

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: - (1974)
Heft: 1676

Artikel: Foregin cricism of Switzerland
Autor: Salis, Jean Rodolphe de
DOI: <https://doi.org/10.5169/seals-686150>

Nutzungsbedingungen

Die ETH-Bibliothek ist die Anbieterin der digitalisierten Zeitschriften auf E-Periodica. Sie besitzt keine Urheberrechte an den Zeitschriften und ist nicht verantwortlich für deren Inhalte. Die Rechte liegen in der Regel bei den Herausgebern beziehungsweise den externen Rechteinhabern. Das Veröffentlichen von Bildern in Print- und Online-Publikationen sowie auf Social Media-Kanälen oder Webseiten ist nur mit vorheriger Genehmigung der Rechteinhaber erlaubt. [Mehr erfahren](#)

Conditions d'utilisation

L'ETH Library est le fournisseur des revues numérisées. Elle ne détient aucun droit d'auteur sur les revues et n'est pas responsable de leur contenu. En règle générale, les droits sont détenus par les éditeurs ou les détenteurs de droits externes. La reproduction d'images dans des publications imprimées ou en ligne ainsi que sur des canaux de médias sociaux ou des sites web n'est autorisée qu'avec l'accord préalable des détenteurs des droits. [En savoir plus](#)

Terms of use

The ETH Library is the provider of the digitised journals. It does not own any copyrights to the journals and is not responsible for their content. The rights usually lie with the publishers or the external rights holders. Publishing images in print and online publications, as well as on social media channels or websites, is only permitted with the prior consent of the rights holders. [Find out more](#)

Download PDF: 08.08.2025

ETH-Bibliothek Zürich, E-Periodica, <https://www.e-periodica.ch>

undertakes practical conservation and restoration. Another side of its activities is the publication of works on Swiss art and art collections. One of its important aims is the publication of *catalogues raisonnés* of Swiss artists. The library consists of 30,000 volumes and there is a documentation department on twentieth century Swiss art, to which are added some 1,000 files every year. Other cultural tasks comprise lectures, exhibitions and study tours.

The first number of the *catalogues raisonnés* on Swiss artists was published a short time ago. It concerns the Anglo-Swiss artist Johann Heinrich Fuessli, known in Great Britain as Henry Fuseli. He is considered the major artist of Zurich's past. This major work of art and cultural history was compiled by Gert Schiff and published by Verlag Berichtaus Zurich and Prestelverlag Munich. The author did his thesis on Fuseli in Cologne in 1957. Today he is Professor of Art History in New York. For ten years he worked on the two volumes. The cost of producing the 1,400 volumes amounts to about £75,000. Its publication was possible due to financial help from the Swiss National Fund for the Promotion of Art and Science Research, the Swiss First of August Fund, the Foundation "Pro Helvetia" and other private and public institutions. The two beautiful volumes are a kind of gift to English scholarship as large parts of the text deal with cultural life in England in the 18th and early 19th centuries.

The Zurich artist Johann Heinrich Fuessli, born 1741, came to London at the age of 23. He was encouraged by the great British artist Sir Joshua Reynolds to go to Italy where he subsequently spent eight years. That is where he found the basis of his mature style. From 1779 he was once again resident in London. Nine years later, he was elected an Associate to the Royal Academy and in 1790 he received the distinction of an RA. From 1799 onwards he was Professor of Painting. He died in Putney on 16th April, 1825, leaving a vast number of paintings, drawings, etchings and literary essays. Already in 1831, a comprehensive catalogue of his life and work was published by Knowles.

On 24th October, the Swiss Ambassador in London, Dr. Albert Weitnauer, gave a reception to mark the publication of the Monograph on Henry Fuseli. Dr. Hans Luethy, Director of the Swiss Institute for Art Research, introduced it to the various directors of museums and art galleries, art scholars and critics and other art lovers present. The two magnificent volumes were on show.

The 150th Anniversary of Fuessli's death will take place in 1975. The "Pro Helvetia" Foundation is preparing a comprehensive exhibition of Fuseli's works in Hamburg, Paris and at the Tate Gallery in London.

