

COLISEUM FILLED AT GERMAN DAY CELEBRATION

FINE MUSIC AND GOOD SPEECHES

Prof. Goebel, of University of Illinois, Makes the Main Address—Prof. Rittmiller in Opening Speech.

—The annual celebration of German Day, held at the Coliseum last night, was an event of an auspicious character and was attended by an audience which packed the auditorium of the huge building. The ceilings and walls were artistically decorated with German and American flags and the scene was an animated one, to say the least.

The Peoria and Bloomington Concordia and Maennerchor singing societies were seated on the platform, which was also attractively decorated with flags. A huge American flag was draped from the rear of the platform and this was surrounded with German and American flags of smaller dimensions. Seated just to the front of the stage was the Bloomington band.

Prof. Rittmiller's Speech

Prof. L. F. Rittmiller was the chairman of the evening and delivered the address of welcome. During the course of his remarks he said among other things:

"Altho the so-called German-Americans are and intend to be good American citizens, we do not feel that we have any cause, whether born here or across the water, to feel ashamed of our ancestors."

In referring to the European war situation, Prof. Rittmiller said: "The allies boasted that by last Christmas they would all join in Berlin and shake hands with one another. These conditions did not come about, however. But the foes of Germany did not fare well, for there were too many allies. I am sorry that our own good country of America was in truth and fact one of the allies against Germany and Austria on account of the war material we are selling to the allies and also on account of the fact that in every manner, shape and form, we tried to hinder and break up the submarine warfare of Germany. If our government had from the very beginning told European nations that we were sorry that they were going to engage in war and that they must not look to America for assistance in any way, and if our president had told us to stay off the ships of the warring countries, we would then have been neutral in truth and in fact. If this had been done I believe that the war would have been ended some time ago."

Prof. Rittmiller further said that if a man was born of English parents, or was born in England, it is unreasonable that a fair minded person would criticize or blame him for wishing success for the British, and that German-Americans should be granted the same privilege. "I hope," said Prof. Rittmiller, by way of conclusion, "that the war will soon be ended and peace will at last be established."

Prof. Goebel's Address

Prof. Julius Goebel, head of the German department of the University of Illinois, was the principal speaker of the evening. He spoke on the theme "The Significance of German Day," and during the course of his remarks touched on the European war situation and deplored the words of a certain "political demagog" who termed "German-American citizens" "hyphenated-Americans."

Dr. Goebel, among other things, said: "The commemoration of German Day follows a custom which was inaugurated over thirty years ago. As the descendants of the Puritans, Scotch, Hollanders and Irish have set apart a day on which they commemorate their forefathers and their deeds, so we Americans of German descent remember the day of the founding of Germantown, Pa., in 1633, which was the first permanent German colony in the country. We are thinking today also of our countrymen who fought for American liberty and for the preservation of the union; of the many millions of farmers and artisans, of the numerous scholars, artists and scientists who in the course of the centuries came here and helped to develop what we call at present American civilization."

The American Civilization

"This civilization is not the product of a single section of the country, as some people, at the present time, seem to believe, but is the result of the efforts of various ethnic elements, among which the German is one of the most prominent, as the true student of American history knows, or should know."

"This civilization is still in the making, and not something complete. It is in the development of the growing American civilization in which every one of us has a share, however humble it may be."

"It seems incredible that to a large and influential part of the nation, such as the German is, the commemoration of the deeds of their forefathers should be denied when the term hyphenated-American was first invented and applied to the German-American by one of our political demagogues."

We Smile at the Poison

"But we smile at it," Prof. Goebel continued. "Today this epithet is saturated with poison to strike us at the heart. Is this the spirit of true American citizenship? What has happened to change the attitude of our fellow citizens with whom we cooperated and lived in peace for more than two centuries?"

We Believe in Germany

"When the present war first broke out and a stream of falsehoods and calumny was spent against Germany, the land of our parents and forefathers, we refused to join in this unholy crusade. We believed in Germany and her cause and we protested against the systematic poisoning of public opinion."

"Who dares say that thereby we committed an offense against our rights as citizens? There was only one time in the history of the country when something similar happened. I mean the so-called 'know-nothing' crusade which was directed against the foreigners, and especially the Germans, because they dared to advocate the abolition of slavery. As public opinion at that time was corrupted by the slave-holders, the Germans were called barbarians and traitors."

Hurl Epithets at Germans

"So it is now, the manufacturers of ammunition and their subsidized allies, throw at us the very same epithets. The attack upon the sincerity of our oaths as citizens is an insult which we cannot resent too strongly. At the same time we consider it an absurdity as well as an infamy, to demand of us that we should forget or hate our brethren across the water."

"We still believe as Germans, in the word of the Bible, 'Cursed be he who curseth his father or mother.'"

Germania and Columbia

One of the beautiful and striking features of the evening was the tableau "Germania and Columbia." When the

curtain was raised Germania was shown with drawn sword protecting thirteen little girls who represented the thirteen original states. Columbia stood back of her among the group representative of the states. Germania sheathed her sword and was seated on her throne and Columbia held in outstretched hands the dove of peace. "Die Wacht Am Rhein" and "The Star Spangled Banner" were then sung by the audience with band accompaniment. The following is the cast of characters:

Columbia—Clara Mae Rothman.
Little girls representing states—Rose Meyer, Melvina Frisch, Julia Peffer, Laurine Meyer, Dorothy Neils, Louisa Ludwig, Laura Worthman, Bernadine Wochner, Gertrude Watchinski, Ida Delieden, Ernestine Goetski, Miss Cunningham and Miss Wertz.
Germania—Freida Quasick.
Art—Lela Meyer.
Music—Freida Frisch.
Maid—Elsie Schaeffer, Mrs. Schaeffer Murphy, Billie Jameson and Hilda Kehr.

Other Features

There were some splendid musical selections by the Bloomington and Peoria Maennerchor and Concordia singing societies and the Bloomington band. Miss Alta Truckenbrod and Mrs. Harry Jungerich favored with vocal selections and the program of musical features as published in yesterday morning's issue of the Pantagraph was carried out in detail.

HALLOWEEN EVENTS