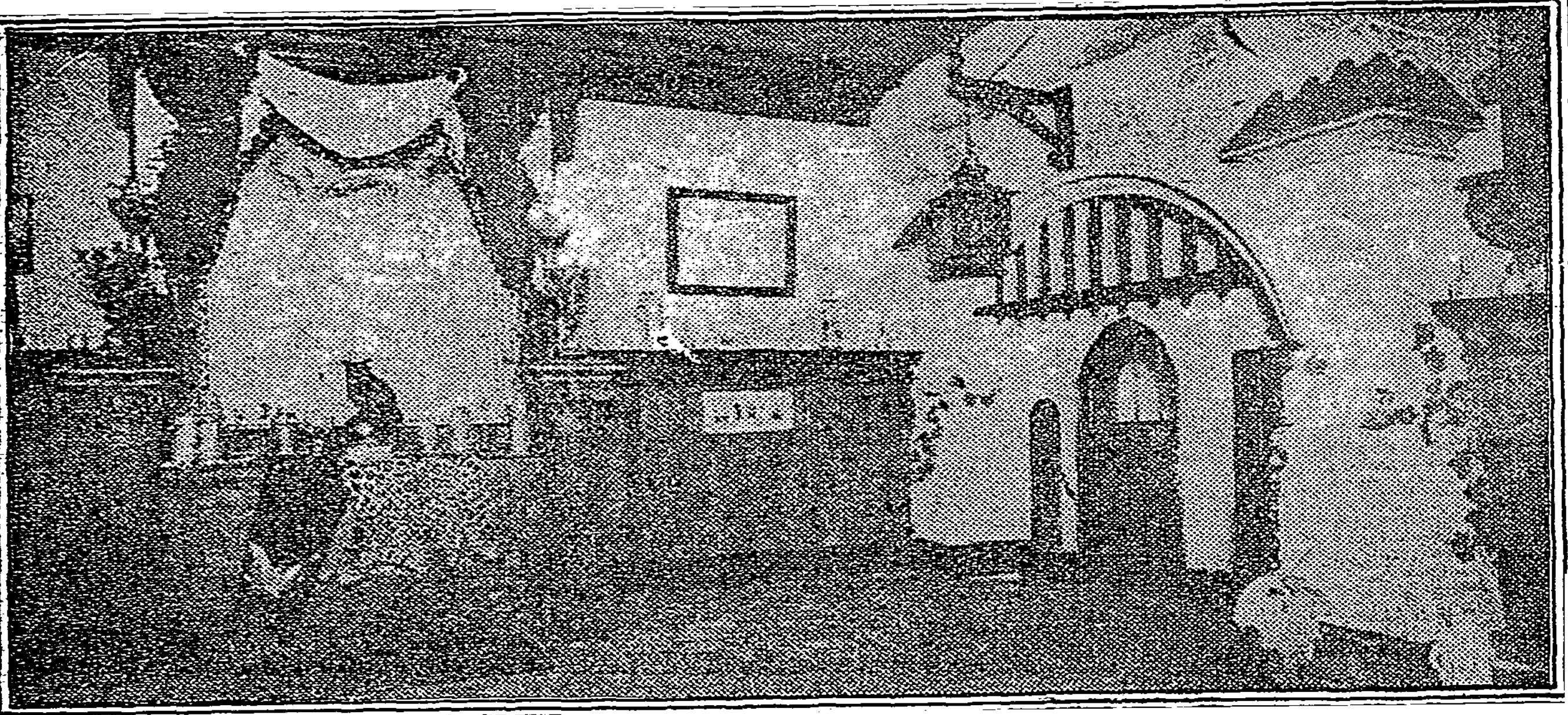


FAMOUS GERMAN SOCIETY OF GOOD FELLOWS COMING HERE

The Schlaraffia, Which Burlesques the Customs of Knighthood, Is Sending a Delegation Over to be Entertained by American Members of the Order.



Drawings by H. S. Mayer. Reproduced by Courtesy of Appleton's Magazine. Interior of a Schlaraffian "Castle."

ON the first day of the Harvest Moon, or, possibly, on the last day of the Hay Moon, under the special protection of the great Uhu, and welcomed by vociferous shouts of "Lulu!" a goodly company of Knights, Younkers, and Pages, with a sprinkling of Ladies of the Castle and Pilgrims, will land in Hoboken. They will come with helmets on their heads and ancestors' baggage they will bring their trusty halberds, their blaring trumpets, their sacred tom-tom, as befits genuine Schlaraffians.

At once all will proceed to the frowning Schlaraffia Castle on Third Avenue and do obeisance before the Throne. Then will come a grand Sipping of Welcome, followed by a trip to the Castles of New Haven and elsewhere, and a marvel of our continent.

And all the way there will be rejoicings. Ay, during the two weeks' stay of that noble company the American welkin will ring with the cordial sound of "Aha!" and "Oho!" with wild outbursts of "Lulu!" and "Lulu!" a single audacious "Uhu!" to spout the flow of Quell and Lethe. Ay, everything will be just as it should be in Schlaraffenland, where cooked partridges and pigeons fly through the air, covered with savory sauce, knives and forks stuck all ready in their sides; where rivers of beer and wine flow down hills of sausages; where it is a crime to work under any pretext whatsoever, or do anything but rest and grin.

All of which, rendered into twentieth century, means that a delegation of about seventy-five members of that renowned German organization, the Schlaraffia, accompanied by their wives and daughters, also by a sprinkling of specially invited guests, are coming to this country to visit the Schlaraffians of America. The delegation will land here on Aug. 1, or, if their boat makes particularly good time, on July 31, and be personally conducted to the Schlaraffia of New York and other American cities until the time comes for its departure for home in Germany, Austria, and the other European lands where the Schlaraffia has branches—or "realms," as they are grandly called in the special language of the order.

