

Swiss national fête day : 1st August 1291-1935

Autor(en): **St.**

Objektyp: **Article**

Zeitschrift: **The Swiss observer : the journal of the Federation of Swiss Societies in the UK**

Band (Jahr): - **(1935)**

Heft 718

PDF erstellt am: **21.07.2024**

Persistenter Link: <https://doi.org/10.5169/seals-693249>

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SWISS NATIONAL FETE DAY.

1st AUGUST 1291-1935.

Six hundred and forty-five years will pass away next Thursday since those sturdy sons of the cantons Uri, Schwyz and Unterwalden, clasped their hands and vowed to stand steadfast together in distress and danger, in joy and sorrow.—

Let us then, dear countrymen, on the birthday of our homeland, wander in thoughts back home to the silvery mountains, to the picturesque lakes, to our native towns, villages and hamlets, where the church bells will be ringing melodiously, spreading the glad tidings of Freedom, Liberty and Independence; and where, at eventide the bonfires on thousands of hills, peaks and mountain tops will send their flares towards heaven, proclaiming that here dwells a free and unfettered country. — Whilst providence has granted us a long term of peace, other countries have seen their territories enlarged and their destinies determined by trouble and war, but no blood has stained the bonds which have knit together our free and order-loving population for many years past. We are a small nation, composed of the most heterogeneous elements — Protestants and Catholics, French, German, Italian and Romansch speaking Swiss, everyone, let it be remembered, with his traditions, with his prejudices. In each of these conflicting antagonistic elements, however, there is a common bond of patriotism, and the only true policy is that, which reaches that common patriotism and makes it vibrate in all toward common ends and common aspirations.

To this country of ours, which has given us its material, moral and intellectual wealth, to this country which affords to all its children its protection, we owe everything, all that we are, all that we have. And if, this day, we have tried to find out what it means to us, it should be, that

we may feel and understand better what we owe it.

What is then our duty to our country? We shall serve it best by defending it, by accepting willingly all the obligations entailed by that. We must, with all our might, support the efforts of the League of Nations so that future generations be spared the horrors of wars. This country of ours, we shall also serve by defending it against its interior foes, against those cynics who will tell you that love for one's country is nothing but a myth. — We Swiss abroad are unable to take an active part in shaping the destiny of our homeland, but we can also serve our land by upholding the prestige by individual efficiency and industry, by faithful and honest services, and by respecting the institutions of the country which has given us hospitality.

Patriotism is the vital condition of national permanence, no government is safe unless it is protected by the good will of the people, Patriotism means: One country, one constitution, one destiny. —

Let the Swiss Colony as a whole, be a reflection of *unity*, which will on our National Day be the catch-word of countless orators, from one end of our country to the other. There is room for improvement in many directions, let us make up our minds to be always just and forbearing in our relations with each other; let us beware of incessant bickerings and petty jealousies, "True patriotism," — Göthe once said: "consists only in this — that everyone sweeps before his own door, minds his own business, also learns his own lesson, that it may be well with him in his own house;" let us remember, that to err is human, to forgive, divine. A more glorious victory cannot be gained over another man than

this, that when the injury began on his part, the kindness should begin on ours.

Let us also beware of the pride which would make us believe there is no other country like our own, and let us beware of disparaging it by saying there is no good thing in it. —

The world crisis, with its bitter lessons, with its desolating experiences, its sorrows and dispairst has also affected many of our compatriots in the Colony; worries and anxieties have visited many a home where want was formerly an unknown factor.

More than ever, therefore our national motto: "Un pour tous, tous pour un" should be our *Leitmotif*, and this should lead us to happier and more prosperous times. It is not enough to make on every possible occasion speeches, emphasizing that we are all children of one large family, and therefore should stand together, this is after all an obvious conclusion, deeds should now follow words, we should show in a practical way, that we mean what we often so freely proclaim. Let us then, dear countrymen, make this our resolution on the 1st of August 1935. —

Wherever Swiss do dwell their thoughts will on this day go back to their native land, they will go back to their dear ones at home and many a heart will ache and many an eye will be moist; to many of us, that longing, to see again those mountains in all their majesty and glory, to hear once again those bells ringing, will manifest itself; let the clouds which pass above us, be the messenger of our fraternal greetings, let them deliver the message of our unswerving attachment to the land of our birth and tell them of the love which still lives in thousands of hearts away from our native soil.

ST.

GOD BLESS OUR DEAR OLD SWITZERLAND!

UN APPEL DU COMITE SUISSE DE LA FETE NATIONALE.

Le Comité Suisse de la Fête Nationale espère que tous les suisses à l'étranger se feront, comme par le passé, un devoir de lui prêter leur bienveillant concours en réservant un bon accueil tant à la vente des insignes qu'à la collecte du 1er Août.

La prochaine collecte du premier août a pour but de favoriser le service volontaire des jeunes chômeurs. Elle se propose ainsi d'aider les jeunes gens sans travail, à cause de la crise, à trouver une occupation régulière et de les sauver des dangers de l'oisiveté. A se croiser les bras sans qu'il y ait de leur faute, ils éprouvent un sentiment particulièrement pénible; à leurs yeux, la vie, dans ces conditions perd tout son sens et mérite à peine d'être vécue. La famille et l'état ont le plus grand intérêt à ce qu'ils ne perdent pas complètement le goût et l'amour du travail utile.

ZUM 1. AUGUST.

