

A Retrospect

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A RETROSPECT.

The present week has seen *nearly* the finish of the social functions in our Colony, and it is perhaps an appropriate moment to make a few comments.

I am not going to dwell on the current topic of economic difficulties, currency devaluation, and ever increasing costs of living, as I am heartily sick of hearing about it. It has been drummed into our ears for the last twelve months, we have been told about it day after day, hour by hour, and worst of all, we have all, more or less, felt the pinch. It is, however, a curious fact, that by reading and hearing about the many functions, which have taken place during the last six months amongst the various Societies and Institutions, one might easily have jumped to the conclusion that we were still living in the boom period of many years ago.

The numerous, perhaps all too numerous festivities of recent months, have created an atmosphere of prosperity, which I dare to call bluntly superfluous. Not a week has passed without either a Banquet and Dance, Fancy Dress Ball, Concerts, Cinema Shows, Lectures, Displays of all kinds, Exhibitions, Tea Parties, etc., etc., and those, who by virtue of their office have to put in an appearance, must be wellnigh exhausted, and I feel sure, that the little respite has come as a welcome relief to them.

Glancing back at the various functions, I cannot withstand the temptation of dwelling at some length on the overwhelming oratorical displays, and I feel sure, that the season 1949/1950 has, in this respect, reached an even greater activity than in previous years. I am not in the least opposed to the delightful art of oration, and I gladly admit that some of the speeches reached the high water mark of perfection, and I for one thoroughly enjoyed listening to them, whilst others were less accomplished, less interesting, and a few were slightly boring.

By long experience (and suffering) I have become an ardent supporter of all those who are advocating a drastic cut in all speech-making. I am fully aware of the serious consequences this confession may have for me, I can see myself shunned and ignored by my nearest and dearest friends, I can imagine with what icy coldness I shall be received, what black looks, full of hate will be sent across the table and perhaps not one single invitation will come my way again. And when this comes to pass, I shall then turn in my great loneliness with an aching and torn heart to all those ladies, who, time after time, have asked me to champion their cause, and if one friendly "thank you" and one kind smile comes my way, I shall consider myself recompensed a thousand times, and I shall go down to my doom with joy in my heart.

Now having professed myself an opponent to lengthy speeches, I feel I ought, in fairness to those who are of a different opinion, to give some reason, and make a few suggestions.

Referring to Banquets and Dances, my principal and foremost contention is, that the great majority of Ladies, who are embellishing these functions by their radiant beauty, do not care a tinkers toss about those never ending speeches. They are fully informed about the merits of that particular Society by their husbands

or their friends, they have come to amuse themselves and to be amused, and last but not least, to dance.

As it happened so often at recent functions, dancing never started before about 10 o'clock, and thus most of the participants who are not lucky owners of a limousine (and there are still some left) will have to leave early in order to catch their trains. It is to be wondered at, that you hear people say, they will not attend anymore as it is hardly worth while to have so much expense for barely two hours amusement.

What a different tale there would be told if say, dancing could be started at 9 o'clock, and I can see no earthly reason, why this could not be done, if dinner starts at 7 o'clock sharp. Two hours seems to me ample time for eating and speech-making.

Therefore I venture to make already now a most earnest appeal to all those who will be in charge of the arrangements for the Season 1950-1951, not to swamp their audiences with their oratorical outbursts.

Some years ago a speaker at a Swiss dinner excused the brevity of his address by saying, that speech-making was out of his line "Whilst others spent their time in acquiring the rudiments of this delightful art, his youth had been spent with companions which could not talk to him, or offer him any instructions, his time had been spent in brushing and milking them twice a day."

One could only wish, that some of our would-be orators could have enjoyed the same congenial company. So often it has happened that speakers trepassed on each others pitch, thus repeating themselves in slightly different words, then again, twice if not three times, the same, and by now unavoidable after dinner jokes were dished up. Arrangements should be made, in future, that each speaker strictly adheres to his allotted sphere.

Now before I terminate this, what my adversaries will, no doubt, rightly or wrongly call, a feeble minded attempt to interfere with our individual liberty (so dear to all Swiss!), I send to all and sundry, who are concerned in the "talking department", a most ardent and sincere request to have

MERCY ON US POOR MORTALS!

ST.

CITY SWISS CLUB

Will Members kindly note that the next
MONTHLY MEETING

will take place on **Tuesday, June 13th, 1950, 6.30 p.m. for 7 p.m., at Brown's Hotel, Dover Street, W.1.**

The dinner will be followed by a film on Switzerland.

Members wishing to attend should send their cards to the Manager, Brown's Hotel, Dover Street, London, W.1, to reach him not later than Monday, June 12th, 1950.

C. E. SEINET,
Hon. Secretary.