

# A Swiss visit to Birmingham

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Book Exhibition for their fine collection, shown at present in London, and said that they were happy, as representatives of Swiss Sport, to be in such good company.

"We owe a great debt," he continued, "to England, never before did we realise how much we owe them. The destruction of this ancient city so vividly brought before us, has been a great eye opener to us and at the same time a useful lesson."

Mr. Krebs also mentioned that the run of the match at Stamford Bridge had been a useful experience for the Swiss team; although they had not been successful, they need not be ashamed of their performance; they had put up a fine and sportsmanlike display. (Loud applause.)

The President of the Swiss Football Association said that this important sports event has naturally been followed with great interest at home, but its importance should not be exaggerated; whether winning or losing, the Swiss flag now, as before, will proudly fly, and the honour of our country will not have suffered one iota through losing a game of football.

As a vivid example of overstating the importance of an International Sports event, he mentioned that he had received this morning a telegram from Switzerland, in which the result was acknowledged, with the concluding phrase "Pleurons." "Surely, gentlemen," he said, "this is putting things rather out of place."

I fully agree with the speaker. I can hardly imagine that 4½ million Swiss burst into tears, when the result became known over the wire; it would have been a sorry sight, and would not have been a credit to our folks at home.

Mr. Krebs's address was loudly cheered.

The Swiss Minister, Monsieur Paul Ruegger, wound up the oratorical part of the function, in congratulating the President and the Committee of the City Swiss Club on having arranged this most successful gathering, and thus a pleasant evening spent amongst our compatriots from home came to an end.

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### A SWISS VISIT TO BIRMINGHAM.

To promote closer relations between Swiss and English industrial circles, the "Tube Investments Ltd." a concern which exports nearly half of their entire output to Switzerland, invited Monsieur E. de Graffenried, Counsellor of Legation, Mr. A. J. Staehelin, representative of the O.S.E.C. in London, as well as a number of Swiss journalists to a visit to their works in Birmingham on May 14th.

In honour of the Swiss guests the Swiss flag was hoisted over the principal works buildings. During a luncheon, Mr. Wolf, Chairman of the Board, expressed his pleasure in welcoming the Swiss visitors, and during his address expressed the gratitude of the British people for the humanitarian work our country had rendered during the war, and hoped that the commercial relations between the two countries would become closer for the benefit of both parties concerned.

Monsieur de Graffenried replied in the name of the Swiss visitors, and expressed the admiration of the Swiss people for the enormous efforts the British Empire had made for the liberation of Europe.

The works, which employ altogether 20,000 workhands, were then inspected.

### PROFESSOR DR. ARNOLD LAETT'S ADDRESS TO THE SWISS CLUB, MANCHESTER, MIDLAND HOTEL, MAY 3rd, 1946.

Mr. F. Heinrich, Vice-President of the Swiss Club, occupying the chair, introduced our guest, expressing at the same time his regret at the enforced absence of Mr. A. F. Suter.

In opening his address to a very representative auditorium, Dr. Laett briefly referred to his activities during the war, to his first visit to Manchester 29 years ago when he was delegated to address Swiss audiences in the provinces. He mentioned names which our older members will recall, such as Hoegger, Merz, Zellwegger, and touched upon his final return to Switzerland in 1926. In 1939 the Manchester people had again the pleasure of hearing from him, since which year however, his short addresses in the services to the "Swiss Abroad" were the only contact which we enjoyed and which in the dark days did so much to put heart into us, to believe in the wise steps and firm attitude taken by the Swiss Government and in the final victory of Great Britain and her Allies.

The N.S.H. during the last war and since the cessation of hostilities is finding increasing support in many towns at home. Young people, Dr. Laett mentioned, are eagerly forming groups under very able guidance of outstanding men and the great hardship of Swiss returning from all over Europe, and those citizens staying bravely in the war-ravaged countries, are getting increased support from this Society. It has, for instance, been agreed that three-quarters of the collect of 1st August 1946 will be employed towards assisting the suffering Swiss abroad.

Pro Helvetia and the Auslandsforschung Institut are striving for improved relationship between the Swiss abroad and the Mother Country. The history of the Swiss living abroad and their achievements is being collected; issue of literature to them in, we hope in future, in our case, the English language, is another item in their programme, and any constructive suggestions which we can submit to these Societies which are, in fact, our representatives in Switzerland, will eventually prove of lasting benefit to all Swiss Colonies wherever they may be.

Dr. Laett told us of his radio experiences and of those of his colleague — Dr. Buechi, and then went on to describe the various factors which have helped Switzerland, in face of overwhelming difficulties, to come through what will no doubt prove the greatest crisis that ever faced our little country.

The preparedness of the Swiss Army was coupled with the names of Minger and Kobelt, the splendid spirit of the troops, the fact that over 800,000 men had gone through the mill, the wonderful leadership of General Guisan, and of the wages compensation agreement, which did so much to allay the fear of the families of our soldiers.

The preparedness on the economic side was also stressed and it was pointed out that even to-day food is still coming forward from the Reduit Nationale. Mention was made of Mr. Wahlen — a Swiss from Canada — who was asked to improve the grain production of Mr. Muckli — an organiser of outstanding ability in introducing a very sound rationing system, of the Swiss Merchant Navy, which owed so much to the considera-