

London Swiss Rifle Team

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FAREWELL DINNER

to

Monsieur W. A. de BOURG

Counsellor of Legation

offered by the

LONDON SWISS RIFLE TEAM

on Tuesday, October 26th

at Pagani's Restaurant, W.

HAIL AND FAREWELL!

A famous French poet wrote, "Partir c'est mourir un peu," and I feel sure, that Monsieur de Bourg, who is leaving us after thirteen years of fruitful work, must have felt the truism of this adage.

It is not my intention to write here an appreciation, as this has already been done in this paper; but I think that the Farewell Party arranged by the London Swiss Rifle Team, of which M. de Bourg was its President, should be duly recorded as one of the more important events in the Social life of the Colony.

In spite of the many functions which have been crowded into the last two weeks, exactly 70 of our compatriots attended the reception and dinner at Pagani's.

Although a parting is always a more or less sad affair everybody "bore up" wonderfully well, and I could not see anybody walking about with "tears in his eyes."

Duly fortified by various cocktails, sherries, etc., the company adjourned from the reception Hall to the Alexandra Hall. I quite expected that ushers carrying rifles would see the more important personalities to their seats; it would have brought it home to those who were not members of the Rifle Team (and they were in the majority) that the hosts of the evening were to a certain degree imbued with a martial spirit.

Instead of which, we had the usual black coated waiters with benign smiles, to give the atmosphere a curiously peaceful appearance.

When Monsieur Paravicini, the Swiss Minister, entered the Banqueting Hall, together with Monsieur de Bourg, he was officially welcomed by M. P. F. Boehringer, the Hon. Secretary of the London Swiss Rifle Team; the speaker, after expressing shortly the pleasure the members of the Team felt in having the Minister presiding over the gathering, alluded to a recent happy event, which had taken place in the Minister's family, congratulating him on having become a Grandfather; I thought, as the father was present he should also have had a share of the congratulations.

The next hour was then spent in eating through one of Pagani's bounteous meals, quite a task, I can assure you, my neighbour on the right worked like a Trojan.

It goes without saying that the principal function at a Farewell Dinner is the one of making speeches.

The Swiss Minister opened the oratorical part with one of his pleasant after dinner speeches, of which he is such a past master, these extempore speeches, so different from the more official utterings at Banquets, etc., fit an occasion of this kind very well, but often they prove the despair of the reporter, as by "reproduction" they often lose the personal *cachet*.

Monsieur Paravicini started his address in French, — no doubt as a compliment to a brother diplomat, — he said it would be a speech both "sérieux" and "mîrte" in fact, almost a *querserie*.

"A farewell speech" the Minister said, "need not necessarily be sad, of course, there remains the fact that our friend is leaving us, and that in itself is sad, but it has also quite a number of redeeming features. Nobody has any idea," — he continued — "what our guest of honour has passed through, during the last few weeks, nobody would believe *f.l.*, the thousand and one things he has "found" when moving,

and yet in spite of all the manifold troubles which leave taking entails, M. de Bourg has never lost "le sourire traditionnel," which is of an exceptional quality, nor his sense of humour; it has enabled him to take leave with a perhaps lighter heart from all those with whom he has been in close contact during his *séjour*, such as the London Swiss Rifle Team, the City Swiss Club, Nouvelle Société Helvétique, Swiss Mercantile Society, Unione Ticinese, Fonds de Secours, Secours Mutuels, Union Helvetia, Swiss Observer, Swiss Federal Railways and the Swiss Bank."

The Minister then continued in "Schwyzerdütsch," saying that during his years of office at the Legation, M. de Bourg was everyone's friend, even of his chief, which was by no means a foregone conclusion in the Diplomatic Service. Amongst great hilarity the Minister said, that he has never known him writing, through all the thirteen years, a private letter during "office hours."

"Monsieur de Bourg" — the speaker continued — "was in the real sense of the word the liaison officer between the Legation and the Swiss Colony, if any information was required or if somebody was in trouble, they got into touch with him, and if he could not help them on the spot, he at least dismissed them with the hopeful sentence "Mir wei de luege" (Laughter)."

The Minister then said that after a *séjour* at the Legations of Paris, Balkans and London, M. de Bourg was going to Munich, to hold an important post; as in the Diplomatic Service one cannot stop anywhere for ever. He then concluded his address, which was intermingled with many a *bon mot*, by wishing M. de Bourg great success in his new sphere of activity.

