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At the Swiss Embassy

A RECEPTION IN HONOUR OF MR. A. STAUFFER

On Saturday, 25th November, the Swiss Ambassador and Madame Daeniker gave a reception at the Embassy. Over three hundred people were invited.

The Ambassador and Madame Daeniker personally greeted the many guests, who were immediately made to feel 'at home' by the characteristic charm and hospitality of our host and hostess. It was, indeed, a very happy gathering, and an impressive tribute to our ever popular friend, Alfred Stauffer.

During the course of the evening, Mr. E. Kuebler, Chairman of the Presidents' Assembly, gave the following address:

Monsieur and Madame Daeniker, Ladies and Gentlemen,

In your name I extend a very special welcome to our friends, Mr. and Mrs. Stauffer. It is a very special occasion which has brought so many of us together tonight, to honour one who has given so many years of his life's work to serve an ideal, to bring us nearer to one another, to keep us closer to events at home, and keep us informed with the doings of our compatriots in this country, which for many of us has become a second home.

For thirty-two years, Alfred Stauffer has been the creator of a link in bringing the many varied functions of our different Societies before our eyes, and to blend these activities into a complete record of the life of the Swiss community.

Not only this, but through his personality, his character and his friendliness, he has become the friend of each of us.

As editor of our "Swiss Observer" he has worked incessantly and untiringly to make the Colony's paper a necessity to all of us who have the interest and the welfare of our Colony at heart, and although it has been a constant struggle, Alfred Stauffer, no doubt, must know in his heart that he could not have done better work than by nursing and caring for his beloved child.

On a visit from Manchester, my home town, in the spring of this year, I heard with great regret of the retirement of Mr. Stauffer from the editorship of the "Swiss Observer". It came as a great shock to me, and on recovering from it I thought that it would be the wish of all of us in expressing — in a tangible way — our grateful thanks and appreciation.

That is how the idea of the "Alfred Stauffer Fund" was born, enabling everyone to partake in a thank-offering to our friend. The response to my Appeal was not only a pleasant, but also a surprising one, a splendid testimonial of appreciation of Alfred Stauffer's work.



A. Stauffer, late Editor of the "Swiss Observer"

May I take this opportunity of thanking most sincerely the many subscribers who so generously contributed to this Fund; and now I have the honour and pleasure of handing over to Mr. Stauffer a cheque for £505, with a most hearty expression of our best wishes for your and Mrs. Stauffer's health and happy retirement. (*Applause.*)

Mr. Stauffer, visibly touched, replied as follows:

Monsieur l'Ambassadeur, Madame Daeniker, Mr. Kuebler, Ladies and Gentlemen,

I wish to thank Mr. Kuebler most sincerely for his generous words, and equally generous presentation. I must say it came as a big surprise when His Excellency, some short while ago, mentioned to me that there would be a presentation, and that it was his and Madame Daeniker's intention to combine it with a reception at the Embassy. Surely never has a secret been kept so well as this has been. Had I known beforehand that a Fund was to be started for my benefit — initiated by Mr. Kuebler, in the capacity of Chairman of the Presidents' Assembly — I would have discouraged him, because I consider that I had received enough appreciation on the occasion of my retirement from the editorship of the "Swiss Observer" some few months ago, when I received a great number of letters, a lovely silver salver from the Advisory Council of the "Swiss Observer", the promotion from Honorary Member of the City Swiss Club to Honorary Vice-

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President, and the golden pin of the Schweiz. Kaufmännischer Verein. All honours which I greatly appreciated — and now comes this!

I somehow feel that I hardly deserve so much praise. I do not wish to make a long speech, but I would like to render grateful thanks.

First of all, I wish to thank His Excellency and Madame Daeniker for the kind hospitality they have always extended to my wife and myself at the Embassy. For well over forty years the diplomatic representatives of our country have kept me well lubricated with dinners and cocktail parties. Well do I remember, in particular, the cocktail party Monsieur and Madame Daeniker gave me, two years ago, on the occasion of my 70th birthday, presenting me with a wonderful birthday cake, complete with seventy candles.

Sincere thanks I owe to the many collaborators — alas, many of whom have left us, never to return! If I have been able to render some service to the Colony, during almost fifty years, it was due to their always willing help; without it I could have achieved very little. The various Swiss Societies and Institutions have always supported me well. If you will allow me to strike a personal note, I would also like to express thanks to my wife; without her help I could not have carried on.

During, and immediately after, the first World War the Colony lost cohesion, neutrals were then not very popular. It was then that I made up my mind to find some remedies, first in the Swiss Societies, and a few years later as editor of the "Swiss Observer". It was, so to speak, the "Sturm und Drang Periode" of the Colony. With the result that in the second World War, the Colony, in spite of the "Blitz", carried on its work almost as usual. We never lost touch with each other.

Now, on the eventide of a fairly busy life, I look back with sincere gratitude for the many kindnesses I have received, and all I can say is—

Thank you, thank you, very, very much! (*Applause.*)

And thank you, too, Alfred Stauffer, for a task well done and one of which you may justly feel proud. May continued good health and happiness be yours and good fortune attend all your endeavours.

O.F.B.

PERSONAL

Mr. A. Stauffer, of 48A Putney Hill, Putney, London, S.W.15, late editor of the Swiss Observer, wishes to thank most sincerely the many subscribers who so generously made donations to the "Alfred Stauffer Fund". He was greatly touched by this "beau geste".

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