

Annual dinner and ball

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MINISTER CARLIN.

(August 19th, 1859 — June 13th, 1922).

The tragically sudden death of our former Minister, on the threshold of his new, arduous and responsible sphere of action, came as a great shock to all. It is an additional regret that it was not vouchsafed to him to vindicate the high hopes placed in him by the Federal Council when they appointed him to the very important post of Swiss Minister at Berlin.

* * *

Minister Gaston Carlin was born at Delémont, in the Canton of Berne, on August 19th, 1859. His father was Prof. Edouard Carlin, a member of the National Council. He studied law at the Universities of Berne, Leipzig and Paris, terminating with an able dissertation which brought him the title of Doctor juris. He practised for a short while in his native Jura, but in 1883 he entered the diplomatic service as Attaché to the Swiss Legation in Rome. The following year he was sent to Vienna, where he became Secretary and later Counsellor of Legation. In 1891 the Government recalled him to entrust him with the delicate duties of Chief of the Section for Foreign Affairs of the Political Department. He remained at Berne until 1895, when the Federal Council appointed him Envoy Extraordinary and Minister Plenipotentiary of Switzerland at Rome, although he was but 36 years old. In 1902 he was transferred to London, and in 1904 appointed to represent his country not only at the Court of St. James's, as hitherto, but also in the Netherlands. At the end of 1919 he left London to take up his residence at the Hague, where he remained until the spring of this year, when he was called upon to accept the difficult post of Swiss Minister at Berlin.

During his long career Monsieur Carlin has also represented our country on many occasions on special missions at important International Conferences. Since 1917 he was also a member of the Permanent International Court of Arbitration at the Hague.

* * *

Most of us must have known our former Minister at least by sight, as he was so tall that at any gathering he could easily be seen above the heads of everybody present. Thus naturally singling him out, one was next struck with the strongly marked and pronounced individuality of his features. The impression of aristocratic aloofness he gave made some people wrongly believe he was somewhat unapproachable; but upon closer acquaintance they would be met with a warmth and cordiality of manner which dispelled the earlier idea.

His chief characteristic was a remarkable sense of duty. He was severe with himself and rightly expected application to duty from his subordinates. New members of the Legation did not always find it easy at first to work for a chief who was himself very painstaking and meticulous, but he was fair and just and always willing to give his co-workers the benefit of his vast experience. He was of scholarly disposition, learned in most subjects; his logical mind had a trend towards legislation and application of law. In legal matters he was an expert whose advice was often sought by the Federal Council.

During the War his devotion to duty led to overwork and undermined his health. It would often happen that long code telegrams arrived from Berne at 10 p.m. Monsieur Carlin would get them decoded at once (his eldest daughter was particularly quick at this laborious task), and as matters were usually urgent, he would personally write

a weighty note to the Foreign Office and have it delivered there the same night.

As an accomplished linguist he wrote a masterly style and spoke our three national languages, including dialects, without an accent.

In his hobby of collecting art treasures, of which he was a connoisseur, he showed himself a true Swiss. Besides paintings and engravings he collected Swiss stained glass, china and silver. He, who was the personal friend of Hodler and other great artists, showed his understanding of art and ideals in many tangible ways. He would encourage a young Swiss artist or sculptor by purchasing his work, or he would help a struggling inventor and invest *à fond perdu* in some venture in order to enable a countryman to carry out his idea.

His great aim in life was to serve loyally our country which he loved so well and to do what he could for his compatriots.

At his hospitable house in Portland Place you could meet many distinguished and titled persons, as well as artists, writers and inventors. No doubt, many members of our Colony have still pleasant memories of the dinner parties they attended.

With public funds he was very careful, realising only too well the financial limitations of our country and never forgetting the responsibility of his position. Privately, however, he was always ready to further a good cause. Besides subscribing to many other institutions, he gave the Swiss Benevolent Society during the war about £1,000. He was the honorary president of this society and he had a specially warm corner in his heart for the work it does. He took a lively interest in all our Swiss Societies and institutions here; the "Swiss House," for instance, owes its present home chiefly to his efforts. — Before leaving London, 2½ years ago, Monsieur Carlin, as a farewell gift, presented the "Fonds de Secours pour les Suisses pauvres" with a further £200, thus laying the foundation stone of the "Fondation Carlin," a fund the interest of which goes to assist aged and infirm Swiss in England.

