

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: - (1969)

Heft: 1569

Artikel: The Swiss "Presence" and the state of the Swiss colony in the United Kingdom in 1968 [Concluded]

Autor: Keller, René

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.5169/seals-693339>

Nutzungsbedingungen

Die ETH-Bibliothek ist die Anbieterin der digitalisierten Zeitschriften. 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. [Siehe Rechtliche Hinweise.](#)

Conditions d'utilisation

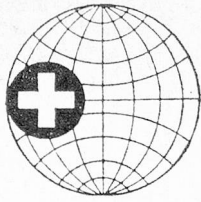
L'ETH Library est le fournisseur des revues numérisées. Elle ne détient aucun droit d'auteur sur les revues et n'est pas responsable de leur contenu. En règle générale, les droits sont détenus par les éditeurs ou les détenteurs de droits externes. [Voir Informations légales.](#)

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. [See Legal notice.](#)

Download PDF: 01.04.2025

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



THE SWISS "PRESENCE" AND THE STATE OF THE SWISS COLONY IN THE UNITED KINGDOM IN 1968

Survey by the Swiss Ambassador,
Monsieur René Keller

The Swiss Ambassador and Madame Keller gave a Reception to Members of the Swiss Colony on 26th February, at their Residence in Upper Brook Street. The following survey was made available on that occasion.

(Concluded)

PART III

The university expansion characteristic of recent years has given to new subjects and broader course patterns an impetus greatly to the benefit of Swiss studies. To explore in Swiss writings the byways of German and French literature has become quite a fashionable pursuit. The Embassy has been able to foster it by providing the new libraries with books presented by the "Pro Helvetia" Foundation, and by arranging lectures, film shows, poetry readings and visits to Switzerland by scholars interested in our intellectual life.

At school level, writers such as Keller, Frisch and Dürrenmatt have long been in the advanced curriculum of the General Certificate of Education. This has brought forth various annotated editions of their works, notably some by the Cambridge Professor Forster. For the first time in English, there has now appeared, too, a full-scale Life of Gottfried Keller by a lecturer at St. Andrews University. The French Department of that University has close links with the Voltaire Institute at Geneva, a centre of literary research whose achievements under Theodore Besterman exemplify Anglo-Swiss relations at their best. At Trinity College, Cambridge, one of his disciples is editing Rousseau's correspondence, Ramuz, the twentieth anniversary of whose death was marked by a double issue of the review "Adam", has for years been the object of dedicated study by a lecturer latterly of Glasgow University and now at Exeter. The Professor of German at Manchester is a Swiss. London, Birmingham, East Anglia, Sussex, Bristol, Leicester, Stirling, Aberdeen and Strathclyde are other universities where spontaneous focuses of activity can now receive material encouragement thanks to the larger slice of the Federal Budget allotted to "Pro Helvetia".

The interest has also become such as to warrant a whole volume devoted to "Swiss Men of Letters"; it will regroup essays scattered through the "German Men of Letters"; series edited by Dr. Alex Natan, and include new ones on French-Swiss and Romanish writers. The Embassy was consulted on the German readers evolved by a research group sponsored by the Nuffield Foundation at York University. The Cultural Attaché arranged in London a Swiss Day for the Association of Teachers of German. In conveying the image they thus gained of Switzerland, some will be helped by Swiss students spending a year at their schools under the Language Assistants Exchange Scheme.

Multilingualism and federalism prompt many enquiries from Welsh and Scottish nationalists, while our twenty-five educational systems offer rich fields of study to Teacher Training Colleges. The Library of Educational Thought has just published a new book on Pestalozzi. Piaget, too, is a much revered master. The death of the theologian Kark Barth was mourned in this country as much as at home.

Blaise Cendrars and Peter Bichsel have joined the ranks of our contemporary authors scoring works translated into English. So has the Ladin Cla Biert, under the sponsorship of the Council of Europe. The poet Michael Bullock, first known to us as a translator of Frisch has been trying his skill on verses by some of the more *avant-garde* Swiss writers. Quite apart from translations, it is surprising how much attention Swiss letters receive in "The Times Literary Supplement" and elsewhere.

Children's books, such as those illustrated by Piatti or Carigiet, are popular, too. Bettina Hürlimann had flattering reviews not only of her story "Barry", but also of her two more serious studies "Three Centuries of Children's Books in Europe" and "Picture Book World".

