

Swiss Choral Society

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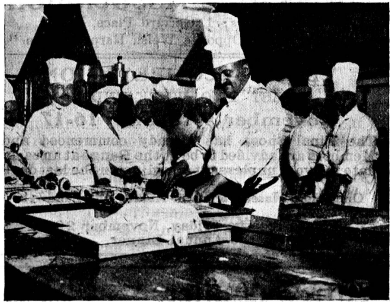
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MINE HOST—THE PRINCE.

Whoever had the happy inspiration of suggesting the recent festive gathering at the Royal Galleries, House of Lords, Westminster, of the several hundred of War Heroes, whose courageous deeds had been fittingly rewarded by the highly prized "V.C.," deserves every commendation; or as our "Jass" confederates would express themselves: "Chast eine putze!"

Our contemporaries have acquainted us in word and picture with the most interesting features of this splendid re-union of comrades in arms, whose devotion to King and Country had earned them exactly the same distinction and gratitude, irrespective of their station in a civil life. On that memorable night, the 9th of November last, there was neither Peer nor Peasant, just a brother "V.C." and H.R.H. the Prince of Wales was undoubtedly as proud as he was happy to preside over, and address in terms of affection, such a wonderful array of service men of all ranks, but of one stamp only: Valour!

But let us look behind the scenes of this gigantic feast and reflect on the hundred and one cares it required to bring this unique Banquet to



the pinnacle of success. Behold, here is Maitre Juriens, the valiant President of La Culinaire Suisse, Quartermaster-General in charge of a "Brigade" of no less than another 11 (how strange that we always come across this mystic figure in connection with War remembrances) stalwart Swiss Chefs de Direction—all Members of the Culinaire and loyally supporting their Leader—who have been entrusted with the stupendous task of preparing—with rather limited accommodation and conveniences—a Dinner befitting the occasion, and well have they accomplished their mandate! Nothing but praise for their work and art, from every quarter; indeed a testimonial which was fully deserved and which brings our London Swiss Chefs once more into favourable prominence. Well done! President and Members of La Culinaire, your compatriots congratulate and thank you!

The following "statistical data" may prove of interest: 450 participants at the principal Banquet, followed by 250 "converts" for the Staff of 120 Ex-Service Waiters, Detectives, Policemen, Firemen, etc., etc. 450 fillets of Sole Victoria were served, 60 Saddles of Southdown Lamb had to be carved up, 120 plump Surrey chickens lost their lives in the encounter. Maitre Adolph managed to clothe huge quantities of Salad into the national colours: Red, White and Blue, and there were Legions of tasty "V.C.'s" en pâte feuilletée, which were on this occasion "liberally" distributed!

Poppies of Flanders played an important part in the table decorations and a master-mind in the Confectioner's art, M. Mermoud, produced a chef-d'oeuvre for the Chairman, the Prince of Wales, namely a "dessert" representing the coat of arms of H.R.H. surrounded by Doves (emblems of Peace) and Flanders Poppies (a reminder of fateful days) all executed in beautiful sugar work, a compliment which his Royal Highness very graciously acknowledged.

We hear that M. Juriens has just received a letter of high appreciation of the services rendered, accompanied by a handsome donation for the good cause of La Société Culinaire Suisse. Bravo! A. WELL-WISHER.

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Doings in Our Colony.

**SWISS CHORAL SOCIETY.
ANNUAL BANQUET.**

This year the Choral Society has opened the festive season of our Colony with its Annual Banquet and Ball, held as usual at the First Avenue Hotel, on the 8th inst. And a very worthy and propitious opening it was. Over 160 guests took part on this occasion and they all surely enjoyed themselves as much as they ever have done at similar gatherings.

The Choral Society is not only fond of singing but obviously also knows "what's what" in the eating line, if we may say so without being chastised as vulgar by the severe critics of the S.O. It may be had taste to allude to this worldly matter right at the beginning of this report, but as the evening began with the good tastes of an eight course dinner, every one of them a work of art, it seems only natural to a grateful heart, read palate, to record that fact first. As a matter of fact the president of the Choral Society was himself so delighted by the fare served that, after the dinner, he quite properly brought out a special toast for the chef de cuisine, Mr. A. Indermayer, to which nobody failed to respond.

The company present included, apart from the members and many friends of the Society and their ladies, Mr. De Bourg, from the Legation, and representatives of all the societies and clubs of the Colony, namely: Mr. Senn and Mr. Marchand (City Swiss Club); Mr. & Mrs. Paschoud (Swiss Mercantile Soc.); Mr. & Mrs. Calnori (Swiss Club); Mr. & Mrs. Finger (Union Helvetia); Mr. Braga (Unione Ticinese); Mr. & Mrs. Schmid (Swiss Rifle Associat.); Mr. & Mrs. Campart (Nouvelle Société Helvétique); Mr. H. Humbel (Swiss Gymnastic Soc.); Mr. P. Dick & Mr. Pellet (Swiss Institute Orchestral Soc.); Dr. & Mrs. Egli (Swiss Observer).

Everybody seemed as comfortable and happy as could be. Grouped round many small tables one felt quite "en famille" amidst the very pleasant surroundings. The few speeches delivered left nothing to be desired from the point of view of shortness. They were preceded by the usual toasts for the King and our home-land, proposed by Mr. De Bourg.

Mr. E. Bommer, president of the S.C.S., greeted the company in the following words:

It is my privilege to extend to you all on behalf of the Swiss Choral Society a hearty welcome and to thank you sincerely for the kind support you give us once more.