This is the first time that any Schlaraffian of Europe have officially visited those of the New World. Plenty of American Schlaraffians have crossed the ocean to occupy seats at the grand councils of the organization, which take place every five years, or else, unofficially, in the form of one European "castle" to another, sure of receiving at every one unbounded hospitality. But this "ride"—Schlaraffians, as befits feudal knights and squires, always "ride," even if their steeds be their own two legs—into the annals of Schlaraffia, consequently, the American members of the famous association are keyed up to a high pitch of excitement and preparation by the impending visit.

Die Schlaraffia—"that is the German for it"—was founded at Prague, in Bohemia, fifty-two years ago. Since then something like two hundred branches have sprung into being, all of which look to Prague as the "Allmother," the mother of all. The objects of the Schlaraffia are the fostering of the "society of good fellows," whose only object is to have as good a time as possible as frequently as possible. But they do not do it in any haphazard way—far from it. The revels of the Schlaraffia are conducted according to a ritual which must be observed in its every detail. This ritual, extended by the ritual members of the order in Prague over fifty years ago, is an elaborate burlesque of the observances of feudal days when knights rode through the land and everything was warlike and picturesque.

Thus, the Schlaraffians have the accolade, by which members are raised to the exalted rank of Knight; though they meet in a private room of some jovial resort of good fellows, they solemnly dub their "Burg" or castle; though their real names be plain Schmidt or Huber or Mayer, each, in so far as Schlaraffia is concerned, has a noble nickname, by which he must invariably be addressed at every "Sipping"—a "Sipping" is the name given the weekly meetings of the Schlaraffia.

All officers of the various "realms," instead of being known as resident, Vice President, Treasurer, or Secretary, have exalted titles,avoring of the days of feudalism. And, last but by no means least, there is, in every "Burg," a horrible dungeon, into which members who offend the authorities in any way are mercilessly thrust. This dungeon, it is expressly stated in the Schlaraffian rules and regulations, "must be a dark and damp place, so rich the rays of the sun can with difficulty penetrate."

While they are at the meetings the members must array themselves in helmet, sash, and sword, address each other only by their Schlaraffian names, and with the article "Ihr," a solemn and antiquated form instead of the common German "Sie" and "Du." They must be careful to substitute for the ordinary forms of speech various other typical "Schlaraff" terms, all carefully set forth in the ritual.

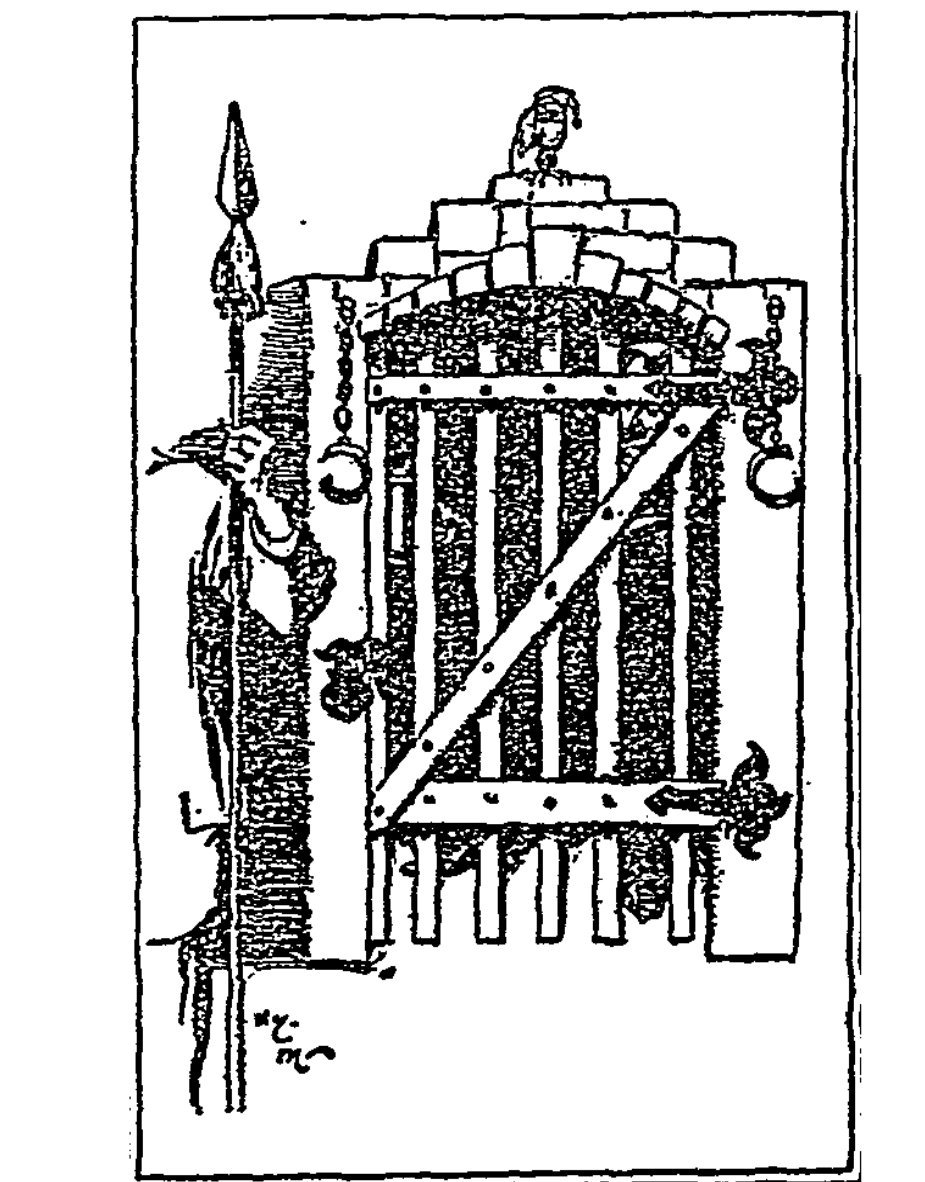
For instance take beer. Beer, it must be known, plays a very important part indeed in Schlaraffian gatherings. With that genial liquid the great bumpers that grace the Schlaraffian tables are filled; in it the jovial members pledge each other many times during each "Sipping."

