

St. Gall

Autor(en): **[s.n.]**

Objekttyp: **Article**

Zeitschrift: **The Swiss observer : the journal of the Federation of Swiss Societies in the UK**

Band (Jahr): **- (1938)**

Heft 874

PDF erstellt am: **26.04.2024**

Persistenter Link: <https://doi.org/10.5169/seals-694144>

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HAIL AND FAREWELL.

It has been the sad duty of the Editor to write for a good many years farewell articles in these columns; a good many of our old friends have left us, alas, never to return.

Some, we are glad to say, have departed, after many years of work in this country, to enjoy the fruits of their labours in the land, where they have been born.

To-day, we are glad, not to say "Farewell for ever," but "Auf Wiedersehen" to our old friend and supporter, Mr. Adolphe Walchli, who, after 40 years of hard and conscientious work, is leaving these hospitable shores to spend the few remaining years, in peace and quietness "back home."

Forty years is a long time to be away from home, and we feel sure that, although our friend's career in this Metropolis has been a successful one, he has sometimes longed to be amongst the green hills, the silvery lakes of the country to which he has always remained faithful.

Our countryman, Adolphe Walchli, arrived in this country as far back as 1899, he intended to spend a short time in London in order to learn the language, and as it so often happens to some of us, he could not tear himself away from a land, which has so much in common with our own country; in short, he remained here.

Soon after his arrival, he joined the firm of "Emile's" in Conduit Street, one of the most fashionable hairdressing establishments in London. Thanks to his great ability and integrity, he soon became the right-hand man of his chief, M. Gaston Boudon, who took him into partnership in 1908; six years later (1914) he was put in sole charge of the business, which he has managed with great efficiency.

For 40 years our countryman was an active member of the *Société du Progrès de la Coiffure*; on several occasions he was invited to take the Presidency, but not desiring to be in the "limelight," he refused an honour, which we have no doubt, was well merited.

This Society, however, insisted on paying a tribute to their member of forty years' standing, and a dinner was arranged at the Martinez Restaurant, Swallow Street, where over fifty of his colleagues assembled to bid farewell to their friend, who ranks as an expert in their profession.

Numerous speeches were made and it must have been gratifying to our friend to realise how much his work was appreciated.

We, too, wish to congratulate M. Adolphe Walchli most sincerely on his success. It is gratifying to learn how much he has been thought of; and he will now join the distinguished number of our countrymen, who have added to the good name they enjoy in this land.

M. Walchli is returning to Fribourg, where he has already a "pied à terre," and we send him and his life's companion our heartiest wishes for a quiet and happy "Lebensabend" blessed with good health, coupled with the hope that he will not forget us; we on our part will always remember him as a Swiss who has done his duty well and who has remained faithful to our Colony during all the many years of his stay.

St.

ST. GALL.

Treasure Chest of Ancient Art and Culture.

St. Gall owes its name and its foundation around the year 615 A.D., to the traveling Irish missionary Gallus. From a humble hermitage near the river Steinach — according to Prof. Linus Birchler, eminent Swiss writer — it grew under the wise guidance of the Abbot Othmar (720-759) into a Benedictine Monastery which, by the middle of the 9th century, shone like a brilliant beacon, as a centre of art and culture, in a still ignorant world. The Monastery of St. Gall has been justly described as the first German University of that early period and the lives of generations of artist-monks, including the poet Notker; Tuotilo, the painter, carver and musician; Radpert, the scholar and teacher, and others are elaborately reviewed in the "Casus Sancti Galli." Scheffel, the poet, also pictured the fascinating and sersatile Monastery life at St. Gall in his "Ekkehard."

The Abbey Library, a rococo building of 1760, houses the treasures which date back to St. Gall's golden era of art. There are theological, musical-theoretical, and chronicle works; hymns, compositions and poetry; ivory carvings, illuminated books and manuscripts dating back as far as the 7th century. The oldest known German-Latin dictionary, also on view, and credited to the monk Kero, was compiled in those early days. The exhibits include marvelous specimens of 9th century book-art, such as Folchart's Psalter and the Psalterium Aureum, both with gold lettering on purple background. One of the manuscripts on display has late-Roman ivory tablets for its covers, and the so-called "Evangelium longum"

reposes between Tuotilo's famous carved ivory tablets. The Library also possesses one of the three most important MSS of the Niebelungenlied, as well as one of the two existing MSS of Parsifal.

The Abbey Church or Cathedral was rebuilt in the baroque style from 1755-69 and its spacious interior is decorated with delicately coloured ceiling frescoes by Christian Wenzinger and elaborate rococo stucco-work. Two crypts remain from the original structure, but only the one on the West side, dating back to the 10th century, is accessible. The huge main altar and six side altars are of impressive design, and a magnificent wrought-iron choir screen stands as a perpetual monument to its creators. Especially noteworthy are the choir-stalls, exquisitely carved by Josef Anton Feuchtmayer, and depicting in a series of reliefs the life of St. Benedict. By Feuchtmayer, also, are the sixteen artistic confessionals in the nave.

The exterior of the Cathedral is comparatively simple, its most ornate feature being the two towers on the East front. A realistic relief of the artist Feuchtmayer used to adorn the gable of the centrepiece between these towers, but in the march of time it gradually became a victim of the elements. During the recent careful renovation of the East façade of this church, a Zurich sculptor, Alfons Magg, recreated this practically vanished relief most successfully.

The adjoining Abbey buildings date from the 17-18th centuries. The East wing is now the seat of the cantonal offices, and the other buildings are occupied by the bishop and the Cathedral-clergy.

Among the many well preserved medieval landmarks of old St. Gall are the Town Hall, with its historical frescoes, and the Kaufhaus, one-time merchant's hall. A large number of private dwellings, too, betray their age through their quaint architecture, their delightful oriels and such-like features. Several churches, besides the Cathedral, as well as museums, and public and private schools give eloquent proof of the intense spiritual, cultural and intellectual life which pulsates in this historic city to-day.

When St. Gall came into being workers at various trades soon began to settle around the abbey, and thus it came about that linen-weaving was introduced in this district in the 11th century. This art has since been cultivated and developed to a rare degree of perfection. In more recent times embroideries and laces became another vital source of livelihood for the inhabitants, but since these industrial activities are either carried on in the outskirts of St. Gall, or in the homes of the peasantry, the beauty and proverbial cleanliness of the city are by no means impaired.

From the mountain ridges on either side of the city the wonderful location of St. Gall is at once apparent. To the East beckons the fair lake of Constance, and only a few miles away rises the Säntis, which for symmetry and charm has few equals. The Säntis, which boasts a thrilling new aerial railway, stands on Appenzell territory, for curiously enough the canton of St. Gall entirely surrounds the little canton of Appenzell, which formerly was the country seat of the abbots of St. Gall.

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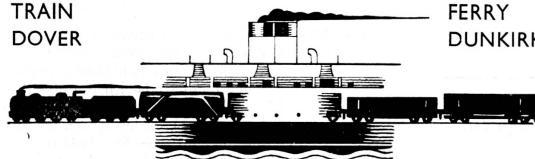
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