The Colony owes the warmest gratitude to Minister Carlin, and our deep sympathy goes out to Madame Carlin and her three daughters, who were so devoted to their father. We have lost a sincere friend, Switzerland has lost one of her ablest and greatest men of the day and can ill spare him.

TH. R.

ANNUAL DINNER AND BALL

of the Société de Secours Mutuels des Suisses à Londres,
held at the "Schweizerbund," 74, Charlotte Street, W.1.
Saturday, June 10th, 1922.

When one enters a banquetting hall for the purpose of being present, through kind invitation, at an Annual Dinner and Ball, and is greeted by a beautiful standard which recalls to one's mind that the foundation of the Society dates back over 200 years (to be precise, the year of foundation was 1703) one cannot but fall into temporary reverent pensiveness.

A Society that can boast of such antiquity, and whose purport and mission is "Pour assister ses malades et pour supporter ses vieillards" has indeed a noble record.

Sixty-four members sat down and enjoyed — there's no reason why they should not have done so — a tempting menu. They must also have enjoyed the speeches that followed after, for it is now a tradition that at the "Schweizerbund" after-dinner speeches are "traditionally" short and therefore sweet, a fact which is greatly appreciated by the audience and no less by the reporter.

The Swiss Minister, Mr. C. R. Paravicini, occupied the honorary presidential chair, rising first to invite the gathering to join him in paying homage to the King, which tribute was duly paid.

He rose again and spoke the following: "Ladies and gentlemen, you may smoke!—an up-to-date invitation which did not fail to provoke merriment.

Mr. G. Colomb, the President of the Secours Mutuels, followed and thanked the Swiss Minister for having kindly accepted the office of chairman.

He further welcomed and tendered his thanks to the representatives of the following Swiss Societies who had responded to the president's invitation, viz.:—

City Swiss Club: Messrs. R. Rueff and J. Oltramare.

Schweizerbund: Mr. Riederer, accompanied by Mrs. Riederer.

Nouvelle Société Helvétique: Mr. Jean Baer.

Union Mercantile Society: Messrs. E. Werner and O. Gasser.

Union Helvetia: Messrs. A. Haller and A. Studer.

Unione Ticinese: Messrs. E. Biucchi and C. Togni.

To the ladies Mr. Colomb paid a special compliment by saying that his Committee were not only indebted to them for gracing the evening's function, but he also considered that particular tribute was due to the ladies who were looking so well after the health of their husbands, who were members of the Society, that the coffers of the sick fund are never seriously involved, and he thought it would not be extravagant if those ladies were made honorary members in return for guarding so jealously the Society's treasures.

The President also reminded the assembly that the Secours Mutuels offers great advantages to its members, who contribute but 2s. per month towards the Society's funds, from which 25%, viz., 6d., are returned to the members if they attend personally to pay their subscription, while they are entitled to draw sick benefits which in some cases have reached over £40 per annum. This fact may well be "broadcasted" through our wireless "Swiss Observer" for the profit of our readers.

Mr. Colomb concluded by inviting the members of the Secours Mutuels to drink the health of the guests of the evening.

In replying, the Swiss Minister expressed his pleasure in occupying the chair at so homely a meeting where ceremony was taboo. He recalled that this was not the first occasion of his being present at functions of this venerable and meritorious society, alluding in particular to the Bi-Centenary Celebration which took place in 1903 at the Hotel Cecil, on which occasion he accompanied his then chief, Minister G. Carlin. That is a good few years back, but what does this lapse of time signify when compared with the record of Mr. George Forrer, Honorary President of the Secours Mutuels, whose membership dates back to 1878, whom he was delighted to see present this evening and whom, he hoped, he would be able to greet once more, when the 250th Anniversary of the Society would be celebrated.