But the word "beer," on knightly lips, would seem vulgar. Therefore the ritual ordains that members must invariably refer to the frothy beverage as "Quell," a word which in German ears, sounds high class and poetic.

Furthermore, no Schlaraff may say "wine" when he is at a meeting. He must allude to "Lethe," and to "Foam-

Lethe," if he is speaking of champagne, and "gr-Lethe" if, perchance, his thoughts turn to spirituous liquor. There is a reason for all this elaborate caricature of the usages of the days when knighthood was in flower. To understand its why and wherefore, one must go back to the founding of the Schlaraffia at Prague in 1859.

Then, in the Bohemian capital, there was a society of gay fellows called the "Arcadia." Its membership was largely



A Guest "Stammering" His Thanks to the "Throne."

made up of actors and literary men; in it, however, was a small minority of the richer, more aristocratic class.

At that time the year 1848, when Republicans all over Europe made trouble for the constituted authorities, was fresh in men's minds. The aristocracy had triumphed in Austria, as elsewhere, and its adherents were inclined to give themselves airs.

So it came to pass that one night, when the "Arcadia" met, a German actor, who, in Schlaraffian parlance, bore the impressive name of "Knight Columbus, the Pathfinder," New York followed in 1855, after which the other thirteen cities fell into line as "realms."

There was a hot discussion. In the course of it, some one of the aristocrats applied to the candidate the term "Proletarian," as a reproach.

That infuriated Thomé and those of his fellow-members who thought that poverty and humble rank should be no bar to membership in the "Arcadia." They promptly seceded and formed a rival organization which they called "The Proletarian Club." As a rebuke to the uppishness of the "Arcadia" aristocracy the members of the new club got up the amusing burlesque of knightly forms which Schlaraffians still cherish. Soon after the new organization decided on a change of name. Of several suggested, the one adopted was "Schlaraffia," derived from Schlaraffenland, a delightful mythical region, touched upon by Hans Sachs and other noted writers. There knighthood is the prime virtue. Nobody has to stir a muscle even to get food or drink, for everything comes hustling up to the inhabitants, ready for instant consumption.

For several years Prague alone knew the Schlaraffia. Still composed of actors, literateurs, and men of other callings adjudged to be good fellows, it held its meetings and thoroughly enjoyed itself. Year by year its membership grew, as did also its ritual, which soon assumed a form almost as complicated as that which it has now.

In 1855 came the founding of the first branch Schlaraffia. Schmidt-Weissenfels, a well-known author, compelled to leave Prague and reside at Berlin, felt so homesick for the merry meetings of his gay little club that he founded a similar one at the German capital. Two years later this branch was recognized by the Prague chapter as a legitimate child of Schlaraffia, and official permission was given to it to use the ritual and bestow on its members the various knightly honors enjoyed by the worthy members of the original Prague group.

The third Schlaraffia was founded in 1872 at Leipzig by two Schlaraff knights in good standing, one from Prague, the other from Berlin. Next came Graz, next Vienna, then Hamburg.

Then came the first council held at Prague, at which were present delegates from all five branches. Amid wild acclamations the "Pan-Schlaraffia" idea was born. The five branches bound themselves into one organization with Prague as their common mother. After that momentous step the ritual was duly revised and the delegates pledged themselves to see that it was rigidly carried out in their respective "realms."

In the following years Schlaraffia branches were founded in such quick succession that the founders must have gasped with astonishment and delight at the success that followed their modest beginnings. Now, half a century after the first Schlaraffia in Prague, there are in the vicinity of two hundred Schlaraffia branches in the world, every one of which carefully conforms to the Prague ritual.

Germany and Austria, of course, are the lands in which there are the most Schlaraffians. But there are branches also in England, Holland, Switzerland, and the United States. "Realms" were established also in remote places like Singapore, New Zealand, and Egypt, but their members were too far away to keep in touch with their brothers, and those branches quickly perished.

Not so with the "realms" of America. Of these there are now fifteen—at New York, San Francisco, Chicago, Cincinnati, Boston, Milwaukee, Philadelphia, St. Louis New Haven, Newark, Jersey City,

(called by Schlaraffians 'Uhu.') Before its members and guests bow deeply, uttering at the same time a solemn 'Uhu!' Then every one bows before the throne on which are seated the three 'Oberschlaraffs' with the insignia of their office. 'The castle is quite remarkable in its arrangements and furnishings. At one

patterned after the German fashion of the sixteenth century extend on two sides through the whole length of the hall. One of these is for the Knights, the others for the lower grades of membership. 'At the head of the Knights' table sits the Marshal of the Realm. He only, at the command of the throne, is entitled to

humorous verse or prose, according to the choice or ability of the man, and gives the best chance for good-natured satire. Variation is secured by a weekly change of this official, who is appointed by the throne.

