

FELLOW-COUNTRYMEN AND FRIENDS,

First of all, I should like to express my sincere gratification at meeting you to-night, this being the first gathering of countrymen and friends of Switzerland I have had the honour to meet in Canada since the Swiss Federal Council has entrusted me with its representation for the Dominion of Canada.

I must tell you frankly that I hesitated to follow this call of my Government, not because I did not appreciate the confidence shown me, but because I doubted somewhat whether I would be able to fulfil the rather high expectations which Swiss Commerce and Industry place in a Swiss Consul-General in Canada. What decided me to accept was the hope justified by former experience with Swiss Colonies in Italy, France, Argentine and the United States, that my countrymen in Canada would aid and assist me, and I am very glad to say that up to the present my hopes have been realized.

If I thus permit myself to ask your co-operation, I feel that you, in turn, have a right to know something more of the duties of a representative of the Swiss Government in Canada. I wish, therefore, to place before you a sketch of the program which I intend to follow in carrying out these duties, in other words, a summary of what I understand the activities of a Swiss Consul-General in Canada to be, and to what extent the co-operation of the Swiss colony in Canada is desirable in order to make these activities fruitful.

It seems to me that to lay before you such a program would be in harmony with those modern ideas born out of the war that the functions exercised in the name of a Government should be plainly laid before those whom they concern and who eventually are to be called upon for co-operation.

In order to limit our discussion and to give you, at the same time, a more or less concise idea of the manifold functions of an official Swiss representation in Canada, we can, by way of summary, divide these functions into the following four groups:

1. Commercial Interests.
2. Intellectual intercourse.