

Assembly of presidents of the swiss societies

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THE SWISS MINISTER'S LUNCHEON PARTY.

To celebrate the visit of the "Stadtmusik — Solothurn", Monsieur Henry de Torrenté offered a luncheon, on Friday, June 15th, at the Dorchester Hotel, at which the following were present:—

The Mayor of Westminster, Albert Sciver, J.P., B.Sc., F.R.I.C., The Mayor of Marylebone, Mr. Alderman F. W. Dean, D.L., J.P., F.I.A.S., Brigadier S. K. Thorburn, O.B.E., M.C., Colonel Stuart Townend, Director, Anglo-Swiss Society, Mr. Pat Dodd, Chairman, Musicians' Social & Benevolent Council, Commander D. O. Doble, Mayor's Parlour, Westminster City Hall, Mr. A. Koffman, B.Sc., Renson Advertising Ltd., Ständerat Dr. Paul Haefelin, Stadttammann, Solothurn, Dr. W. de Vigier, Ehrenpräsident Stadtmusik Solothurn, M. Erwin Berger, Präsident Stadtmusik Solothurn, Dr. Franz Königshofer, Dirigent Stadtmusik Solothurn, Dr. Luder, Redaktor Solothurner Zeitung, M. W. A. de Vigier, Managing Director, Acrow Ltd., Prof de Watteville, Genève, M. Charles L. Chapuis, Dr. H. Egli, M. Gottfried Keller, M. J. Mennessier, M. A. Stauffer, M. Th. Haller, M. E. Bernath, M. A. Lindt, M. Marcuard.

In addressing the company, the Swiss Minister warmly welcomed the Mayors of Westminster and Marylebone, States Councillor, Dr. P. Haefelin, Mayor of the town of Solothurn, Dr. W. de Vigier, Honorary President, and Mr. E. Berger, President of the Stadtmusik as well as Dr. Luder, Editor of the "Solothurn Zeitung". He expressed his sincere thanks to Mr. W. A. de Vigier, through whose generosity this well-known band had been enabled to visit this great Metropolis and to the band who by their excellent performances have given so much pleasure not only to their compatriots but also to our English friends.

National-Councillor, M. Chaudet, representative of the town of Lausanne, who was invited to the Minister's party was unfortunately prevented from attending, his parliamentary duties having kept him in Berne, he conveyed his regrets by letter to the Minister.

Monsieur de Torrenté concluded his short address, given in English, French and German, by saying: "Many times have I assisted at demonstrations of the friendship between our two democratic countries, but rarely before have I felt so happy, as I see assembled around me representatives of cities and towns which in our old democracies provide a strong and lasting

bulwark to civil liberties and communal freedom." (Applause.)

Dr. P. Haefelin, the Mayor of the town of Solothurn, thanked the Minister for his kind invitation and generous hospitality. He paid a great tribute to this country, saying that if Switzerland is to-day still free, it is principally due to the heroic efforts the British Empire has made during the last war. Speeches were also made by the Mayors of Westminster and Marylebone, Colonel St. Townend, Dr. W. de Vigier, Mr. E. Berger, Dr. F. Königshofer, Ch. Chapuis and Mr. Gottfried Keller.

ASSEMBLY OF PRESIDENTS OF THE SWISS SOCIETIES.

The 11th Meeting of the Assembly was held on Friday, June 1st. The Swiss Minister was represented by Monsieur E. Bernath, First Counsellor of Legation, and by Dr. E. M. Bircher, Secretary of Legation. In the unavoidable absence of the Chairman, Mr. R. Dupraz, the meeting was presided over by the Vice-Chairman, Prof. J. P. Inebnit (Yorkshire — West Riding — Swiss Club). Another welcome visitor from the Provinces was Mr. E. Berner (Swiss Club Manchester).

On the subject of the official draft for a new Federal Law regarding the acquisition and loss of Swiss Citizenship the Hon. Secretary, Mr. W. Meier (Swiss Mercantile Society) reported that since the Assembly had forwarded a number of suggestions to Berne, a Commission of Experts had also been at work in Switzerland and a revised draft was now available. Happily, this embodied practically all the points proposed by the Presidents' Assembly, the only real difference being that the Presidents were of the opinion that the Swiss woman who marries a foreigner, should only lose her Swiss citizenship if she made a declaration of renunciation. The Commission of Experts, on the other hand, considered that on marrying a foreigner the Swiss woman should lose her Swiss citizenship, except if she made a declaration stating that she wished to keep it. — In this matter the Presidents' Assembly decided to maintain its previously expressed view.

At the next "Journée des Suisses à l'Etranger" which will be held at Basle from August 31st to September 2nd the chief item on the agenda will be "The maintenance and rejuvenation of the Swiss Colonies abroad". A thorough discussion of this subject took up the main part of the Presidents' meeting. The Chairman quoted extensively from a report which had recently been submitted to the Federal Council by a Commission of Experts and which contained a large number of valuable suggestions. — As its own contribution the Presidents' Assembly decided to forward two recommendations to the "Secrétariat des Suisses à l'Etranger" in Berne. The text had been prepared by the Committee of Three (Dr. H. W. Egli, Mr. A. Renou and Mr. W. Meier) and it is intended to issue it also to the Swiss Press.

The Chairman was pleased to take note that several of the Presidents, besides himself, would attend the "Journée" as this would ensure that the views expressed at this meeting would be given personal emphasis.

The next meeting of the Presidents' Assembly was fixed for Friday, October 5th. W.M.

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