After the reading of the protocol, the chancellor reads the letter which has been received during the week from the various 'realms' abroad and in America. Meanwhile the Marshal has handed the throne a list of those members who have volunteered—or may be commanded to deliver speeches, poems, essays, or musical selections.

The Chancellor having finished, the guests are 'dragged' before the throne, where they are welcomed by a humorously impressive speech and the tender of a huge bumper.

After the roll call the real entertainment begins. Speeches, repartee, song, and instrumental productions follow one another in rapid succession. 'Twice during the evening the entertainment is interrupted by a Schmuspausa, a short recess, during which the Schlaraffs leave their seats and stand around in groups, laughing and joking, smoking, eating, and drinking.

After the second recess the closing part of the 'Sipping' begins. Witty speeches tend to increase the general hilarity, and this is the time when slight infractions of the rules give the 'Knaifer' (pincher), an important official with an aim bag at the end of a long rod, an opportunity to shove it before the faces of offenders and gather in a lot of nickels and dimes, which go to swell the treasury of the 'realm' or a charity fund to be distributed at Christmas time.

Schlaraffians who do something that meets with particular approval among their fellow members are entitled to receive various medals which they may wear on all festival occasions. Some of

A duel with spiritual weapons is a competition in which the opposing parties try to best each other in recitations of verse or prose, improvised on the spot. This custom dates back to the days when the Schlaraffia was composed entirely of actors and literary folk.

Enormous mugs play an important part at all Schlaraffian gatherings. Among these are mugs named Aha, Uhu, Lulu, and Dudu. To drink out of each of these a special form of ceremonial is necessary.

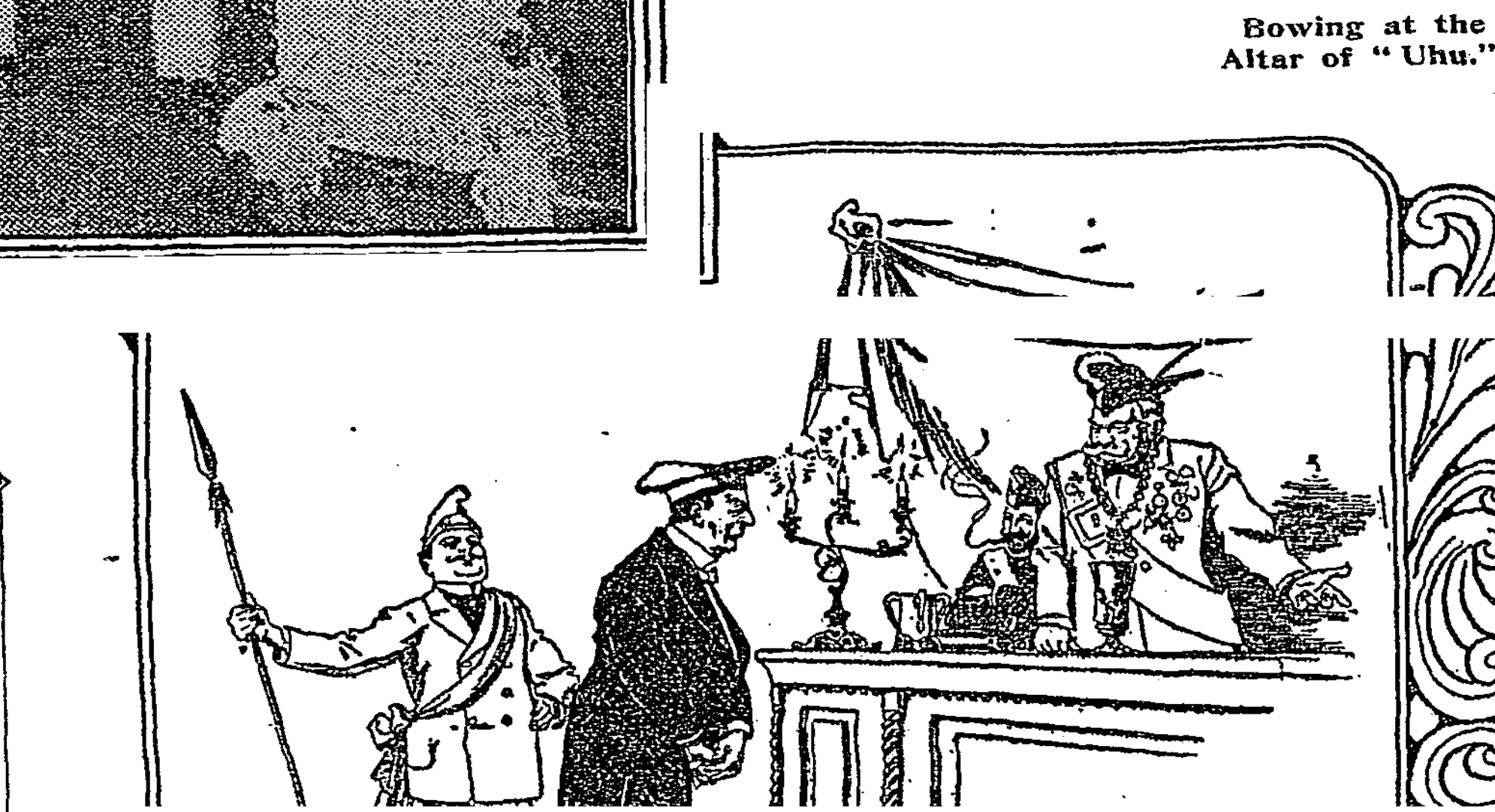
Whenever a new mug is added to the possessions of a "realm" there is a complicated ceremonial to be observed. Covered from the view of the members, the new treasure is taken before the throne of the presiding Schlaraffian official by a duly-appointed Knight, called, for that evening, the "Nurse." He handles the bumper exactly as if it were a baby. Other officials appointed for the ceremony bear the appropriate titles of "Parson" and "Bell-Tower." The latter, armed with a bell, rings it at stated intervals.