After the applause had subsided, the Swiss Minister presented, on behalf of the Members of the London Swiss Rifle Team, a beautiful solid silver salver to M. de Bourg, bearing the following inscription:

Presented by the Members of the London Swiss Rifle Team to their President, Monsieur Walter, A. de Bourg, Counsellor of Legation, on his departure from London, October 1937.

The Minister then asked the gathering to drink to the health of M. de Bourg, which was done with great enthusiasm.

The next speaker was Mr. A. F. Suter, President of the Nouvelle Société Helvétique, London Group. He said:

"It is always a sad task to speed a parting friend, but fortunately we have M. de Bourg's assurance that he will come back at times and pay us a fleeting visit. However, it is also a pleasant privilege to be able to tell a parting friend how much his personality and his work were appreciated, and that he carries with him the good wishes of all his friends.

M. de Bourg has been such a faithful companion and true friend to all of us in the Colony that I prefer to convey our good wishes to him not from the narrow circle of the Nouvelle Société Helvétique only, but rather in the wider sense of all those who cannot express these wishes themselves.

I imagine that a diplomat's lot, like a policeman's, cannot always be a happy one. He, in fact, is a policeman and a detective all in one — in the wider sense — with his ears laid back and his eyes skinned, often with his nose to the grindstone till deep into the night, at times even with his back to the wall — alto-

gether a somewhat difficult and dangerous profession to have.

His work is leading him into novel and untried surrounding: — into a new post, in a new capital, in a new Reich, with a new Führer. I can foresee that there will be plenty of excitement for him, new situations and circumstances for his adroit mind to chew and digest, and to set before the Federal Council in a palatable and nicely pre-digested dish; plenty of opportunities to transmit to the new Government the answers from Berne, answers not too hasty, not too friendly yet not suspicious, neither in the affirmative nor the negative exactly, yet always very neighbourly.

These are the duties and privileges of a diplomat. His own personality is everything, yet it must be lost in his official work. His decisions must be firm and final, his advices to Berne unequivocal, yet he is the servant of a State, not his own master and the last word is not his. These privileges look almost like disadvantages.

However, there must be plenty of compensations in a diplomat's life, and we hope that many such will come the way of our friend: — pomp and pageantry, glitter and glory, banners and banquets, famous and noble friends, all these good things M. de Bourg is likely to encounter in his new life. — Of one thing we are certain, that he, in his new capacity, will meet many good countrymen who will like him as we have liked him and who, not enjoying the same happy freedom as we do, will make greater claims on his leadership than we have had to do. He of the charming smile and hearty word will, I feel sure watch over their welfare with keen and selfless care.

We express to-night not only our thanks for M. de Bourg's services rendered to us in the past, but we also express here our best wishes for his good health, his happiness and the prosperity of his new activity."

The applause which these words evoked had hardly died down, when M. A. Steinmann, President of the Swiss Mercantile Society, expressed to M. de Bourg, on behalf of his Society his sincere thanks for the great interest he had always shown to the Society and the College, and also for the keen interest he had taken in the various Sporting events at Imber Court. In closing his short address, M. Steinmann alluded to the fact that he hailed from the same canton (Solothurn) wishing him especially as "engerer Landsmann" success in his future career.

So far we had heard speeches in English, French and "Schwyzerdütsch," M. Gambazzi, President of the Unione Ticinese, addressed M. de Bourg in Italian, thanking him for the services he had rendered not only to the Society but to a large number of our compatriots, and wishing him success wherever he may go.

M. A. Indermaur, President of the Union Helvetia (Landesverwaltung) also thanked the parting diplomat, saying amidst laughter that M. de Bourg even went into the Police Court for them: "we have not seen him so often since at our Club" — (Renewed laughter) — M. Indermaur said in conclusion.

Then the culminating point of the evening arrived, M. de Bourg, this time without his traditional smile, asked the indulgence of the company. On rising one could see that he was labouring under a great emotional strain, he said:

"I find it rather difficult to find words or voice with which to thank you, and I hope that if I am very brief you will understand.

That the London Swiss Rifle Team should have arranged this dinner here to-night, and so given me an opportunity of bidding you all farewell, is something which has moved me very deeply, and I want to thank them most sincerely for their kind and generous thought, and in particular for all the nice things you have said about me.

