

Charles Gos on the conquest of the Alps

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Annual Banquet and Ball of the UNION HELVETIA

PAUL LEHRIAN,
President of the Union Helvetia, (London Section).



There are many signs that conditions in our Colony share the general improvement enjoyed by this country and the Annual Banquet held by the above society on Wednesday, Nov. 14th, amply bears out this fact. The depression had imposed on all our clubs and societies (with two notable exceptions) certain restrictions in their social functions but we are gradually resuming our former activities.

The large hall of the club premises at 1, Gerrard Place, W.1, was gaily decorated and the Swiss colours displayed on the rear wall with the illuminated cross in the centre enhanced the homely atmosphere. Swiss customs were observed right from the beginning! The preliminaries in suitably renewing and reviving old and new acquaintances were responsible for the party of about 110 sitting down to dinner, which was served with exemplary dispatch, considerably after the advertised time.

The chair was occupied by Mr. P. Lehrian, the president of the London Section, who proposed the loyal toast.

The toast to "La Patrie" was submitted by M. Walter Rüfenacht, 1st Secretary of Legation, who conveyed the regrets of the Swiss Minister for his unavoidable absence. The speaker welcomed the opportunity thus afforded to him of spending the evening in the jovial company of such a large number of compatriots.

Mr. P. Lehrian, who on rising was loudly applauded, extended a hearty welcome to M. Rüfenacht whom he asked to present on behalf of the Society sincere and loyal greetings to the Swiss Minister. He had intended to survey the progress made by the Society during the last twelve months but in view of the advanced hour he did not wish to take the responsibility of curtailing the time allotted for dancing. He could, however, not let this opportunity pass by without referring to the assiduous and unremitting work of their Secretary, Mr. J. Keller (cheers), so ably seconded by his assistant, Mrs. Greenfield; in the employment department they had succeeded in filling over a thousand vacancies. He also wished to underline the devoted services of the members of the different committees who in an unpretentious way contributed to the progress and success of the Society. He would like to stimulate the interest of the members whose attendance at the monthly meetings was not encouraging. On the other hand he was proud of the support they always secured for the annual pilgrimage to Hendon Cemetery to honour the memory of departed ones; he paid tribute to the affectionate co-operation of our two pastors, the Rev. Hoffmann-de Visme and the Rev. Hahn. In this connection he deeply regretted to record the death of Mr. H. Senn, one of their founders, whose services in the early days of the Helvetia Society would ever be remembered. The devotion of another departed member, Mr. Lehrian continued, were recalled to our mind by the news just received that a testamentary disposition of the late Mr. Rudishauser, who died in 1903 became now operative. It was their practice to recognise and reward devotion whenever possible, and he was delighted to bestow the "Veteran Gold Ensign for 25 years' faithful membership" to Bernard

von Kaenel, Victor Liengme, Léon Meotti, Paul Schweckler, Jean Tache, Carl Boesch, Robert Grünig, Walter Lüthi, August Reiber, Gottfried Schneider, Albert Scherer, Hermann Strotz, Jacques Egloff, Julius Furrer. Unfortunately none of the recipients who all lived in the provinces were present to receive their decoration. Mr. Lehrian terminated his address by calling on the company to drink to the further prosperity of the Helvetia Society.

Mr. A. Indermaur, president of the Territorial Administration, proposed the health of "The Guest and the Ladies." He said no dinner was perfect without having somebody to talk about. The chairman had already expressed his appreciation to M. Rüfenacht for having honoured us with his presence but there were two other official guests and it fell to his lot to extend to them a most hearty welcome. One was the Rev. Hahn, accompanied by Mrs. Hahn, who looked after our spiritual welfare and tended to the sick and no man could do "this job" better than he did. The other was Mr. P. F. Boehringer, accompanied by Mrs. Boehringer whose great distinction consisted in never having missed his Saturday afternoon jass at the Helvetia. Mr. Indermaur would have liked to also welcome Mr. Duchêne of the Carlton and Mr. Devegney of the Grosvenor House but he had just received a telephone message apologising for their absence. He was gratified to notice among those present Messrs. Verger, Grand Jean and Cadec of the "Culinaire Française," Mr. P. Brun, President of the Swiss Club, Birmingham, M. et Mme Jurien (President of the Culinaire Suisse), Mr. and Mrs. A. Wyss (Swiss Hotel), Mr. and Mrs. Bruschweiler, Mr. and Mrs. Kummer, Mr. and Mrs. Martin, Mr. and Mrs. Oggier, Mrs. Rossier (Swiss Club), Mr. and Mrs. Linder (Great Central Hotel), and the unofficial bookmaker.

In addressing himself more particularly to the Ladies, Mr. Indermaur hoped that they would find some recompense for the many lonely hours when their husbands had to attend committee meetings. He had been asked to propose the health of the ladies mainly because he was a married man and known to relate anything but the truth. The traditional story which is always coupled with this toast created much merriment and as same is of interest to spinsters only its iteration is omitted.

Mr. P. F. Boehringer returned thanks on behalf of the guests. He expressed the hope that the annual gatherings in our Colony would soon be restored to their old form. It was one of the peculiarities of our compatriots that whenever half a dozen settled down somewhere they managed to run as many or more clubs or societies, and inviting official representatives to the inevitable banquets brought home to us the consciousness of solidarity. Though the Helvetia Society had on this occasion singled out two institutions only, i.e., the church and the press they may be said to be truly representative of the best and worst in our Colony.