The presiding Schlaraff, after stating the ritual which must precede all drinks from the new "baby," proceeds to christen it with some high-flown name.

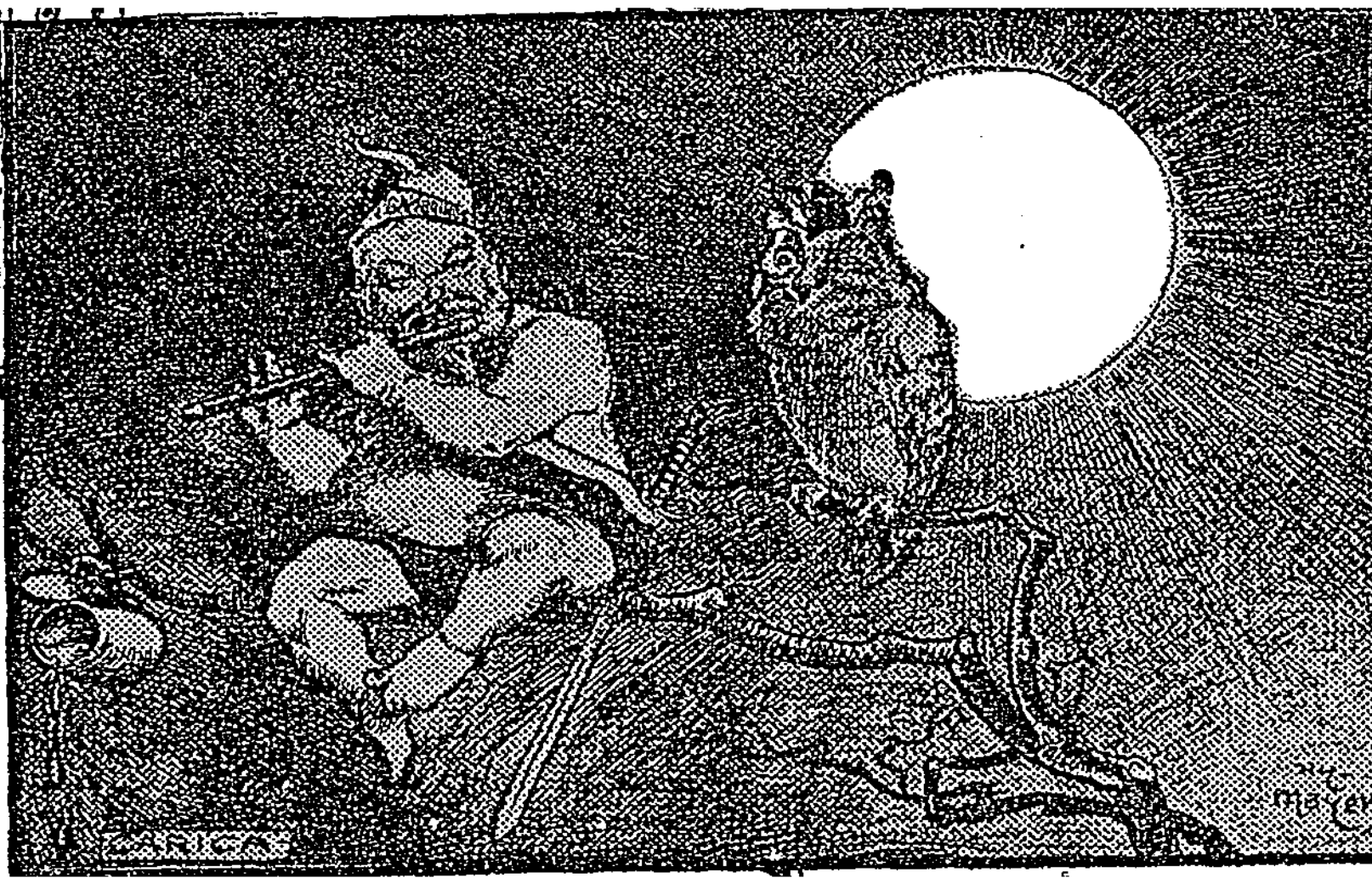
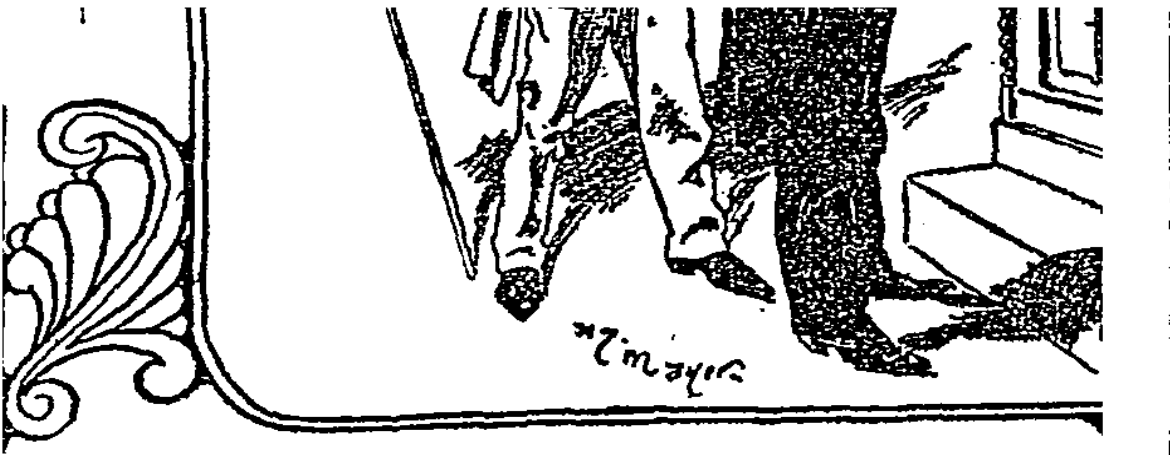
Then, while the "Bell-Tower" tolls furiously, the "Nurse" fills the newcomer with beer, and all those present drink with appropriate shouts of pleasure. The only exclamation of applause, by the way, allowed at a "Sipping" is the cry of "Lulu!" Anything like "bravo" is "profane," and is at once punished with a fine. As a sign of disapprobation members shout, "Uhu!" which frequently is the cause for a "duel."

