

A room from the mountains

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OUR DISTINGUISHED GUEST.



Dr. E. Schulthess
President of the Swiss Confederation.

We have much pleasure in publishing the portrait of Dr. E. Schulthess, President of the Swiss Confederation, and Switzerland's chief delegate to the World Economic Conference, which will open in London on Monday next.

Dr. E. Schulthess is a member of the Government since 1912, and, including his present term, has been four times President of the Confederation.

A ROOM FROM THE MOUNTAINS.

By ELIZABETH CONHEAD.

Whenever I have been in one, I decide that the mountain huts of the Swiss Alpine Club represent the perfect style of furnishing. The cleanliness, the absolute simplicity, the elimination of everything which is inessential, make them as beautiful in their bareness as the great views of rock wall and glacier which every window frames. In comparison, our rooms at home suddenly seem stuffy, and full of fuss.

Yet there is no reason why the Alpine hut motif should not be copied at home, more particularly in the little dining kitchens, or narrow slips of corridor rooms, which are so common in small modern flats, and so hard to save from messiness.

It is the business of the Alpine hut to withstand every kind of weather, and to provide, at a moment's notice, for hordes of tired mountaineers. Everything which might break or rot, or which would take up unnecessary space, is eliminated.

Its walls, of course, are of wood, but in an English house whitewashed walls, varnished so that they are washable, would serve the purpose. Against the walls of the main room are big built-in cupboards, and in them all the cutlery and crockery are stored. Actually, there is no crockery, but enamelled tin, or the new unbreakable ware in gay colours. A cooking stove is also shut into a cupboard, and in the grander huts there is a water tap beside it. Under the cupboards are

lockers, opening outwards, housing blankets, fuel, and a broom.

The furniture consists of a long, narrow refectory table, flanked by benches. If there are chairs, they are carved out of solid wood, with no corners to harbour dirt, but being shaped to the human frame, they are much more comfortable than you would suppose. Any extra blankets or supplies, together with the big felt slippers you slip on when you have removed your climbing boots, are hung in baskets from the ceiling.

The other room is the sleeping-room, which has rows of mattresses laid on the floor, each with its black blankets and big pillow covered in cotton, gaily printed in huge red and white checks. The same cotton makes curtains in the more civilised huts. A strip of sturdy hand-woven matting (made in some remote village of the Valais), which is not harmed by any hob-nails, runs at the foot of the "beds," and there is another strip before the living-room stove.

The idea can be transplanted, a trifle less austere, into the narrow dining-kitchen at home. The long refectory table and benches are so much less cumbersome than an ordinary dining-room table and chairs that a space under six feet broad can be made into a dining-recess. If the benches are upholstered with pads covered in check gingham, which is also used for curtains, the corner is as gay as it is practical. Cupboards and lockers built into the wall will house all utensils, and if possible, the stove and sink should be built in also, so that they can be shut out of sight. Matting rather like the handwork of the Valais can be had from Scotland, and its pale greys and browns look most attractive against the scrubbed white wooden boards of the floor.

SWISS BENEVOLENT SOCIETY.

34, Fitzroy Square, London, W.1.

The Annual Report of this Society gives some striking indications regarding its present activities in comparison with previous years. The total expenditure for the year 1932 amounted to £4,080 0 6 against £1,852 11 0 in 1922 and £602 18 9 in 1912. This is a renewed proof of the great necessity of this institution. Not less than 602 countrymen benefited by the aid of the Society last year, and apart from the numerous donations in kind, £2,032 were paid out in Casual Relief, £1,517 in Pensions and £148 in expenses for Repatriation.

In 1933 the demands upon the Society are still increasing and, in order to enable us to render adequate assistance to our countrymen in distress, we should like to appeal to all who are in steady employment or otherwise in a position to help for their kind support. May we direct this appeal particularly also to the Members of our Colony, who do not yet appear amongst the kind contributors.

R. DUPRAZ,
President.

LONDON GOSSIP.

— WHIT-WEEK —

No matter how we felt in regard to the Referendum on the proposal to reduce Swiss Government salaries — having been lost, those last days of blue and gold must have melted away any grief and what-not. — It is, of course, none of our business, but we do hope and feel almost sure you all had in one way or another a most marvellous time.

Many people, chronically, are somehow out of gear after such a holiday, — in spite of previous resolutions: never again to drink milk with cucumber salad, and then try to cure it off with beer. — There is our tip to make the stomach rid itself of all the unpleasant residues that embarrass it, — but why bring that up!

Glasses of water quite cool, taken abundantly between meals, in the morning early, and in the evening as you step into bed, will promote the proper action of your kidneys. — This medical advice is from a good friend of ours, who includes the "Kirsch" water into the H-2-O family, as well as other "blue-blooded" drinks.