During my thirteen years in London I have been so fortunate as to make many friends amongst the Colony in general and in particular with the City Swiss Club, the Swiss Mercantile Society, the Union Helvetia, the Swiss Rifle Association, the Gymnastic Society, the Nouvelle Société Helvétique and the Unione Ticinese.

At the Legation too I have found the most charming colleagues and the most kindly Chief, who has often used great indulgence when dealing with my shortcomings, and who has set me a most brilliant example of what is expected from the Head of a Mission.

You, Monsieur le Ministre, have always been the perfect Chief and the perfect adviser, and I owe you a debt of gratitude that I can never hope to repay.

It is hard to pull up one's roots, especially when the soil in which they are embedded is such a kindly soil as this has been, and to go away to a strange country. But we in the Diplomatic Corps know beforehand that every time we say "Ave" to new friends we must hear — in our mind's ear — the whisper of a future "Vale."

And to be forewarned is to be forearmed. So I must consider myself lucky to have enjoyed your friendship for so long, and I want to thank you, as well as all those at the Legation, for my many happy memories of my stay in England.

They say that at parting the heart grows fonder. But I don't agree with the poet, because my feelings could not grow fonder than they have always been.

And I will not say "goodbye," to you all, but rather "Auf Wiedersehen," because I hope to see you all again often, here in London where I am so fortunate as to possess a house even if I no longer have a home, and also in Munich, where I shall always be most happy to welcome you or to help you in any possible way.

I hardly need to say how overwhelmed I am with the magnificent souvenirs which my friends from the London Swiss Rifle have given me. You can rest assured that it will be a most treasured memento of my stay in London."

Long and sincere applause greeted the speaker, who then resumed his seat and "traditional smile."

The last speaker was M. de Cintra, President of the Swiss Sports Committee, who expressed the thanks to the London Swiss Rifle Team for having given the Colony an opportunity to say good-bye to M. de Bourg. He also hoped that the L.S.R.T. would find an equally acceptable President in the near future.

And so ended a pleasant evening spent with a man who leaves but friends behind.

There have been so many bouquets thrown at him, some suspiciously looking like wreaths, that the writer does not wish to add to the agony or discomfort of the recipient, may he, however, be allowed to pick one little simple flower from the wealth of blooms, one little flower without grandeur or splendour, and present it to our departing friend; a forget-me-not on behalf of all those who so often have enjoyed his cheerful company, his help and advice. May the writer also present best wishes for success in a task which, both requires optimism and tact, which our friend, M. de Bourg, happily possesses in such abundance.

We will not say farewell, but

"AUF WIEDERSEHEN!"

ST.

Apart from those already mentioned, the following were present:

P. Brun, W. Beckmann, H. C. Balser, O. Bartholdi, P. Bessire, A. C. Baume, C. Campart, A. Clivaz, C. Chapuis, R. Dupraz, G. E. DE Brunner, A. Deubelbeiss, Dr. Egli, J. Eusebio, W. Fischer, O. Frei, E. Gassmann, M. Grether, W. Gattiker, Dr. Haccius, Rev. Hahn, P. Hiltner, M. Hess, L. Haussauer, G. Jenne, J. Jenny, L. Jobin, G. Jenni, G. Keller and friend, W. Kruecker, F. Magnin, G. Marchand, F. Matthey, C. Xater, J. Oltramare, H. Pfister, G. Pape, J. Pfändler, E. Pernet, V. Paravicini, Dr. Rezzonico, A. Rueff, G. Rueff, F. H. Rohr, M. Rohr, jun's, J. de Rham, E. Steiner, A. Stauffer, B. W. Sigerist, A. Saager, A. Stahelin, C. Strublin, A. Schmid, H. Senn, G. Wuthrich, J. C. Wetter, W. Wetter, F. Zogg, J. Zimmermann.

NEWS FROM THE LEGATION.

On Friday, October 29th, Mme. Paravicini and the Swiss Minister invited the Staff of the Legation to a small, informal Sherry Party at 21, Bryanston Square, and so gave them a welcome opportunity of bidding farewell to their friend and colleague, M. de Bourg, and to his daughter.

All were grateful to the Minister for putting their own feelings into words so admirably when he presented M. de Bourg with the Legation's personal gift and souvenir in the form of a silver flower bowl, bearing the following inscription:—

A. Monsieur Walter de Bourg
en souvenir de sa collaboration
1924-1937

La Légation de Suisse en Grande-Bretagne.

