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: - (1951)

Heft: 1160

Artikel: Fête suisse 1951

Autor: [s.n.]

DOI: https://doi.org/10.5169/seals-692870

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FETE SUISSE 1951.

Thursday, June 14th, 1951, at Central Hall, Westminster.

This Reunion of the Swiss Colony dates back to 1864. It was started under the auspices of the outstanding centre of the Colony — which remains its oldest institution — the EGLISE SUISSE. Year after year all Swiss have come together to celebrate our Homeland, sing its songs, recall happy memories, show their great devotion to " la Patrie lointaine " as it must have been then! But it was also an occasion — as it still is — to meet old Friends and make new ones.

The Fête suisse has become a great annual manifestation of the Swiss in London. Outstanding personalities like Général Henri Guisan, Aleardo Pini, President of the National Council, important Groups such as the Pipers and Drums of Basle and other artists have come and brought to our Fête honour and greatness, but above all they have strengthened the bonds which unite the Swiss abroad with the " Heimat ".

This year — which is that of the Festival of Britain — we are particularly proud and happy to have with us two outstanding Groups of Swiss artists, namely the *Stadtmusik Solothurn* and *La Chanson de Lausanne,* no less than 120 Performers, a great effort indeed. We are fortunate to have also the full support of the talents of our local Swiss Societies whose loyal collaboration has been such a great asset. We wish to express here our sincere gratitude to all those who have made this possible.

In 1948 several hundreds of people could not gain admission to a packed Central Hall; this may well happen again this year. So BOOK EARLY, do *not* wait.

An excellent Tea with many very tempting Swiss délicatesses will be served from 5 p.m. and during the Interval, you will enjoy them!

The times are not too cheerful, so let us unite, fill our hearts with joy and show our great and loyal love to Switzerland!

Au revoir . . . Uf wiederluege . . . Arrivederci . . .!

The Committee.

NEW SWISS GUARDS TAKE THE OATH.

(The following article has appeared in the issue of May 9th in " The Irish Press " and is herewith reproduced by courtesy of the Editor.)

A colourful ceremony took place in the Belvedere courtyard in the Vatican recently; the annual taking of the oath of service by the latest recruits to the Swiss Guards.

Seventy of the hundred Guards that make up the corps lined up and paraded the courtyard in full dress uniform with shining breastplates, helmets and halberds, and the nineteen new recruits of recent months took the oath: " I swear to serve faithfully and loyally His Holiness the reigning Pontiff, Pope Pius XII, and his legitimate successors, as well as to devote to them all my strength and, if needs be, to sacrifice my life for their defence. . . ."

May 6th is a sacred day for the Swiss Guards, the anniversary of the most glorious page in their history. On that date in 1527, only 22 years after the Corps had been established, all the Guards — 42 of them — lost their lives in defending Pope Clement VII against the forces of the Emperor Charles V.

Having sacked Rome, the German and Spanish troops attacked the Vatican Palace. They easily disposed of the Papal Gendarmes and the other Vatican Guards, but the little group of Swiss resisted valiantly against overwhelming odds. One by one they were slain in hand-to-hand combat as they covered thes Pope's retreat through the 500-yard covered passage that led to the fortress, Castel Sant' Angelo. The last Swiss Guard fell before the spears of the attackers as he banged the door of the fortress behind the Pope.

Twenty years later the corps was reconstructed and increased to the strength of 200 men. The massacre of 1527 set the headline for the fidelity of this chosen Corps, and in 1848, when Pope Pius IX was besieged in the Quirinal Palace by a Roman mob, the Swiss Guards were the only ones to remain loyal to their posts. On this occasion, too, many of them fell before the muskets of the crowd, but they managed to repulse the attack.

At the moment the Swiss Guards are a hundred in number. The commander is a full colonel, and he is assisted by a lieutenant-colonel, a major and four cap-

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