Mr. Paravicini also observed that he gladly noted the presence of two other members whose associations with the Secours Mutuels were slightly more ancient still; he referred to Mr. R. Gotz and Mr. A. Matzinger, who had become members in 1876 and 1877 respectively, and whom he was particularly pleased to greet, as they were also "engere Landsleute" of his, since they both hail from his own native Canton of Basle, which proves that Basle also plays a rôle of some importance outside its geographical borders.

The Swiss Minister concluded by raising his glass in honour of Mr. G. Colomb and the Secours Mutuels.

Mr. Jean Baer, the President of the Nouvelle Société Helvétique, then responded on behalf of the invited guests mentioning that it was the first time he had the pleasure of representing his society at an Annual of the Secours Mutuels. He terminated his address with sincere wishes for a long and prosperous life to this benevolent institution.

Mr. C. Campart proposed "La Patrie"; and the singing of patriotic songs, interspersed with entertainments by Mr. F. Golay and Mr. E. Durand, the Treasurer of the Society, kept the gathering amused until Mr. Colomb rose to announce that the finale of a pleasant and successful evening would be devoted to dancing. Here the usual order of things was reversed for once, for it was the "once stronger sex" which suffered for want of partners, a defect which, it is promised, will be remedied on the next occasion.

COOK-GENERAL WANTED in Doctor's house; four in family; no basement; housemaid kept; £42. — Mrs. Butler, 269, Goldhawk Road, W.12.

THE GRASSHOPPER ROWING CLUB AND HENLEY REGATTA.

July 5th—8th.

We have not yet been able to ascertain from the proper authorities in Zurich the exact date of the arrival of the Grasshopper crews, who, according to advance information are expected to reach London either Monday or Tuesday next.

This is rather unfortunate, as "The Swiss Observer" intends having the arrival and reception at the station filmed (also the training practice and results at Henley later on), adequate and proper arrangements for which cannot be made at the last moment only.

To arouse the interest of our readers and the Swiss Colony at large, we may mention the fact that since the club's inception, in 1906, the rowing section has secured:—

181 First Prizes.

60 Second Prizes.

30 Swiss Championships.

8 European Championships.

and one victory at the Olympic Games in Antwerp.

This formidable record inspires some hopes for Henley, and we hope the members of our Swiss Colony will not fail to muster in large forces to help stimulate by their presence at Henley the extreme efforts which our compatriots will be called upon to make when meeting the international competitors, whose prowess and skill it would be folly to underrate.

Therefore, members of the Swiss Colony, please show up in large numbers at the Royal Regatta and raise there the battle cry which our native crews are accustomed to hear in home waters: "Grasshoppers, come on!"

AMATEUR ATHLETIC CHAMPIONSHIPS, 1922.

Stamford Bridge Sports Grounds, Fulham Road, S.W. 6.

There is almost an avalanche of important events in the sport's world here in which Swiss champions are due to compete.

In this instance, as the heading indicates, we are referring to the A.A.A. Championships, due for decision on Friday and Saturday next, June 30th and July 1st, at 5 p.m. and 2.30 p.m. respectively.

In our last issue we acquainted our readers with the names of the four Swiss athletes who will arrive in London on Thursday next, the 29th inst. They will make the Union Helvetia Club, 1, Gerrard Place, W.1, their headquarters according to information kindly conveyed to us by its President, Mr. J. H. Rohr.

We wish to impress upon our readers and the members of the Swiss Colony that on this occasion, too, our sporting compatriots should receive every encouragement on the days when they are due to do battle. We sincerely trust that support will be forthcoming, afford comfort, and—if possible—lead Switzerland's representatives to victory!

YOUNG SWISS LADY requires situation as **CORRESPONDENCE-TYPIST**; thorough knowledge of French, German and Italian; fair English; French and German shorthand; three years' experience and references.—Please address replies to "Lady Correspondent," c/o. *The Swiss Observer*, 21, Garlick Hill, E.C.4.

BOARD-RESIDENCE at moderate terms offered to one or two Swiss gentlemen; comfortable home; good cuisine.—50, Aberdeen Road, Highbury, N.5. Phone: North 91.

SWISS YOUNG LADY, well educated, wishes care of children in refined family; needlework; per September.—Write, "E.W.", c/o. *Swiss Observer*, 21, Garlick Hill, E.C. 4.