There is a "Sipping" once a week. The day on which the first one of the month takes place is called the day of "Uhu" after the owl, which is the deity of the Schlaraffians.

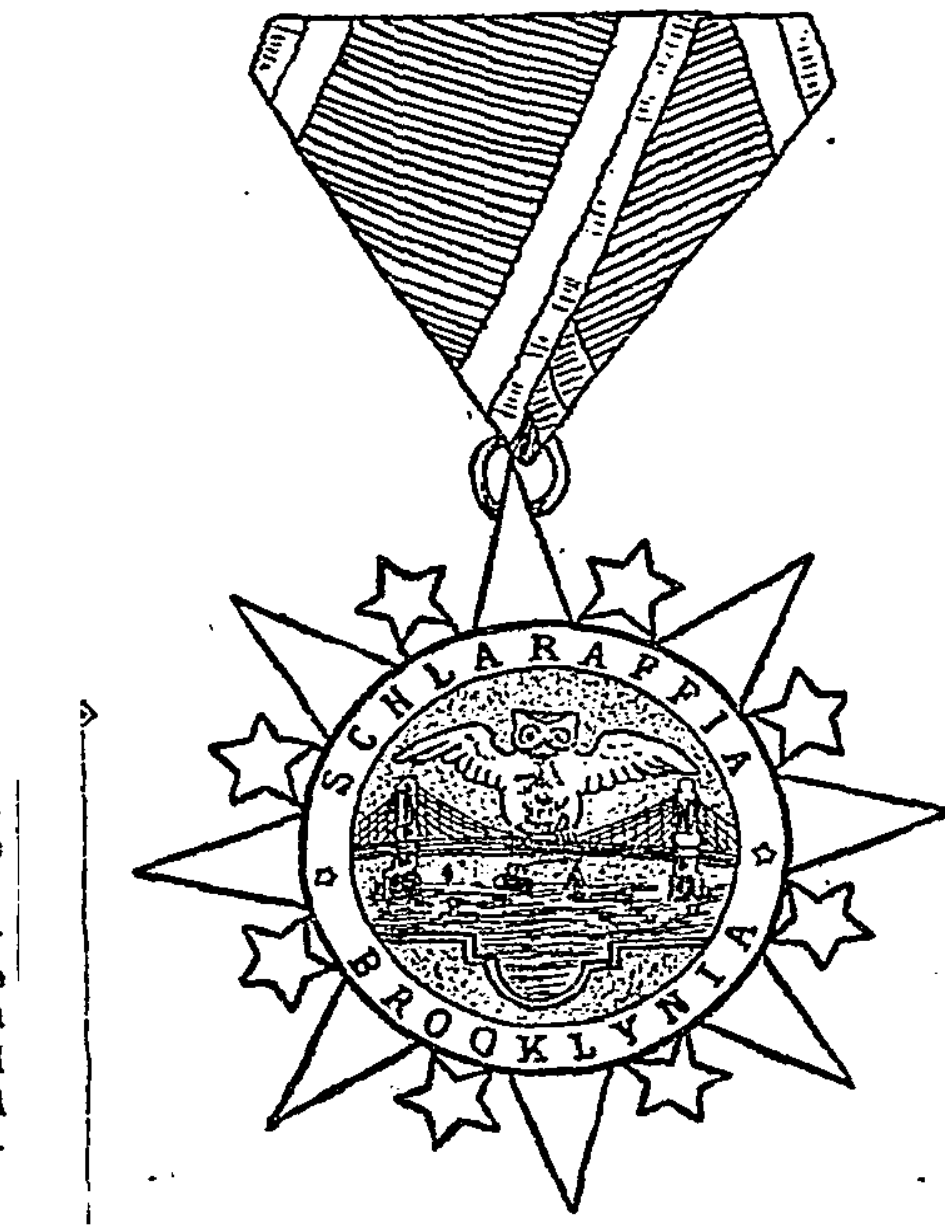
Besides the tom-tom, which every "cas-



Bowling at the Altar of "Uhu."



Sketch of the Invitation Card Sent Their European Brothers.



A Schlaraffian "Ancestor."

Brooklyn, Paterson, Buffalo, and Cleveland.