M. M.

CITY SWISS CLUB CHRISTMAS DINNER

After a relatively well-attended Annual Dinner and Ball in November, the City Swiss Club Christmas Dinner suffered badly because of the railway strike. Those faithful members who managed to come only filled five tables in the Orchid Suite. Despite this low turnout, it was a lively and successful evening presided by Mr. E. Tangemann with the presence of the Ambassador, Dr. A. Weitnauer, and his second-in-command, Dr. J. Iselin.

The fare was good with traditional fish and a delicious Christmas pudding with ice. At £3.60 the bill had doubled in comparison to the Christmas Dinner of three years ago. Entertainment was supplied by Father Bossard who appeared in Father Christmas garb and made the startled attendance sing Christmas carols in three languages. Instead of grace, we were made to sing the first verse "Silent Night" and "O du fröhliche, o du selige gnadenbringende Weihnachtszelt" before terminating on "Il est né, le divin Enfant". Father Bossard, who was accompanied by a bearded devil brandishing a birch, stalked across the room and picked out a few members for an admonition or a congratulation, depending on each case. Your Editor was told that he would be forgiven on this New Year for his *mistakes* (printing mistakes, that is . . .) and after dispensing similar treatment on others amid the guffaws of the male attendance, Father Bossard made a well applauded exit.

After a short resumption of conversations, the Minutes of the October Meeting were read by the acting Secretary. That meeting had heard Dr. Schaefer, President of the Board of Directors of the Union Bank of Switzerland speak on inflation and monetary problems. 34 members and 60 guests had come to listen to what was, by all accounts, a fascinating exposé. The President then made an announcement concerning the promotion of Embassy staff: Consul Adams had been made General Consul; Dr. Franz Birrer, Cultural Attaché, promoted to "Botschaftsrat" and Vice-Consul Robert named Consul.

The last intervention by the President referred to the next January meeting. Mr. Tangemann asked members if they agreed to the idea of inviting their ladies for that meeting so as to secure sufficient attendance for the guest speaker who was expected to speak on the energy crisis. This led to a discussion on women's membership with some standing up to show strong opposition to such an eventuality. But the President stressed that he was not proposing to alter the club rules on male exclusivity — a theme that could only be broached at the AGM — but only to invite women for the exceptional occasion. With the odds that the rail and other trouble might continue, the next dinner with a speaker might well prove to be such an occasion, he said. When everybody was clear what was at issue, a

vote showed to two-to-one majority in favour of women attending for this special occasion.

ESCALADE DINNER

About eighteen friends of Geneva met on Wednesday, 12th December in the Kensington flat of Mr. and Mrs. K. R. H. Allen, members of the Anglo-Swiss Society, to celebrate the *Escalade*, the failed attempt by the Savoyans to storm Geneva on the night of 12th December, 1602. Among those present were Mr. and Mrs. René Serex, Political Counsellor at the Embassy, Mr. and Mrs. H. Baumann, General Manager of George Fischer UK, and Mr. Michael Metford Sewell, Solicitor. The gathering enjoyed an excellent meal in congenial surroundings. They were supplied with Swiss and Genevese flags by the little son of their hosts and sang the traditional Escalade songs.

A chocolate *marmite* and large nougat eggs had naturally been sent over from Geneva. By all accounts, this was a most enjoyable and interesting evening.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

The account on the life and work of Edward Gibbon which appeared in our Christmas issue under the title *Gibbon's Swiss Heritage* was not credited. It was in fact written by our young friend *Geoffrey Buchler*, a literature student in Lausanne converted to salesmanship. We extend to him our apologies for this egregious omission!

JOSEPH ALFONSO COMPAGNONI

It is with deep regret that we announce the death of *Mr. Joseph Alfonso Compagnoni* on 17th September at the age of 82. Born in St. Leonards-on-Sea, he carried on the family business of confectioners in Eastbourne and later in Margate. He served in the Royal Engineers during the Great War. The latter part of his life was spent in Hove, where his wife, also Swiss, and his family still reside. He always kept in close touch with his family home at Poschiavo, in the Grisons, visiting it for the last time in 1972.

We should like to extend our sincere condolences to Mr. Compagnoni's widow and his family.

(continued from page 10).

of Europe and the world the importance that Switzerland once had. Switzerland could reconquer it again, amid the greatly changed conditions of the present time, if our people made a great effort to rise out of the trough of foreign criticism to a higher valuation in the eyes of other countries.

Taken from "Switzerland and Europe" by J. R. de Salis by kind permission of Oswald Wolff, London.