The "shilling" theatre in Fulham has given a play, called "Night's Candles," adopted from Alfred de Musset's "Lorenzaccio." No smaller critic than James Agate has given his views in regard to play and performance. And since we have seen it, we think that it is every bit as good as the daily papers say. Ernest Milton personifies to perfection the degenerate, cowardly and capricious sinner. — All seats are one shilling and can be booked in advance. In case you should miss it in Fulham, — we hear, it will come to the West End in the autumn.

In an age of showoffs and bow stealers — well what we mean is that it is quite in order to say, with that twist in the voice, that one goes to the Riviera this summer as usual, — and then

takes a Greenline bus to Maidenhead. In fact, the "Thames Riviera" is a most beautiful spot. The Hungaria River Club has a dining room which is Montmartre, complete with deep blue sky, stars, little side-café and cabarets. — We dined in the Place des Abesses. — Just outside is the Thames — and there was a moon, of course; red and blue lights were in trees and bushes, underneath the free-air dancing floor of glass, and around the swimming pool. Genuine and artificial romance whispered in darker corners — and it was June, the month when spring is still in the memory and summer so near. — It is a dangerous time, they say, and many an old man is likely to forget his lumbago and dance the Rumba.

And then we overheard 2 City business men: we have sold during the past 4 weeks exactly 104 dinner jackets designed for woman. Seven were for married women, and what do you think, Sir, of that? — Well, said the other, I haven't a single thought, except in my duds I feel positively effeminate.

And that again reminds us of the old washer-woman's answer, as she was asked: Have you seen Miss Edith's fiancé? — No, ma'am, she said, it ain't been in the wash yet! —

When W. R. Hearst celebrated his birthday on April 29, the Americans hoped that he will see many happy returns. The "New York American" which, of course, is a Hearst Newspaper, wrote on the occasion: Washington established this country. Lincoln preserved it, Edison lighted it, Ford put it on wheels and Hearst makes men think! — Well, there you are, where are you? —

Another book has been written about Mona Lisa, and all that. — But we are very doubtful whether anything better remains to be said, than the one of the two country visitors to the Art museum which hit the nail on the top for all times: "Hallo! here is the Mona Lisa" the one

AN AMUSING BOOKLET.

To the Editor of the Swiss Observer.

I have received a little book entitled "Twenty Polyglot Rhymes" which is an attempt at versification in four languages. The result is curious, and considering the enormous difficulty there is in making the lines not only rhyme but also scan, I think the author is to be congratulated on his efforts.

It is bad enough when one tries to write poetry in one language, but when four are mixed up together the difficulties are almost insurmountable, because the genius of each language is different and the rhythm is not the same.

However, the result is distinctly amusing, and I think I cannot do better than quote two examples.

MODERN EVE.

Dear "Mother Eve" was fond of fruit,
Der Apfel schmeckte ihr recht gut,
Mais elle, sans hésiter, donna
A suo sposo la metà.

Our modern Eve "moves with the tide,"
Liebt Bubikopf und kurzes Kleid,
Les bas à jour, les belles bottines,
Gioielli anche, senza fin'!

But "Man" remains, please don't ignore,
"Der alte Adam," nach wie vor!
Ce pauvre doit gagner sa vie,
Anch' io debbo far' così!

THE GERMAN LANGUAGE.

When learning German, you must first
Erraten vieles, was du hörst,
Car bien des mots sont si bizarres
Che non si lasciano spiegar'!

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exclaimed, and the other one said: "Aw, come on! that dame's smile reminds me of my wife's when she thinks I am lying." —

And, incidentally, were you lucky enough to get a ticket for the Centre Court in Wimbledon? Now that the arguments with regard to the "New and other fronts" should be settled in Switzerland, we wonder what the Uerners, Schwyzers and others will answer to Hitler's suggestion of a Super-Germany, including all Germanic peoples as well as the German speaking parts of Switzerland? — If we remember rightly some hundred years ago some Austrians tried to do something of that sort. Did they not come with men and horse somewhere near Morgarten — and then lost their shirts? — To-day, of course, we are all pacifists, and we Swiss are nearly as "polished" as anybody else, but then beware of what still might happen when they start: verr ... chaib ... etc. — The space of this column, unfortunately, does not permit us to bring that "prayer" in its full length.

If you are getting tired of mutton and cabbage, try for a change crocodile's tail with Hiazinth's bulbs. — They had a dinner of it in Paris some days ago, and they called it: rather exciting! —

A manufacturer said that some morning soon we shall wake up and wonder where the depression has gone. — And it had better be soon, or the depression will wake up some morning and wonder where we have gone. —

But, nevertheless, we are all looking forward to the garden party at the Brent Bridge Hotel, and we all want to be there. — The various paints and varnishes we all have to put on, or are being put on, occasionally, to suit the circumstances — will once again fall off, and we will be just Swiss amongst us. — or, will we?

Mops.