

Forthcoming events

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well worth keeping flourishing within its city walls.

Our President has just greeted the citizens of Birmingham who are our guests to-night with words full of cordiality. Like him, I see in their presence a fresh token of the old-established friendship between Swiss and British.

Although I feel as he does I will not repeat what he has expressed so well and so eloquently. But I must be permitted to second him most emphatically in his appreciation of the presence of Sir John Burnam, a presence which can be taken by all of us, English and Swiss alike, as nothing less than the very symbol or, shall I say, confirmation in official form, of the traditional cordiality of relations existing between our two countries. The merits, position and personality of Sir John would in themselves be ample reason for us to congratulate ourselves on this striking evidence of goodwill and friendship, but the fact that he is also here as the Representative of the City Council and as the special Ambassador of the Lord Mayor makes him doubly welcome at this function.

I beg of him to convey to the eminent Head of this City and to the Members of the Council the expression of our gratitude for the honour and kind feelings thus shown to us. Mr. Canning, himself a friend of and frequent visitor to Switzerland, has had occasion, I hope, to see from his own experience that in the valleys and mountains of the Swiss Alps no more welcome visitor than the British visitor will ever appear.

Let me say one word more about that friendship. At no time has such true friendship between nations been of greater value than it is in the sorely disturbed times through which Europe is at present passing.

I am in the happy and probably unique position of being able to speak as the citizen of a country which has since the Middle Ages been uninterruptedly on terms of friendship with England.

If the people of the earth had followed that example for the last six centuries, the world would have been something like a paradise all that time.

But what is it in reality? Is it not something like an arena of unrest, strife and opposing ideas, mistrust and ill feelings, which might again, at any moment, bring disaster to humanity?

Where it not for the fact that there are happily still a few countries in the world where peace and international order count as the highest and most precious goods of all, disaster might well have overtaken us again.

In the Society of Nations Switzerland is only a small member, one of the very smallest. Nevertheless, she has her duties to fulfil in that community and, situated as she has been for centuries in the very centre of European currents and storms, the fulfilment of these duties would have been a fatal task, had her people not been animated from the beginning by the spirit of liberty, courage, justice and equity, not only amongst their own compatriots and within their narrow frontiers, but also with regard to the peoples beyond these frontiers, far and near.

Only a few days ago the President of the Confederation made a solemn Declaration in the name of the Government and people, saying that whatever other nations might think was the best way to conduct their affairs, the Swiss meant to manage theirs on the old and well-founded principles of true democracy, in friendship and co-operation with all and, if need be, in defending those sacred principles and their country to the last man.

And let me add that the same hour an equally solemn promise was given, in response, in the Federal Assembly by the representatives of all parts of Switzerland, without any distinction as to party, race or religion, confirming this will to remain as they were and what they were.

By no people will this spirit be better understood or more fully approved than in this mighty Kingdom and its Empire, where peace and justice, order and freedom for all have likewise been the fundamental principles of the nation's life.

Sir, to-day the world looks to Great Britain as to the one Power which, in the danger of conflict, can save the reign of peace. On Thursday last that world listened breathlessly to the words of your Prime Minister, as he spoke at Westminster. And with feelings of universal relief it heard that, whatever might happen, Old England would stand to the end for justice and democracy with the full might of her moral and material forces.

What Mr. Chamberlain said on Thursday last gives us hope that by the might and power of a peace-loving nation like Great Britain,

the mightiest and most peace-loving of all, and by the contribution of the small nations, like Switzerland, the cause of peace may yet be saved.

And let us not forget, Sir, that the man who spoke at Westminster those all important words and who was listened to by the whole world, he is the son of Birmingham.

This very excellent and weighty oration of the Minister was greatly cheered.

The next speaker was Alderman, Sir John Burnam, a former Lord Mayor of the town of Birmingham, to him too, a hearty reception was accorded.

Sir John, mentioned that he was deputised by the Lord Mayor, who was unable to attend, to convey his personal greetings and those of the Corporation of the city of Birmingham to the Minister and the Swiss Club. He was glad to hear that the Swiss living in Birmingham felt happy in this busy Midland town, and expressed the wish that the Club would be able to enrol again some younger members.

After having pointed out the advantages of being citizens of a free and neutral country, he expressed the hope that the world would be spared from another calamity such as the events which took place in 1914. "I am sure," Sir John said, "that nobody wants war, and I am equally convinced that we shall not see another big war in our life time."

