with the Swiss Embassy and with other Swiss Societies in London has been maintained. Our Association are the happy proprietors of two tents which have been used last summer for camping over week-ends.

The writer was privileged to visit an old friend and lecturer of our Y.M.C.A., the Rev. C. Pummell, who now lives in retirement in Broadstairs (Kent). At the age of 88 he still enjoys good health, but unfortunately he has lost his sight completely. In spite of this handicap he preaches once a week at the local Old People's Home. He still remembers the names of the old friends of the Swiss Y.M.C.A. The house where Mr. and Mrs. Pummell live commands a unique position above the cliffs, and any friends spending holidays here should not fail to visit him.

The former members of the Paris and London Swiss Y.M.C.A.s meet once a year in Zurich. The conference last August was attended by about sixty friends who came from all parts of Switzerland. Our Secretary, Mr. Willy Strub, who attended this gathering, told us on his return how inspiring the meeting was. We take this opportunity to thank our friends for the financial help they have again rendered to us, which enabled us to meet all our expenses.



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I close with the words in Jude's letter :— " Dear friends, I find myself constrained to write and cheer you on to the *vigorous defence of the faith*, delivered once for all to God's people ". — *Prayer* is a world-embracing power if exercised by faith. May we then ask you to pray for the Oversea work carried on in India and Africa by young leaders of the Y.M.C.A. Last, but not least, pray for work at the London Central Y.M.C.A., so that others may find their way to us.

With kind regards,

*For and on behalf of the
Swiss Y.M.C.A.,
W. Fischer,
President.*

August Conference 1959. We trust that many who read these lines will be able to attend this year's conference, which is fixed for Sunday, 30th August 1959. It will be an opportunity to renew old friendships and to strengthen ourselves in the faith. The writer hopes to be present on this occasion.

OUR NEXT ISSUE.

Our next issue will be published on Friday, 15th May 1959. We take this opportunity of thanking the following subscribers for their kind and helpful donation over and above their subscription: Mrs. A. Rossier, O. Roethlisberger (Nyon), A. Maeder, A. Burkhalter, G. Bechtel, Paul Bucher, C. R. Jaeger, R. de Cintra, E. Luterbacher, Ernest Schaerer, F. Conrad, A. Bruschi, L. J. Faivre, A. Steiner.

FREIHEIT, DIE ICH MEINE.

Freedom, gift I cherish
Treasured in my heart,
May you never perish
Nor from us depart.
Ever brightly shining
In the starry skies,
Our faith refining,
Light that never dies.

In the shady woodlands,
In the verdant dells,
'Mongst the flow'ry garlands,
There your spirit dwells.
O how sweet its flavour,
When in storm and stress,
Gently freedom's favour
You on us impress.

When God's spirit enters
In our souls anew,
And within them centres
All that's good and true,
When free men are meeting,
Noble aims in view,
Shall our hearts be beating,
Liberty, for you.

(Translated by J.J.F.S.)

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