The quality of Swiss graphic work and book production attracts many favourable comments. The frequency of exhibitions of Swiss posters, type-faces, etc., at the London College of Printing was explained when it was discovered that its Design Department harboured a Swiss lecturer. This led to other contacts with Design Schools, and to a study tour of Switzerland by some of their senior teachers.

A request from Reading University brought over a Swiss exhibition on mediaeval town planning, which after a successful American tour has just inaugurated one here at Bristol.

Opened first in the Arts Council Gallery, an exhibition of 17th and 18th-century prints from the collection of the Federal Institute of Technology went on to several provincial towns. A notable display at a commercial gallery was that of the Fuseli drawings discovered in New Zealand and now

belonging to the city of Auckland. Bill, Erni, Tinguely and Lohse had one-man shows. Swiss native and animal painters were represented in collective ones. The Bauhaus Exhibition at the Royal Academy bore witness to how much Swiss leavening had animated this great teaching movement.

Many Swiss musicians have again come over to this country, either in a first attempt to get the acknowledgment of talent a London success confers, or as established favourites of the concert-going public. Young organists such as Lionel Rogg, Guy Bovet and Verena Lutz, in particular, have made a very good name for themselves. The Schola Cantorum Basiliensis headed an exceptionally strong contingent from our country at the last Oxford Bach Festival. A harpsichord presented to Coventry Cathedral by a group of Swiss friends was inaugurated by Henriette Barbé, whose London recital with the flautist Peter Lukas Graf had been so well received a few days before. The oboist Heinz Holliger is always greatly admired. Among the numerous pianists should be mentioned Fernande Kaeser (who won a well-deserved Harriet Cohen Award). Klecki, Dutoit, Sylvia Caduff, Varviso were conductors invited to this country, Lisa Della Casa appearing with the last-named at Covent Garden. As well as singing in the City of London Festival, Hugues Cuénod repeated his success in "L'Ormino" at Glyndebourne, which it seems has yet another link with Switzerland in that its founder, John Christie, was descended from a Christin, of Yverdon.

Swiss music and music-making is much heard on the air, too. Performances by the Swiss Romande Orchestra, the Lucerne Festival Strings, etc., often greet the ears of the casual listener tuning in to a BBC programme; Ansermet's eight-fifth birthday was even marked by a special broadcast of music he had conducted.

Armin Schibler attended the British Première of his Concerto for Percussion. Honegger is much in favour with choral societies. Rarely noticed, however, are the literary contributions of a Morax to "Roi David", of a Ramuz in Stravinsky's "Histoire du soldat", or a Gottfried Keller in Delius's "Village Romeo and Juliet". Plays by Frisch and Dürrenmatt still rate frequent professional and amateur productions.

The Anglo-Swiss Society provides a platform for eminent speakers who come over to explain aspects of Swiss national life to their English friends. The stimulating programmes of the Nouvelle Société Helvétique keep the Colony abreast of events in Switzerland. Of course, when the Swiss Centre at long last gets its cultural forum, there will be right in the middle of London a rallying point for all who are interested in creations of the mind originating in our country.

PART IV

In the political and economic sphere, relations between Switzerland and Britain have remained very good. Economic problems have been in the foreground, especially with regard to Britain's candidature for entry into the European Communities and the continual Swiss financial support of the pound. In May, Dr. Spühler, President of the Swiss Confederation, and Dr. Schaffner, Federal Councillor, attended the ordinary Spring Assembly of EFTA in London. In July, Dr. Conzett, President of the National Council, and five other Swiss members of Parliament were, for a week, the guests of their British colleagues. During the second part of 1968, as the conflict in Biafra became more violent, two delegations, one including Professor Wahlen, former President of the Confederation, and representatives of the various Swiss Churches, and the other headed by Ambassador Rüeegg, travelling on behalf of the International Committee of the Red Cross, of which he has been a President, came to London and had conversations, at the highest governmental level, on the plight of Biafra.

A large number of Swiss personalities took part in the Wilton Park Conferences, which are aimed at developing a better political understanding between Britain and other European countries, including also, since 1966, those in the Eastern part of the Continent.

Switzerland was represented at numerous international conferences in London. She plays an active part at the meetings of the Intergovernmental Maritime Consultative Organisation, of the European Satellite Telecommunications Conference and of the international wheat, coffee and wool organisations whose headquarters are in London.

* * *

As may be gathered, the activities of the Swiss in the United Kingdom in 1968 were very varied and their position continues to be on the whole as satisfactory as it was in 1965, the last time a survey like this was made.