The departing Counsellor of Legation expressed his appreciation in well chosen words and went round to shake hands with each of his — from now on "former" — colleagues.

M. DE BOURG'S SHERRY PARTY AT THE DORCHESTER HOTEL.

Well over 400 guests attended the farewell Sherry party given by M. de Bourg, at the Dorchester Hotel.

Mlle. de Bourg, his daughter, helped to receive the guests, the majority of which were diplomats of all nations. There were also a considerable number of Members of the Swiss Colony present.

CHURCH MATTERS.

An announcement by the "Consistoire" of the "Eglise Suisse" appeared in our last issue, with regard to the appointment of M. Marcel Pradervand to the post of "Pasteur" at the above church.

We take this opportunity to extend our sincere congratulations to Pasteur Pradervand, who is no stranger amongst the Colony. —

M. Marcel Pradervand, hails from Corcelles near Payerne, he was born in Payerne on the 7th of November 1905, where he received his schooling up to the age of 16. From 1921-1923 he studied at the "Gymnase de Lausanne" in order to get the degree of *bachelier ès-lettres classiques*.

Having achieved this, he continued his studies at the theological Faculty of the University of Lausanne for four years (1923-1927), obtaining the degree of *licencié en théologie*.

M. Pradervand then studied for a while at the University of Basle, in which town he acted at the same time as "Suffragant de l'Eglise Française."

In 1928 he went to Berlin where he studied at the University for one year, having amongst his teachers Professors Diessmann and Titius. His next sphere of activity was London, (1929) where he held an appointment as "suffragant" at the Eglise Suisse for three years.

In 1932 he was ordained as a member of the "Eglise Nationale Vaudoise," and since acted as "Pasteur" of the Parish of Ressudens, near Payerne. A year later he married Mlle. Ruth Bertschinger, whom he met during his stay in London, two boys are the issue of this marriage.

THE CONGRESS OF THE SWISS ABROAD IN BERNE.

The second instalment and conclusion of the above article will appear in our next issue.

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FORTHCOMING EVENTS.

Wednesday, November 10th, at 8.30 p.m. — Swiss Mercantile Society — Lantern-Lecture, by Mlle. Ella Maillart, on "From Peking to India by Caravan," at Kingsway Hall, Kingsway, W.C.2.

Saturday, November 13th, — Nouvelle Société Helvétique — at 2 and 4 o'clock — Film Show: "A Travers la Suisse," at King George's Hall, Caroline Street, Tottenham Court Road, W.C.1. Calendars on sale.

Friday, November 19th — Nouvelle Société Helvétique — at "Swiss House" 34/35, Fitzroy Square, W.1 at 7.45 p.m. Monthly Meeting to be followed by a causerie by J. Eusebio, Esq., on: "A few 'Ticinesi' worth talking about."

Friday, November 26th — City Swiss Club — Annual Banquet and Ball — at the Grosvenor House, Park Lane, W.1.

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Réformation: 11h. — M. Emery. Prédication et Ste. Cène.

6h.30 — Mr. Lageard — Prédication et Ste. Cène.

11h. — Ecole du Dimanche.

Le Pasteur Emery reçoit le Mercredi de 11 heures à midi 30, à l'Eglise, 79, Endell Street, W.C.2. S'adresser à lui pour tous les actes pastoraux. (téléphone: Museum 3100, domicile: Foyer Suisse, 12, Upper Bedford Place, W.C.1.)

SCHWEIZERKIRCHE (Deutschsprachige Gemeinde).

St. Anne's Church, 9, Gresham Street, E.C.2.
(near General Post Office.)

Sonntag, den 7. November 1937. Reformationfest.

11 Uhr morgens, Gottesdienst u. Feier des Heiligen Abendmahls.

Sonntagsschule.

7 Uhr abends, Gottesdienst u. Feier des Heiligen Abendmahls.

Anfragen wegen Religions- bzw. Confirmandenstunden und Amtshandlungen sind erbeten an den Pfarrer der Gemeinde: C. Th. Hahn, 43, Priory Road, Bedford Park, W. 4 (Telephon: Chiswick 4156). Sprechstunden: Dienstag 12-2 Uhr in der Kirche.

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