

# Swiss military film show

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**SWISS MILITARY FILM SHOW.**  
**At Conway Hall, Red Lion Square, W.C.1.**  
 Arranged by the N.S.H. (London Group).

This show which, by courtesy of the Swiss Legation, was given twice during Saturday afternoon, June 13th, drew a large number of our Compatriots and their British friends and proved an outstanding success. By 2 o'clock, when the first performance began, there was not a vacant seat anywhere and the second one must have been at least equally well attended, judging by the crowd in the Foyer greeting those who came away from "the first house."

Mr. Charles de Jenner, Counsellor of Legation, and several of his colleagues honoured the gathering by their presence. The proceedings were opened by Mr. A. Fred Suter, President of the N.S.H., in the following words:—

"I feel sure that we are all deploring the fact that there will be no Fête Suisse this year; the London Group of the N.S.H. is therefore the more honoured and pleased in being enabled by the Swiss Legation to produce this show of Swiss Official Military Films, and these, without doubt, will prove of the greatest pleasure and instruction to us all. I should like to believe that this show will form some measure of compensation for the loss of the Fête Suisse to the colony.

We men who have done service in our army, and to whatever rank we were able to rise, will appreciate what modernisation and mechanisation has done to our old units and with what hope of success the Swiss army could take the field to-day against a superior force. That particular quality, fighting against heavy odds, has always been the fate of the Swiss army, and would be more certain than ever if Switzerland were attacked again.

To our British friends these pictures will convey a further proof that our little country is still prepared and keen enough to dispute with any invader of any size the amoral principle that Might is right. May I remind our friends that this army of ours has been a purely defensive instrument of warfare, and deliberately so, ever since 1515, the year of Marignano, with the exception of some private, internal, quarrels and a temporary absorption by Napoleon the First at the end of the 18th century. Its up-to-dateness and efficiency are therefore all the more remarkable, but of course it has always been a citizen army and this means that every Swiss fit to bear arms automatically becomes part of the army, and war in Switzerland, at all times in her history, has meant total war."

It was his particular pleasure, Mr. Suter added, to now introduce and give the word to Major Schlegel, our Military Attaché in London, who was greeted with great applause, which was no doubt intended to convey, at the same time, a hearty "thank you" to the President of the N.S.H., for his concise and very interesting preface.

Major Schlegel opened by observing that the audience had surely come in such great numbers to see the films rather than to listen to any lengthy speeches; that he would, therefore, be brief, as public speeches were anyhow not to his taste. This is a well known dictum of all men of action.

The speaker explained that a running commentary on the films was not necessary, as they were either sound films, giving comments in French, German or Schwyzterduetsch, or else they bore the requisite head-

ings, so that one ought to be able to follow with ease. Major Schlegel amplified some of the points already made by his predecessor, which he was in a privileged position to do, since, as he told his audience, he had had the good fortune to visit our home country earlier this year. All that he had seen on that occasion not only heartened him greatly, but filled him with pride and admiration.

He said that he was tremendously impressed by the fine bearing and equally fine spirit of our Army, including the Air Force. The speaker recalled the very heavy sacrifices which our country had been prepared to make — and was still making — to be ready for any emergency and that the will to defend our frontiers was as unflinching and resolute today, as it had been at the outbreak of this war.

For this, he concluded, we owed the deepest gratitude to our valiant Army, her troops and "cadres," under the inspiring leadership of General Guisan. The prolonged applause testified that Major Schlegel had truly interpreted the feeling of the large and representative assembly.

The films were then displayed and gave a vivid picture of the concert pitch, to which every unit of our Army has been trained. It certainly is a different force, handling different equipment, from that which we associate with the last war and every one must have been deeply impressed with the very high standard of work and efficiency.

We saw the Army in the field, with their quick-firing cannon and machine-guns; the "pontonniers" building their bridges (immediately put to the severest test); troops in the High Alps, during strenuous manœuvres, in summer and winter. Other films depicted the training of the farriers and a contingent in charge of dogs being trained as watchers and messengers. Another and most interesting series showed the extensive and incredibly varied course of physical training, which our troops of to-day have to undergo, fitting them for the kind of tasks, which we know British "Commando" units tackle so brilliantly. Some further films did justice to the work of our Air Force, showed us long processions of rumbling Tanks and proved their mobility while last, though not least, we were introduced to our Women's Army, which at the present time plays so important a part in its several branches.

Tempting, as it might be, to comment on each of the many excellent films separately, this would lead too far. In this case, once again, one can only say that "seeing is believing" and those who, for one reason or another, were unable to be present, lost a wonderful opportunity of witnessing the enthusiasm, the skill and great efficiency of our Army, to whom the protection of our country can safely be entrusted and to whom, as Major Schlegel said, we owe a very large debt of admiration and gratitude.

The show ended by the singing of our National Anthem and Mr. Suter again thanked Major Schlegel for his presence and his comments. He also expressed his thanks to Mr. Fer, for his ever ready services on occasions of this kind. His cinematographs produced large and wonderfully clear pictures and were constructed at St. Croix. The message they brought from our home land will linger in our minds for a long time. Mr. Suter also made the advance announcement that a Celebration of National Day will be held on Saturday, August the First, at Kingsway Hall.

GALLUS.