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FAREWELL DINNER FOR M. JEAN DE RHAM.

On February 28th, the Swiss Council took the opportunity of a full meeting, at which the now very topical question of a Swiss Centre in London was discussed, to follow it up with a dinner in honour of Monsieur de Rham, First Secretary at our Legation and a good friend of so many in our Colony, who was due to leave his London post. The Minister and several other members of the Legation were present in order to join in the heartfelt tributes that were paid to a departing colleague and friend. Mr. Steiner as chairman, M. Renou as honorary secretary of the Council, Mr. Bon as President of the City Swiss Club and an unofficial doyen of our Colony, and the Minister, M. Paul Ruegger, expressed their and the Colony's parting sorrow and deep appreciation of M. de Rham, his devoted selfless work, his unassuming intellectual qualities, his warmhearted human and cultural interests and above all his friendship and utter loyalty. Both M. Renou and Colonel Bon delivered moving testimonies of the sense of a great loss evoked by the departure of M. de Rham and they did not forget to pay tributes also to Madame de Rham, who has endeared herself no less to our Colony with her sympathetic understanding, her cheerfulness and friendship and her model qualities as hostess, wife and mother.

The Minister completed the round of speeches from the official angle, underlining especially M. de Rham's ever ready service and devotion to duty in the many tasks he was called upon to perform in the course of his eight years stay at the London Legation. Team-work and loyalty, he declared, were the chief prerequisites of the success of all foreign missions, and M. de Rham contributed so much to the successful working of the Legation by exactly those qualities, by putting service and duty above everything else. The Minister wished his brilliant young colleague and Mme de Rham all the best for a great future to which his proposed stay at the Commercial Division in Berne for the completion of his experiences so obviously represents only a preparatory interim stage.


M. de Rham thanked the speakers and all his friends for their moving testimonies of friendship and appreciation, the memory of which he will treasure wherever he goes. In a humorous survey of his stay amongst us he recalled that he came to this country at the end of 1937, still under M. Paravicini, and how he passed through all conceivable kinds of legation duties during this arduous period of training. He came as Attaché and ends up, as is well known, as First Secretary to be promoted any moment now to the rank of conseiller. On one aspect of his work and interests here he dwelled with particular pride and justification: the unostentatious care for cultural relations which he shared particularly, as he did not fail to point out, with M. Eric Kessler, whose work as press-attaché has borne such beneficial fruit for Switzerland in this country and is now required in Washington, where he has been transferred to so recently in the rank of conseiller. Two important Swiss events in the cultural domain, largely the work of these two former members of the Legation, will shortly take place in London in their much regretted absence: The Swiss Book Exhibition to be opened some time in April and a Swiss Architectural Exhibition timed to be held in August or September. The success of two Swiss films in London, one of which is still running in sev-

eral cinemas, and M. Ansermet's triumphal concert-tour in this country of several weeks duration have helped very much to revive Anglo-Swiss cultural relations in a most satisfactory manner. M. de Rham rounded up this short review of cultural events, that are so near to his heart, with the expression of the hope, that also an exhibition of Swiss paintings may, before very long, be held in London.

The correspondents of Swiss newspapers in London took leave from M. Eric Kessler, their adviser and friend throughout the war years in all Press matters and political questions, at an intimate lunch organised in his honour. Each of the correspondents present confirmed in short informal speeches the high esteem in which Dr. Kessler was held by all the representatives of the Swiss Press working in London. He has gone to Washington with the warmest wishes for the difficult task awaiting him there on the part of all his former colleagues of the Press.

Dr. E.

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