

Glimpses of the homeland

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GLIMPSES OF THE HOMELAND.

The series of the SWISS HOMELAND BOOKS issued by the enterprising Publishing House PAUL HAUPT, BERNE, has recently been enriched through the addition of two volumes with an English text and adorned by the well-chosen, beautiful illustrations that form so pleasing a feature of these publications.

Like a previous book in an English translation — Hans Itten's description of the Alpine Gardens on the Schynige Platte — the present two volumes take the reader to the Bernese Oberland. They are entitled:—

LAUTERBRUNNEN, WENGEN, MURREN, by Hans Michel, and INTERLAKEN, by Hans Spreng.

The books are descriptive, informative and historical. The authors, specialists of considerable scholarship, have drawn much of their knowledge from the study of century-old chronicles and charters preserved in the cantonal Public Records. From their researches into these documents they have found it possible to reconstruct a fascinating picture of the social conditions of the Bernese highlanders as far back as the feudal times of the 12th century. Much of the history of Interlaken, for instance, is linked with the famous Augustine monastery, mention of which is found in a charter dated 1133. There are traces of a yet earlier culture and numerous land and river names point to a Celtic-Roman origin. As Sir Arnold Lunn, in his introduction to H. Michel's book rightly says "Switzerland is something more than a mere 'Playground of Europe' and the historical and cultural associations of the Alps are not the least of their charm."

The illustrations which form the major part of each book are delightful and selected with care. They offer a panorama of picturesque landscapes, magnificent views of mountains, lakes and waterfalls, scenes from the daily life of the native population at work and at play, churches, chalets, inns, homesteads, cowmen and their cattle, chamois hunters, guides, skiers, young women in their national costumes, altogether a most interesting collection.

The translation of the original German text into English is again very ably done by Elaine Rubli.

These Homeland books, attractive and interesting as they are, deserve to be widely known. Their value, we think, would be enhanced if a simple map were provided so as to give the reader who is not familiar with the district an idea of its geographical position.

J.J.F.S.

CONCERT NEWS.

It is not often that we have the pleasure of welcoming Swiss artists in this country, and unfortunately when they come, invariably their compatriots seem to ignore them, which is a great pity, as well as a disappointment to the visiting artists.

True enough there are plenty of recitals throughout the year in the various London concert halls, many given by world wide known personalities, and one finds hardly time to attend only a fraction of them; but let it be known, that our country possesses quite an estimable group of young and promising artists, who, if they do not all belong to the "top notchers" are nevertheless worth while listening to.

Amongst them is Rudolph am Bach, a young pianist from Zurich, who is giving a piano recital on Tuesday, October 23rd, at Wigmore Hall, Wigmore Street, W.1 (*see advertisement*). He is of course no stranger to us, having appeared three years ago at Wigmore Hall when he met with much success.

* * *

Rudolf am Bach was born in Zurich, the son of a well-known Swiss conductor. As a child he received lessons from his father, and then studied with Professor Emil Frey in Zurich before entering the conservatory of that town in 1936. In 1939, he came to London to study with Professor Frederic Lamond, returning to Switzerland in 1940, when he won the first prize in the national Swiss music competition at Geneva.

This young artist is now well-known in Switzerland, Germany, Austria and France, where he has made extensive concert tours, and he has participated regularly at the International Music Festival in

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