This rather optimistic forecast was heartily cheered. He ended his oration with a few personal reminiscences of the present Prime Minister, Mr. Chamberlain, with whom he was in personal contact for the last 30 years.

The address of Sir John was greatly cheered by all the people present.

Mr. Montag, Swiss Consul in Liverpool, who is called the Father of the Birmingham Colony, gave a short address in which he assured the Colony of his continued support.

Mr. Reinhart, one of the founders of the Club was entrusted with the toast for "Charity," he said that the Club was in the enviable position of being able to devote this year's collection to a non-Swiss institution, and mentioned that the Club had decided to make a donation to the occupational centres of the City of Birmingham. The result of the collection amounted to £15. 15. 0.

I would like to mention that a very efficient orchestra supplied the "Tafel Music," during the dinner, and a pot-pourri of familiar Swiss airs was much appreciated, such popular tunes as the "Zapfenstreich," and many others, brought back to not a few, treasured memories of happy moments spent in the service of our beloved homeland. I wish, however, to point out that the "Bärnermarsch" is played much slower in the part where I come from, we are not in such a hurry "down-under."

Dancing started soon after 10 o'clock, and forgotten were the troubles, tribulations and worries which are such a common occurrence in these anxious days.

It was only right that "Yodling" should find a place in the programme, Mr. Beer and some of his friends supplied the necessary want. Much enjoyed was the dancing of Mlle. Aebischer, the daughter of a member of the Club.

On Sunday morning about 11 o'clock a char-à-banc, followed by a small fleet of private cars, set off from the Midland Hotel on the way to Stratford-on-Avon. Amongst the company was the Lord Mayor of Birmingham, Mr. C. R. Canning.

Back once more at the Midland Hotel the entire company sat down to a special luncheon; on this occasion speeches were made by the Lord Mayor of Birmingham, Mr. C. R. Canning, who eulogized our country being a frequent visitor there. "I wish," he said, "many more of my countrymen would have an opportunity to see this lovely country, which is doing so much for the betterment of humanity."

Other speakers were, the Swiss Minister, Mr. Stauffer, Editor "Swiss Observer," and Mr. Binggely, City Swiss Club, London. Amongst the guests was Colonel Danielson, D.S.O., Aide-de-Camp to the King.

The Swiss Minister, Madame and Mlle. Paravicini, the Lord Mayor of Birmingham and about 30 members of the party adjourned later on to the private residence of the President by special invitation, and a very jolly afternoon it was. Mme. Brun, presided over the gathering, proving that she was equally efficient as her husband in "taking the Chair." Many were the bottles emptied to the health of the generous host and hostess, and to the future prosperity of the Swiss Club Birmingham; all too soon the hour of departure approached, and we had to take leave from our smiling host and hostess.

In conclusion, I would like to congratulate the Swiss Club Birmingham, and especially its President, M. P. Brun, for this splendid Rally, it was a very enjoyable function, and the message which again has come from our countrymen in the Midlands will not be forgotten.

FORTHCOMING EVENTS.

Monday, April 4th — Unione Ticinese — Annual Banquet and Ball, at Paganini's Restaurant, Great Portland Street, W.

Wednesday, April 6th, at 7.30 p.m. — Société de Secours Mutuels — Monthly Meeting, at 74, Charlotte Street, W.1.

Tuesday, April 12th — (Dinner 7.15 sharp) — City Swiss Club — Annual General Meeting — at Paganini's, Great Portland Street, W.1. (See Advert.).

Wednesday, April 13th — Swiss Mercantile Society Ltd. — Monthly Meeting — followed by a lecture with slides and films on "The Blue Danube," by Bernard Newman, Esq.

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Dimanche 3 avril :

11h. — Culte : Mr. Blocher, cand. théol.

11h. — Ecole du Dimanche.

6h.30. — Culte : Mr. Blocher, cand. théol.

7h.30 — Chœur.

SCHWEIZERKIRCHE

(Deutschsprachige Gemeinde).

St. Anne's Church, 9, Gresham Street, E.C.2.

(near General Post Office.)

Sonntag, den 3. April 1938.

11 Uhr morgens, Gottesdienst und Sonntagsschule.

7 Uhr abends, Gottesdienst.

8 Uhr, Chorprobe.

Dienstag, den 5. April 1938.

Nachm. 3 Uhr, Nähverein im "Foyer Suisse."

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