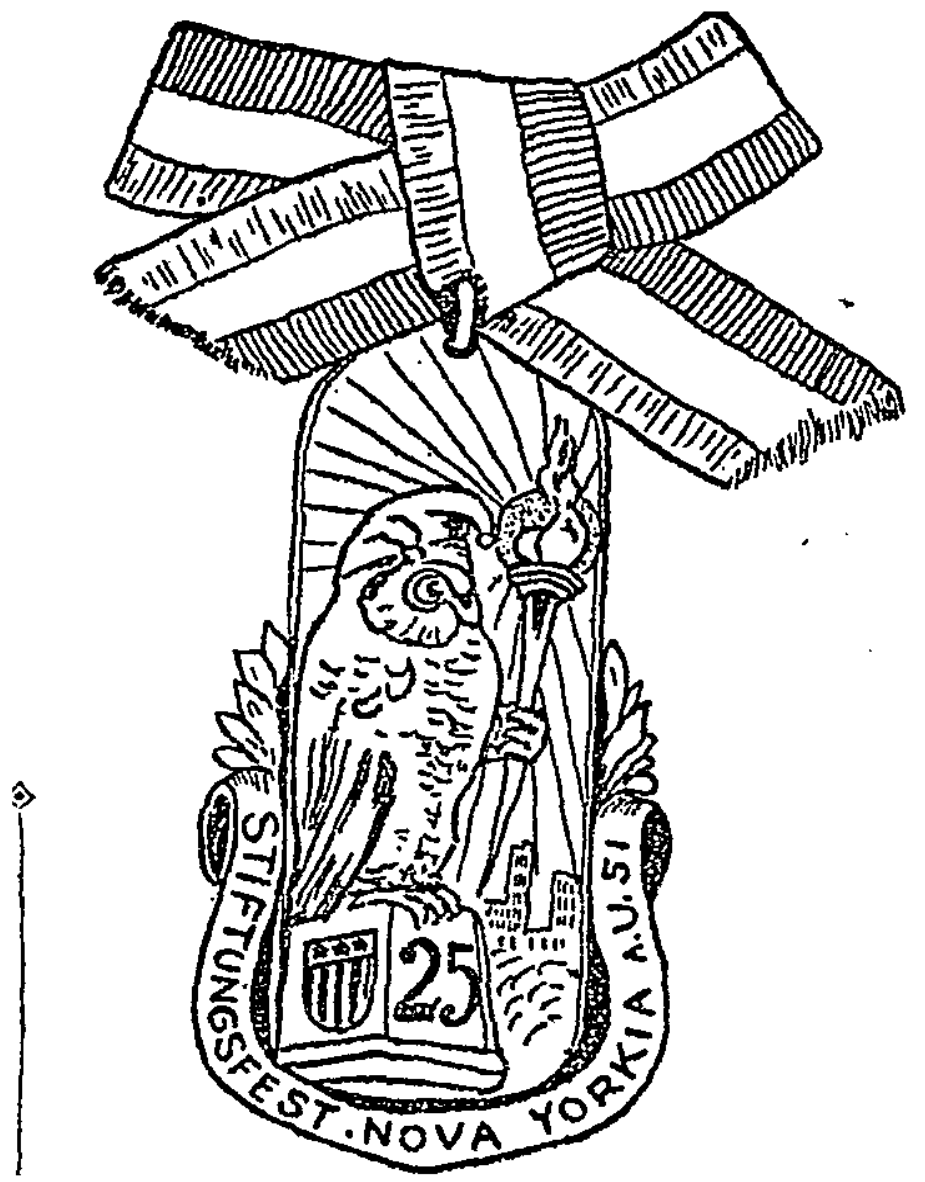
The oldest of these is San Francisco. It was founded in 1853 by a German actor, who, in Schlaraffian parlance, bore the impressive name of "Knight Columbus, the Pathfinder." New York followed in 1855, after which the other thirteen cities fell into line as "realms."

All "realms" are called by Latin or near-Latin names. New York is Nova Yorkia, Boston Bostonia, San Francisco Franziskan California, St. Louis Ludovic Missouriia, &c. In Europe there are Praga, the All-Mother Berolina, Berlin; Pragobona, Vienna; Colonia Aserippina, Cologna; Lipia, Leipsic, and many more with names more or less changed from those given their respective cities by the "profane" world. It must be remembered that all that is not Schlaraffian is, to a Schlaraffian, "profane." As soon as he enters a "castle" and comes under the rule of Uhu, the great horned owl of Minerva, he is expected to forget all foolish things of everyday life.

To get a good idea of just how Schlaraffian revels are conducted it is well to hark to the following description of a "Sipping" by a high and mighty Schlaraff:

"Arrived in the 'Vorburg,' the ante-room, before the 'Sipping' begins the visitor generally encounters the members in the act of exchanging their street garb for helmet, bandolier, and sword, to which, on special occasions, are added a brightly flowing cloak and such orders and decorations as the wearer may possess and be inclined to wear.

"The sound of a tom-tom is the signal for entry into the castle proper. Near the entrance stands the altar with a stuffed image of the bird of Minerva



An "Ancestor" Showing Uhu, the Schlaraffian Deity.

end of the spacious hall extends a carpet-covered platform, surmounted by a canopy of rich hangings and backed by the coat-of-arms of the 'realm.' On the table, in front of three high-backed chairs, are scattered books, a silver box containing 'ancestors,' and a couple of large candlesticks. This is the throne.

"On the opposite side of the hall is Uhu's altar, on which rest the sword of the realm, the challenging gauntlet, and several elaborate mugs, each of which is destined for use on certain special occasions. The 'Aha' mug is used only by knights at the reception of visiting knights; members of the lower grades are only permitted to smell at this. The 'Lulu' mug is used for greating the pilgrims, the 'Dudu' for exchanging brotherly vows.