Naturally I regret that our Minister, Mons. Paravicini, and Madame Paravicini are unavoidably prevented from honouring us with their presence, but I am glad to have with us in the Chair, as the representative of our Minister, Monsieur De Bourg, First Secretary of Legation, and to him I extend a special welcome.

I am convinced that you will not bear me any grudge, especially the Ladies, if I abstain from giving you a detailed account of the activities of our Society. I can say in a few words that the Choir, under the expert conductorship of Mr. Meyrowitz, is doing very good work. In mentioning this fact I am not forgetting that we are mainly enabled to cultivate the art of folk-songs through the generous support we receive from our contributing members and I would not miss this opportunity of thanking them sincerely for the interest they continue to take in our Society. I am equally grateful to the Swiss Club "Schweizerbund" and the "Union Helvetia" for the generous help they give our Choir.

May I couple my expression of gratitude with one of hope that we may also in the future count on the support from the sources I was just able to mention. Given this condition, Ladies and Gentlemen, I have no doubt whatever as to the prosperity of the S.C.S. in years to come.

Mr. De Bourg delivered the following oration:

It has been my privilege to represent the Swiss Minister at a good many functions of the Swiss Choral Society. This time again M. Paravicini has been prevented from taking the chair and he has asked me to convey to you his thanks for the invitation you have been so kind as to extend to him and his regrets at not being present this evening.

However, it is an ill wind that blows nobody good. I am here to prove this proverb. I need hardly say that it is always a great satisfaction to me to take part at the annual banquet of the Swiss Choral Society. It affords me great pleasure to see that your Society is growing both in popularity and in success.

At a meeting of the assembly of the League of Nations, a few years ago, the foreign delegates, somewhat bored by the proceedings, started exchanging little notes about the various nations represented there. So, one of these notes read as follows:

"1 Français, un gourmet
2 Français, une dispute
3 Français, Un ménage."

Another:

"1 Allemand, un gourmet
2 Allemands, Une Kneipe
3 Allemands, une guerre!"

If I had been asked to write something about Switzerland, I might have been tempted to say:

"1 Suisse, un alpiniste
2 Suisses, une partie de cartes,
3 Suisses, un 'Männerchor.'"

Singing is one of our great hobbies, and an excellent one at that. You are therefore keeping up, under the grey skies of this country, which we all like, a Swiss tradition. Being men of tradition, you also occasionally have a little Swiss squabble but, "ce n'est pas méchant" as they would say in Neuchâtel. You know how to make it up and, as in married life, so in the existence of a Society, a small difference of opinion need not lead to a divorce, on the contrary, it clears the atmosphere and makes life more enjoyable after the wind of peace and reason has brushed the clouds away.

Therefore, members of the Swiss Choral Society, go on singing, "say it in music" which the Gods have invented for our comfort and for our happiness.

Mr. Gerber thereupon, on behalf of the S.C.S., extended a special greeting to the guests and the ladies. The latter he apostrophized in the following words:

And now let me say just a few words to our dear ladies who have come again to-night in such great numbers to give our function that special grace and loveliness which their presence always creates. My dear ladies, you will remember that it is not so long ago since we were together in this beautiful Hall. Now there was a Committee, who, endeavouring to fulfil the wishes of a joyful lot of singers, took 12 months of one financial year in the one hand and 12 months of another financial year in the other and started throwing them about. They arranged them afterwards in such a way that suddenly 2 Annual Banquets and Balls could be brought within the period of 12 months. What was the big idea? Obviously life without your company was unendurable and they achieved the miraculous. What more proof do you want of our devotion? Dear ladies let me thank you for your kind support which you always so readily give to us, and which we appreciate more than words can express.

And finally Mr. Paschoud, president of the Swiss Mercantile Society, expressed the thanks of the guests as follows:

It is an established custom of the Swiss Societies in London to invite Members of the other Swiss societies to their annual functions, and it is to this custom that we, your guests, owe the pleasure of being here to-night. These official invitations are more than a mere courtesy, they are a proof of the bond of unity which exists throughout the Colony, and they show that we Swiss in London are of one mind in spite of the diversity of our Mother tongues, our occupations, and the different aims of our Societies. We are therefore here to help to strengthen this national bond which does not become weaker through long absence from Switzerland. Your Society plays a very big part in this work. You supply an atmosphere from Home such as no other society can give us. The Power of song is well known, and we only have to look up history to find proofs of it. When in old times the Swiss in military service abroad heard or sang the "Ranz des vaches" or "Zu Strassburg auf der Schanz" some found the call from Home so strong that they could not resist it, and deserted. On the morning of the 26th of November 1812, at the Beresina, while the remnants of the Swiss Division were waiting, nearly exhausted, for the inevitable fate which they knew would be theirs, Lieutenant Legler, of Glarus, started an old Swiss song in which the men joined with all their hearts, and this old song from Home fired them with renewed courage to hold out against tremendous odds, and do their duty to the last. Such is the Power of song, and when we hear you sing these Swiss songs, you bring sweet memories to us exiles abroad, and make our hearts beat faster. You thus kindle the light of Remembrance, of Patriotism in us all.

All speeches were heartily cheered. During the dinner Mr. F. Conrad treated the company to two beautifully rendered solo songs and later in the evening, after the dance had started, with an excellent selection of choir songs the Society gave proof that it is a very worthy sister of the many splendid male choirs at home in Switzerland. The choir sang the following songs which were heartily applauded:—"Siehst du am Abend die Wolken ziehn," "Das beste Bier im ganzen Nest" and "Der fahrende Scholar." The dance finished at 2.15 a.m.—THE ED.

Please reserve FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 22nd,
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CITY SWISS CLUB.