Soon after the banquet the dancers took command of the floor until the early hours of the morning.

THE ROYAL WEDDING.

The HEADS of the DIPLOMATIC MISSION accredited to the Court of St. James' are presenting a collective present to their Royal Highnesses, the Duke of Kent and Princess Marina of Greece on the occasion of their wedding.

The Swiss Minister and Madame Paravicini have not, however, joined their colleagues, as they thought it appropriate to offer the bridal couple a present of Swiss origin and for that purpose, they have, while in Switzerland in September, chosen a Swiss clock of specially good make and pleasing design. The clock was sent to the Duke of Kent some days ago and H. R. H. has addressed a very appreciative letter to Madame Paravicini expressing his thanks.

PERSONAL.

We deeply regret to inform our readers of the death of Mme. Germaine Dreyfuss, wife of M. S. Dreyfuss, of 8, Ferncroft Avenue, Hampstead, N.W.3, after a long illness.

We greatly regret to announce the death of Mrs. Henrietta Wetter, née Lagneau, the wife of Mr. W. Wetter, of 67, Grafton Street, Fitzroy Square, W.1, at the age of 65. The funeral will take place on Saturday morning at St. Pancras Cemetery, Finchley, the hearse leaving 67, Grafton Street about 10 o'clock.

CHARLES GOS ON THE CONQUEST OF THE ALPS.

An N.S.H. Lecture with Lantern Slides.

The New Helvetic Society has once more afforded our Colony a most memorable and enjoyable entertainment of a nature that is helping to foster our mental affinity to the beauties and values of our home-country. By the ever helpful assistance of the Secrétariat des Suisses a l'étranger the N.S.H. secured Monsieur Charles Gos of Geneva, the great mountaineer and author of several important books bearing on this subject, to come over here specially for this lecture entitled "How the mountains overcome man and how man conquered the Alps!" Mr. Gos, son of the famous mountain landscape painter Albert Gos and brother of François Gos, also a painter of distinction, and of Emile Gos, a photographic artist who made the well-known Cervin film, enjoys the highest esteem also in English alpinist circles on account of his books, amongst which the best known is probably "La croix du Cervin," as well as owing to personal contact. As a very telling proof of this esteem may surely be reckoned the fact that the Minister of Health in the British Government, Sir Hilton Young, himself an ardent lover of the Alps, honoured Mr. Gos and our Colony by attending the lecture, which our Minister Monsieur Paravicini opened with a few well-chosen introductory words. The lecture was held last Saturday afternoon at St. George's Hall, as usual in two sessions, to which at least 600 compatriots and friends came flocking in.

Mr. Gos gave not only an entertaining, but a very stimulating and instructive lecture covering the history of the Alps in all aspects starting from ancient times and leading up to the present. We had hoped to give the lecture in full, but Mr. Gos had spoken freely with only a few notes. As the title of the lecture suggested, Mr. Gos traces two main periods in the history of the Alps, one leading up to the Renaissance during which the Alps were just some particularly big mountains for whom mankind felt in the main only fear and awe and mystic associations. Mr. Gos showed with some finely selected slides how in painting the element of mountains slowly emerges into individuality. Mountain voyages confined themselves usually to the negotiation of passes. The second main period from the Renaissance brings an ever more clearly realised romantic and later on practical interest in the Alps as such. Rabelais, Rousseau, Haller, Goethe and many others carry the message of the Alps into people's imagination and heart and the conquest of the Alps by the pioneer mountaineers, amongst whom the English have played such an important part, is the glorious sequence of that centuries long preparations of mind and soul. The lecture was applauded with great enthusiasm so richly justified.

Dr. E.

A NEW BOOK BY TSCHIFFELY.

Our countryman A. S. Tschiffely whose description of his famous 10,000 mile ride from the Argentine to Washington in the book "From Southern Cross to Pole Star" has created such a stir last year and became a best-seller in that type of books, has just reappeared on the book market with a new volume on the same theme, but written for the children. The author has taken some of the best and most interesting or amusing stories and episodes from his first book and retold them in a simple manner as coming from the lips of his two wonderful horses with the aid of whom he has achieved that great feat of endurance. The book is illustrated by the author himself with a number of disarmingly naive but vividly telling drawings. It is entitled "The Tale of Two Horses." It is again published by Heinemann at a price of 6s.

At the last literary luncheon at Grosvenor House, the 49th in the series arranged monthly by that enterprising booksellers and library Foyle's Ltd., in Charing Cross Road, Mr. Tschiffely was with two fellow authors, Miss Helen Simpson and Mr. McGuinness, amongst the guests of honour. Sir Herbert Morgan, K.B.E., held the chair and Lord Lytton addressed the assembly of some five hundred book-lovers on the peace-problem and in favour of the League of Nations Union Ballot. Mr. Tschiffely made a entertaining speech in the course of which he declared, with reference to Lord Lytton's address, that he found on his long American journey that the maligned Red-Indians and Indians were a much more peace-loving and trustworthy people than most white races he knew.

Dr. E.

VISIT OF M. DALCROZE.

That great Swiss Composer, Monsieur Jaques-Dalcroze, is to give a Demonstration of his Method of Eurhythmics in the Scala Theatre next Monday, November 26th. It is some years since Monsieur Dalcroze has been seen and heard in London, and the Scala Theatre will be a scene of much enthusiasm next Monday. His compatriots will doubtless wish to share in paying homage to this great Teacher of Music and Movement from their own country.