"Near the altar hang the large portraits of Schlaraffs who are resting in 'Aha'ia, the Schlaraffic heaven; in one corner threaten the heavy gates of the dark and gruesome dungeon; on another rises the Periculum, the rostrum from which flow the wit, humor, and wisdom of the members. The walls are covered with pictures of poets and composers, photographs, and armorial bearings of the knights, &c.

"Two long tables with rows of chairs,



Raising a Schlaraff to the Dignity of "Knight."

sound the tom-tom, at the tones of which absolute stillness has to reign in the castle. Between him and the throne is the desk of the Chancellor, the chief of all the departments, who, next to the Oberschlaraffs, is the most important of Schlaraffia's oligarchy.

"The meeting is always opened with a short speech by the presiding Oberschlaraff, who is addressed as 'Eure Herrlichkeit,' or 'Your Magnificence.' The strains of the opening song, an inspiring melody, sung by all members, fills the hall. The Schlaraffia song book, consisting of two big volumes, contains almost exclusively original songs and compositions of members, some of which are works of the highest artistic merit.

"The song finished, cigars and pipes are lit, the mugs are filled, and the Protocol is called upon to read the minutes of the last meeting. This is done in

these medals are known as "Ancestors" and were designed by the society's founders to burlesque the passionate adoration of family trees prevailing in Europe.

Thus, a member who collects, during his years of membership, a large number of "Ancestors" and pins them on his chest is supposed to be in a position to laugh at any perch who utilizes a long line of bona fide ancestors as a reason for getting haughty.

Only "Knights" may wear "Ancestors" on their chests in plain view. Members of the humbler grades are required to carry their "Ancestors" in their waistcoat pockets, and to produce them for inspection when ordered so to do by a high Schlaraffian official.

In the Schlaraffia there are three grades of members—Knights, Younkers, and "Knappens," or Pages. Only after a severe period of probation on the lower grades rise to the dignity of Knight.

Among the duties of members of the lesser grades is that they must attend every "Sipping" that occurs during their probation time and listen to the proceedings "with breathless attention." Younkers and Pages are presided over by an official who keeps them humble and quiet by means of a cat-o-nine tails which he swishes menacingly at the slightest provocation.

A member may be condemned during a "Sipping" by the presiding official to imprisonment in the "dungeon cell." In spite of his vehement appeals for mercy, he is seized by two members bearing halberds and pushed bodily into that "damp, dark recess." There he comes under the jurisdiction of the Warden of the Castle, who may, at his discretion, supply the prisoner with food and drink in tiny quantities, or else with none at all. Furthermore, a Schlaraff confined in the dungeon is forbidden to take any part whatever in the evening's proceedings.

One of the most important and amusing parts of the Schlaraffian ritual is that which concerns "duels" between members. These may be fought either with material or spiritual weapons.

Whenever a member feels himself insulted he announces the fact in a loud voice and demands satisfaction. At once one of the grand officials supplies him with the "Feud Glove," which the offender puts then huris at the feet of his insulted party.

Thereupon if the latter choose material weapons each of the duellists picks out two seconds. The opposing parties line up on opposite sides of a table.

Then with tremendous solemnity other Knights bring their weapons—enormous mugs filled with beer. At a given signal they raise them to their lips. Whichever party finishes last or spills any beer is adjudged the loser. If both do so the duel is a tie.

tle" must possess, music is provided by a piano. In Schlaraffian this instrument is known by the fearsome name of Clavicymbalum.

Guests are called pilgrims. Only a few are allowed each year at Schlaraffian meetings. They must on arriving advance very humbly to the throne, listen with bowed head to the extravagant Schlaraff's speech of welcome, and then "stammer" their thanks.

One of the first tenets of Schlaraffia is that, at its meetings, there shall be no talk of politics, religion, business, or other things calculated to cause acrimonious discussion. In spite of the extravagant respect which the association's regulations command, this particular section has, at times, been disobeyed.

Some years ago a couple of Austrian "realms" were peremptorily dissolved because their members meddled in politics and allowed prejudices, political and otherwise, to worm their way into the "castle."

Then, again, some "realms" of Schlaraffia existing in the Russian Empire were disbanded because the Government looked askance at them—which would seem to mean that the Knights and their numberless fellow-members were inclined to forget the dictates of the ritual.

And even in Prague itself, the home of all that is genuinely Schlaraffian, the society has had its troubles.

As is well known, Prague is a centre of the Czechs, the Bohemian Nationalist Party, who feel bitter enmity toward the German element in Bohemia's population. Now, the Schlaraffia, from its start, has been essentially German. So, on one occasion, when Germans and Czechs were rioting against each other in the streets of the ancient city, the Czechs attacked the "castle" of the Schlaraffia and had to be driven away by force.

Thereupon stout iron bars were placed on doors and windows of the Schlaraffian stronghold in readiness for another attack. This, luckily, has not yet been made.

It has been stated that all Schlaraffians have special names. Some of these are exceedingly grand and pompous. Thus, here in New York, men who in real life have names that would attract no special attention anywhere are known to fellow-Schlaraffians by such extraordinary appellations as The Assassin of Tailors, Walter von der Vogelweide, Blondel, Ab-salom, Apollo the Irresistible, Carica the Tourist, Henry the Fowler, Hippocrates, Marzipan, Martin the Dragon Slayer, Pantalon Socrates, and Paganini.

Among those who will soon visit America from the "castles" of Europe are: His Magnificence Knight Dynamita, Knight Know-It-All, Younker Wenceslaus, and Knights Nero, Schinddel, Bruno, and Adonia.