In the meantime, it has been possible to finalise plans for a new Embassy building. Planning permission for the reconstruction of the Embassy on its traditional site at the corner of Bryanston Square and Montagu Place was obtained from the Westminster City Council last autumn. Demolition of the present structure has begun, and work on the new building will be taken in hand from mid-June onward.

After some years of consideration, it has been decided that the façade of the residence in Bryanston Square shall be reconstructed in the classical style of the Regency period, which means that it will be a close replica of the present elevation. The office block in Montagu Place, which will provide office space for about 60 people, and

the interior of the residence will be built in the modern style. The project will take roughly three years to complete.

Although some progress has been made in this respect, the principal question concerning the Colony in London is still the setting up of a social and cultural centre, the "Swiss Forum", which, combined with the now existing Institute for Swiss Trade Promotion, will greatly facilitate the co-ordination of activities in the various sectors of Swiss life in London.

NUCLEAR WORLD FAIR

Only some years ago, nuclear technology was considered a problem for the far future. Today, this new technique is a very important factor in the economic and industrial evolution. Enormous amounts have been invested by industrial countries in the development of nuclear power stations and their components and over the last two or three years, this field has become an important factor in the industrial markets. U.S.-industry having clearly dominated the first phase of the nuclear market, several European companies have now succeeded in filling up a great part of the initial gap and are becoming — above all in the field of nuclear components — serious competitors for the Americans.

The steadily increasing number of producers of nuclear components in all industrial countries and the growing demand for nuclear power stations in these countries as well as in developing areas have created strong international competition in this field, which already at NUCLEX 66 in Basle has led to a worldwide meeting of producers and buyers.

NUCLEX 69, Second International Fair and Technical Meetings for Nuclear Industries (from 6th to 11th October 1969) in Basle will present a very reliable picture of the increasing importance of the nuclear market. The fact, that several attempts for organising similar events in Europe and in U.S.A. have failed, shows that Basle is recognised by producers and buyers as the right place for a nuclear event of such an importance.

The powerful participation of the European countries, and, above all, of the nuclear industry of the Federal Republic of Germany will constitute one of the main characteristics of NUCLEX 69. The U.S.-industry will have to face a first strong attack of the European producers on the existing and newly forming nuclear sales positions. Even if in the field of the sale of nuclear reactors only the Federal Republic of Germany could be considered as a serious competitor of the U.S.-reactor companies, one should not forget, that the reactor only constitutes between 20 and 23% of the necessary investments for a nuclear power station. As today the turn-key-offers

for entire nuclear power stations has disappeared, the interest has clearly turned to the sale of components, which represents 80% of the market. NUCLEX 69 will be the first big-size nuclear component fair in the world.

Furthermore, the planning of future introduction of nuclear energy into the networks has increased the interest for the advanced reactor systems. In this field, the European nuclear industry will start the commercial phase under equal chances with U.S.-producers. As the adequate planning of future energy needs can only be done as a long-term device and as the construction of the first power stations equipped with advanced reactor types will start around 1975, NUCLEX 69 will give large emphasis on the present state and the future development of these promising reactor concepts.

In conjunction with the *Fair*, NUCLEX 69 organises *Technical Meetings*, which will give to the potential buyer a first-hand opportunity to get a clear picture concerning his needs in the nuclear sector. Leading representatives of important power utilities will present their experience with operating nuclear power stations equipped with proven reactor systems, whereas highly competent specialists from industry and research will discuss the prospects of advanced reactor systems. Furthermore, the programme contains sessions dealing with the crucial problems of the fuel cycles the prospects of automation in nuclear power stations as well as with the experience gained in the field of nuclear safety. A special chapter is devoted to the possibilities offered by the industrial applications of radioisotopes.

Exhibitors from the following countries are participating in the NUCLEX 69 — Fair, which will show a 30% surface increase compared with the 1966 event: Austria, Belgium, Canada, Czechoslovakia, Denmark, Federal Republic of Germany, Finland, France, Israel, Italy, Netherlands, Norway, Rumania, Sweden, Switzerland, United Kingdom, U.S.A.

GENEVA — FESTIVAL

The traditional "Fêtes de Genève" will be held on 15th, 16th and 17th August. The principal events will be the grand flower corso and the sensational firework display on the lake.

HORSE-RIDING

Guests at the Hotel Bahnhof at Trogen, Appenzell, are offered (throughout the year) all-inclusive arrangements for 7 days, costing Fr. 220.— (£22. 0s. 0d.) comprising full *pension* terms at the hotel, use of the hotel's own horses and 10 riding lessons.