

News of the colony

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For the first time in history of the Swissair, one of their Air Liners, on the return journey from Johannesburg (S. Africa) landed at Accra (British West Africa).

The Swiss Colony, consisting of about 60 persons, headed by the Swiss Consul Knittel, gave the "DC-4" machine an enthusiastic reception.

After a stay of 1½ hours, the air liner continued its flight to Geneva.

The journey from Johannesburg to Geneva (4,700 kms.) took less than 14 hours. The machine was piloted by Flight-Captains Borner and Hans Kuhn. [A.T.S.]

The Union for Inland Navigation in northern Italy will hold a congress in Ferrara from May 20th to 22nd to study schemes for international waterways to link Switzerland with the Adriatic Sea and the development of inland traffic along the Po Valley.

The Congress will be attended by experts from all over Italy, as well as delegates from abroad.

Economics

A delegation of Swiss bankers and Government officials has left for Washington to discuss the U.S. Treasury plan to sequester as "enemy property" dollar holdings in U.S. banks of foreign nationals who do not declare them before June 1st. The appointment of the delegation announced by the Swiss Government followed strong protests by the Swiss press against the U.S. Treasury's plan which, it was said, "violated the principle of bank secrecy."

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The following Universities in Switzerland: Basle, Berne, Fribourg, Geneva, Lausanne, Neuchâtel and Zurich, which, at the beginning of this year were invited to send delegates to the 600th anniversary of the Karls University in Prague (Czechoslovakia), have now declined the invitation owing to the recent events which have taken place in that country. [A.T.S.]

The Swiss Colony in San Francisco has sent a donation of 6,000\$ to the Swiss Red Cross to be used for needy children in the countries which were at war. In appreciation of this gift one of the "Chalets" of the "Kinderhilfe" will bear the name "Chalet of the Swiss Colony San Francisco." [A.T.S.]

The Central Committee in Zurich of the Swiss National Day announced that the total result from the sale of 1st of August badges in 1947 amounted to 1,070,000.—frs.

The proceeds from the sales of those badges amongst Swiss citizens abroad produced the amount of 44,000.—frs.

The 1948 collection will be used for the fight against tuberculosis. This year's badge represents the Great Seal of the Confederation with the escutcheons of the Swiss cantons and has been struck on the occasion of the centenary of the Swiss Constitution.

[A.T.S.]

Good news for all wine lovers comes from Switzerland. The 1947 vintage is reported to be of fine quality, in fact it is stated that it will be the "wine of the century." The last three vintages are considered to be of excellent quality, a thing which seldom happens. [A.T.S.]

The Federal Yodel Festival (Eidg. Jodlerfest) will take place in Berne in 1949. [A.T.S.]

NEWS OF THE COLONY.

Concert of the Swiss Male Choir, Swiss Orchestral Society, Swiss Accordion Group.

Not since March 29th, 1939 — nine long and eventful years — has the Colony been able to attend a Swiss Concert, and now comes the welcome news, that three of our Societies have joined forces, to present their supporters and friends with an attractive and well-chosen programme.

The combination is a most fortunate one, and everyone should find amongst the many items on the programme something to his or her taste. The aim of the performers is not only to entertain, but also to put their talents at the service of a good cause; the profits of this entertainment will be handed over to the Swiss Benevolent Society, which is doing such splendid work for our less fortunate compatriots.

The organisers have been successful in obtaining the collaboration of a fine artist, in the person of Albert Ferber, who has made a name for himself as a first-class pianist, both in this country and abroad.

The name of Albert Ferber, a countryman of ours, is on any programme a big asset, and those, who have had the pleasure of attending some of his recitals, during the last few years at Wigmore Hall, will, no doubt, look forward to hearing this gifted artist again.

The Swiss Male Choir, needs but little introduction, this active Society has on many occasions given their whole-hearted support to various functions in the Colony, such as the 1st of August celebration and the

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"Fête Suisse," etc., etc. By their fine singing under the efficient leadership of Mr. E. P. Dick, they have given us untold pleasure, and all lovers of folk-lore should not miss the opportunity of hearing them again.

The Swiss Orchestral Society, also under the leadership of Mr. E. P. Dick, is a Society which does not advertise itself much, but they too, have rendered a helping hand at many functions and they have always been ready when their services were required, and by doing so, they have often strained their slender resources to the breaking-point.

A Swiss concert without accordionists would not be complete, and those amongst us, who prefer light to classical music will undoubtedly find great pleasure in listening to the Swiss Accordion Group. They have a leader in the person of Mr. A. Gandon, who realises the difference between playing for dancing and concert-playing, as could be witnessed on their appearances at social functions in the Colony.

Having been acquainted with the contents of the programme we are more than convinced, that this entertainment will satisfy both the "highbrows" and the "lowbrows," and we sincerely hope that the above mentioned Societies will register a "full house" on Friday, 23rd of April, 1948.

By their great services which they have rendered in the past to the Swiss Colony, we are all deeply indebted to them, and here is a splendid occasion to show our appreciation for services well and truly rendered.

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Switzerland ?

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FAREWELL LUNCHEON TO THE SWISS MINISTER AND MADAME PAUL RUEGGER by the Council for the Study of Swiss Problems.

The above Council invited their members and guests to a Farewell Luncheon in honour of the Swiss Minister and Madame P. Ruegger on Monday, March 22nd, 1948, at Brown's Hotel, Dover Street, W.1.

Mr. E. Steiner, President of the Council, welcomed the Minister and Madame Ruegger and extended a special welcome to Monsieur M. Petitpierre, Swiss Foreign Minister, and Madame Petitpierre, who are on a private visit to this country.

Other guests included, Dr. A. Escher, Counsellor of Legation, Monsieur and Madame de Graffenried, Monsieur and Madame Hunziker, Monsieur and Madame Aubaret, and Mr. Stauffer, Editor of the Swiss Observer.

After a short *resumé* with regard to the work of the Council by the President, Mr. A. Renou, the energetic and vivacious Secretary of this Council, paid a high and moving tribute to Monsieur and Madame Ruegger for the devoted services they had rendered both to our country and to the Swiss Colony in Great Britain, not forgetting the Minister's collaborators at the Legation.

He expressed the regrets of the members to see our sympathetic Minister leaving a post, which he had held with such distinction and success, and wished both him and Madame Ruegger God speed and success in their new sphere of activity.

Mr. Renou, then referred to the presence of Monsieur and Madame Petitpierre, saying that the visit of a Federal Councillor amongst the members of the Council was highly appreciated and a great honour.

Space unfortunately does not allow us to go into the details of this excellent address, which was unanimously applauded by the company.

The Swiss Minister on his, and Madame Ruegger's behalf, thanked the Council for having given him an opportunity to take leave from the members with whom he had been in the closest and most pleasant touch during the tenure of his post, singling out several of them by name.

He mentioned, that he was leaving London with regrets, and that his responsible task had been made easier by the helpful collaboration of the business community in the Colony.

Federal-Councillor Petitpierre, who received a hearty ovation from the company, voiced his great pleasure at having been asked to the Farewell Party for the Minister and Madame Ruegger, which had given him an opportunity to meet a number of his compatriots.

He paid a warm tribute to the work of the Minister, whom, he said, was held in great esteem by the Federal Council.

Monsieur Petitpierre referred to the many problems which are confronting the Swiss Government both in the political, financial and economic sphere, and in conclusion thanked the Swiss abroad for the efforts and courage which they have shown, especially during the last difficult years.

Long applause greeted the statement of our Foreign Minister.