Schweizer; — Scharet Euch zusammen
Wenn beim vollen Glockenklang
Eure Lieben sich vereinen,
Frohgemut zu Klang und Sang.

Heute ist das Fest der Heimat,
Tag der Freude weit und breit.
Darum auf, Ihr Landsgenossen,
Sammelt Euch zur Abendzeit!

Wenn auch trübe Tage heute,
Ernst und Sorgen uns bemühen,
Kommet vorwärts! Lasst die Sorgen!
Feiert mit beim Abendglüh'n.

Feuer leuchtet von den Bergen
Weit ins dunkle Tal hinaus. —
Und der Schweizer still Gedanken
Kehren heim zum Vaterhaus.

Ernst Kühler.
(Manchester).

NEWS FROM THE COLONY.

FAREWELL DINNER TO Dr. W. RUEFENACHT.

We learn that the Swiss Mercantile Society is offering a Farewell Dinner to Dr. W. Rüfenacht, 1st Secretary of Legation in charge of Commercial affairs, on the occasion of his impending departure from London.

We wish to congratulate the Swiss Mercantile Society on this happy initiative, as Dr. Rüfenacht has, during his 4 year's *séjour* in Lon-

don taken a great interest in the affairs of the Colony.

We understand that the Society is extending the invitation to this informal dinner also to friends of the Society and members of the Colony, and we sincerely hope that a very representative gathering will take leave of the guest of the evening.

The Dinner is taking place on Tuesday next, (July 30th) at 7 o'clock, at Pagani's Restaurant, Great Portland Street, W. The price per *couvert* is 5/-. Those who wish to take part, should write or phone (Museum 6693) to the Swiss Mercantile Society, 34/35, Fitzroy Square, W., before 12 o'clock on Tuesday next, (July 30th).

NOUVELLE SOCIETE HELVETIQUE. (London Group).

A small but representative gathering met on Tuesday, July 23rd at the Foyer Suisse, to welcome our old friend Dr. A. Lätt from Zurich; who was on a short visit in London.

The Swiss Minister, Monsieur C. R. Paravicini, honoured the company with his presence.

After an excellent supper, provided by the "Foyer," Mr. A. F. Suter, the energetic President of the N.S.H., extended a hearty welcome to Dr. Lätt, reminding the company of the excellent work which he had performed when he was Secretary of the London Branch of the N.S.H.

Dr. Lätt then gave an exhaustive and very interesting account of the work of the Society in Switzerland; his address which lasted for over an hour was followed with the greatest of interest by all those present. Dr. Lätt, who is, as will be remembered, "President de la Commission des Suisses à l'étranger," is one of the pillar of this patriotic Society, and the services he has rendered to this institution are too numerous to be mentioned here.

Those who had the pleasure to work with him during those fateful years of the war, will remember with what zeal and enthusiasm he fulfilled his heavy task, a task which required great tact and unbounding love for the cause.

It was refreshing to note, although many years have since passed, that Dr. Lätt is still imbued by the same enthusiasm. His faith in the N.S.H. is undimmed, and his work is untiringly devoted to it; in him the Society possesses indeed a faithful servant. —

During his address, he expressed the wish that many of the London members would be present at the "Auslandschweizertag" which is taking place on the 24/25th of August in Baden.

Monsieur Paravicini then extended greetings to Dr. Lätt, thanking him for the work which has been performed by him for so many years; a discussion followed in which the Minister took part.

Shortly before 11 o'clock Mr. Suter closed the discussion, warmly thanking Monsieur Paravicini for his presence which was highly appreciated by the members of the London Group.

It was a happy gathering which will be remembered for many a day by those who took part.

SWISS FOLK-DANCERS IN LONDON.

Reception at the Legation.

At an informal reception, very graciously arranged at rather short notice by our Minister with the aid of his daughters, Madame Paravicini had been obliged to leave that very morning by Air to Carlsbad, as otherwise she would not have been able to get accommodation for flying for several days, the "Suisses de passage" and a few members of the Colony were afforded a welcome opportunity of meeting the group of Swiss folk-dancers, yodellers, singers and musicians who took part at last week's International Folk-Dance Festival held at the Albert-Hall. Our compatriots played not only an honourable, but a very notable and successful part at the festival. Their performances at the Albert-Hall and in the grounds of Lambeth Palace were invariably greeted and applauded with rousing cheers. The press notices were full of delighted praise for them and even the railway porters paid their homage to our countrymen at their arrival and departure by imitation yodels. As the Albert-Hall performances were sold out, Monsieur Paravicini's efforts of providing an opportunity to see the group, despite the very short time available, were doubly appreciated.

The Swiss group of the Festival consisted of 16 dancers and an old-fashioned peasant orchestra from Champéry and eight "Appenzeller Sennen." The selection of these hardy and simple men and women with their lovely old costumes; and instruments could not have been improved upon. And to complete the picture the champion Swiss woman yodeller Mlle. Amelia Bolfi had been included in the group. Full of zest they arrived in a hired omnibus at the Legation where they gave a very charming short performance. An Appenzeller turn, the "Thaler-Schwingen" attracted particular interest. It consists of rolling old heavy "Füvliher" in earthenware open milk dishes by gentle rotation of the basins, producing a noise like hundreds of far-away cowbells, to which yodel-songs were being sung. Mlle. Bolfi of Zürich in Bernertracht gave some lovely