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A FEW SWISS BOOKS OF INTEREST

CONVALESCENCE, EDUCATION AND RECREATION IN SWITZERLAND 1962-1964

A few days ago I received this handsome reference book with a request to review it. It is called an almanac and is published at Fr.15.— by Sa-Na Verlag AG, Basle. The book is divided into nine sections, dealing in turn with health resorts, Swiss spas, private nursing homes and sanatoria, private psychiatric institutes, sanatoria for tuberculosis, private schools, children's homes, mothers' and infants' homes and nurses' training schools, resorts for sport and convalescence. Each section is introduced by an expert, such as a doctor, or president of an organisation concerned with a particular field of activity. It is an excellent reference book and should prove a most valuable source of information, except for ordinary holiday resorts of which it gives only a few. As the publishers and editors say in the preface, the addresses given are carefully chosen and the user of the almanac thus has the assurance that he is offered specially selected and recommendable addresses.

One of the interesting aspects is the fact that the publishers are willing to offer completely gratuitous information about any of the above-mentioned institutions. Application for information, prospectuses, etc., should be addressed to SA-NA Verlag und Propaganda A.G., Basle, Blumenrain 20.

THE SWISS ALPS by Vivian H. Green

"I find nowhere as satisfying as the Swiss Alps for spiritual and physical refreshment. I am neither a climber nor a sportsman, but I hope that what I have written may help others to appreciate and understand the beauty and the people of the Swiss Alps." Thus Vivian Green introduces a most interesting and fascinating book, beautifully illustrated as one expects of a Batsford book. His knowledge of our mountains is profound — their history, literary associations, agriculture, peoples and natural history. But this is an extremely lively account, and the author describes the various alpine regions in turn: Central Switzerland, the Bernese Oberland, the Valais, the Ticino and the Grisons. The description of each region is supplemented by a map and the photographs, some fifty-five of them, are amongst the most beautiful and unusual pictures of Switzerland I have seen in any book. Reading it was a great pleasure, and I am most grateful to the kind friend who gave it to me. The fact that it was not written by just a traveller gave it depth that so many travel books lack. Vivian Green read History at Cambridge and was later ordained. In 1940 he became History master and chaplain at Sherborne School, Dorset. He has been a Fellow of Lincoln College, Oxford, since 1951, and is a Doctor of Divinity of Cambridge and Oxford Universities, as well as a Fellow of the Royal Historical Society. He has had several books published, among them "Bishop Reginald Pecock" (1945), "Renaissance and Reformation" (1951), "Oxford Common Room" (1957), and "The Young Mr. Wesley" (1961), in the same year as "The Swiss Alps". (Published by B. T. Batsford Ltd., London.)

GLARNER GESCHICHTEN by Kaspar Freuler

At 76, the well-known author of popular folkloristic plays has given us a delightful volume of stories from the Canton of Glarus, serious and cheerful from the past and the present. (Published by Tschudi, Glarus.)

HEINI WOLLEB by Hans Kriesi

This is an historic novel of great literary value. I have not read it myself, but it has been called one of the few good historical novels since C. F. Meyer's "Juerg Jenatsch". The literary critic of the "Basler Nachrichten" calls it a worthy successor to Meyer's classic (Literary Supplement, 11th January 1963). The story which the well-known author from the eastern part of Switzerland writes, after a great deal of intensive research, tells of the adventurous life of the brave soldier from the Urseren Valley. He paints a vivid picture of the spirit and customs of the second half of the fifteenth century and, the reviewer said, at the same time manages to create a thrilling story with a unity of personality, fate and history. (Published by Volksverlag Elgg.)

HOLDERBLUESCHT

One of the most welcome presents which I received last Christmas was a beautiful volume of alemannic poetry and prose. The rich collection of dialect writing was compiled by Georg Thuerer, and the book is published by Langewiesche-Brandt Ebenhausen (Munich) and Sauerländer (Aarau) in 1962. It contains contributions from the German-speaking part of Switzerland, and its alemannic neighbourhood: Baden, Alsace, Vorarlberg, Liechtenstein and the Walser settlements in Piedmont. Amongst the authors we find Ernst Balzli (Berne), Blasius (Dr. Felix Burckhardt from Basle), Kaspar Freuler (Glarus), Simon Gfeller, Jeremias Gotthelf, Otto von Greyerz and Karl Grunder (Berne), Sophie Haemmerli-Marti (Aargau), Emil Hegetschweiler (Zurich), Alfred Huggenberger (Thurgau), Meinrad Inglin and Meinrad Lienert (Schwyz), Traugott Meyer and Dominik Müller (Basle), Joseph Reinhart (Solothurn), Emanuel Stickelberger (Basle), Rudolf von Tavel (Berne), Traugott Vogel and Albert Welti (Zurich), as well as Ulrich Zwingli, the great Swiss Reformer. The most famous amongst the authors from outside Switzerland is, of course, Johann Peter Hebel from Hausen in the Wiesental, who spent much of his life in Basle.

It can be seen from this enumeration what a wide variety of dialect and period the book covers. Over three hundred pages of literary wealth are in this attractive book, which is at the same time a symbol of neighbourliness, of understanding across the frontiers.

Mariann.

SWITZERLAND FOR BEGINNERS by George Mikes

The famous neutral country has been rediscovered by Mr. Mikes — or rather, Mr. Mikes has been discovered by the Swiss. They were so intrigued by "How to be an Alien" and his other books that a Swiss publisher commissioned Mr. Mikes to explore Switzerland. He set off to roam the cantons and, of course, brought to light many facts that even the Swiss did not suspect, let alone know, about themselves. Now George Mikes has re-written the book for English readers. The section on winter sports and his advice to would-be skiers is in the best Mikes tradition. Godi Hofmann, the illustrator, well-known in Switzerland, goes into partnership with Mr. Mikes for the first time (Price 9/6)

[O.S.E.C.]