

Veterans of the German Army Now Guests of Omaha



GROUP OF MEMBERS OF THE OMAHA LANDWEHR VEREIN



LADIES COMMITTEE

FOR the first time in the history of the organization "Der Deutschen Veteranen und Kriegerbund von Nord Amerika" will meet in the central west. Never before has this national society of German veterans held its annual convention as far west as Nebraska. It is expected something like 5,000 men and women of the sturdy Teutonic stock will congregate in Omaha this week. Most complete preparations have been made to properly entertain them, under the direction of officers of the western Kriegerbund. A. F. Mertens of South Omaha is president of the western branch and also secretary of the national organization. Manager Parish of the Commercial club publicity bureau has been co-operating closely with Secretary Mertens and other public-spirited German citizens in these preparations, and the program gives promise of furnishing the kind of entertainment that will particularly appeal to the city's guests.

The English name of the organization which is to enlighten the public places of Omaha during the week is "National Organization of German Veterans and Warriors Societies of North America." It comprises the following separate organizations: German Kriegerbund of North America; German Kriegerbund of New York; Organization of Veterans and Warriors of the German Army, Philadelphia, Pa.; German Kriegerverein, San Francisco; regiment, Michigan; German Kriegerbund, Wisconsin; German Military Brigade, Buffalo, N. Y.; Central New York Kriegerbund; German Veterans' society, "Prius Heinrich," Boston, Mass.; battalion, Rochester, N. Y.; and Western Kriegerbund.

Western German Veterans All Interested.

Strong backing has been given the efforts of the Omaha and Nebraska veterans by the Iowa, North and South Dakota branches, with the purpose in mind to entertain the visitors from the east and other sections of the country in a manner to give them a lasting impression of western hospitality. It is intended to fully justify the departure made in selecting a representative western metropolis as the place for the national fete. All over the states of the west are scattered veterans of the German armies, who take a deep pride in the history of the members, both in Germany and in the adopted land. It is a glorious organization of former fighting men and their compatriots who have served their time with the colors in times of peace. They go about the business of their annual gathering with the intense heartiness that distinguishes the German character when its sympathies are enlisted. Not only will this gathering be a celebration of trials and victories of other days; it will be a big family party out to enjoy everything that offers, but determined that the fransen and the blader shall also participate in the pleasures.

Greetings, Rejoicings and Reunions.

Saturday the first delegates were registered, and with the arrival of National President Mueller of New York the aspect of things began to live up at Maennerchor hall, Fourteenth and Farnam, where the local committee has been holding its meetings. Greetings of old comrades and making of new friends was the first order of business, and German conversation was to be heard in its most genial tenor. The distinctive German headwear was in evidence on every side, and many a hard-won decoration, seldom shown by the possessors, was brought to the light on many

breast. Some of these veterans had been boys together, while still others had become sworn friends in camp and on the battlefields of the old land. Joyous, indeed, were some of the greetings as the older veterans met and went over again the thrilling stories of the days of youth.

Inspiring Tableaux at the Auditorium.

September 1, 1870, was the date of the memorable victory of the German army over the French at Sedan. Saturday evening at the Auditorium occurred the big event of the gathering, when a series of stirring tableaux was presented, picturing forth never-to-be forgotten incidents of the Franco-Prussian war. Among other scenes was one representing the capture of the French emperor, Napoleon III, following the historic fight near the little French town forty-one years ago. Around this victory, in fact, centers the essential spirit of the gathering now meeting in Omaha. It was the decisive point in the battling of long ago, and mixing with the throngs in the Auditorium were a great many veterans who took part in that battle. They and their descendants were thrilled anew with the fighting spirit of fatherland that has carried the German nation so far to the front among warrior peoples; but through all the rejoicing was to be discerned the happiness attaching to the love of honorable peace.

The Auditorium was packed from the last seat on the stage to the rear row of the balcony with enthusiastic Germans, and as each picture was assembled on the platform in appropriate ensemble plaudits rang out with good old German vim. Every person taking part in the tableaux had entered most earnestly into the spirit of the occasion, and it was a goodly sight to note their bearing and demeanor. Descriptive songs were sung as each tableau was formed. It was a scene never to be effaced from the memory.

Joy and Mirth, Song and Story.

Behind the cheering of the stage pictures and the songs was the thought of the great hall to follow; for no German gathering would be considered a success that did not include a chance to dance. This was, in a way, the big entertainment feature of the meeting of veterans, and many hundreds of couples availed themselves of the opportunity to participate in the dance numbers. Refreshments were served bountifully throughout the continuance of the festivities of Teutonic and good fellowship of the heartiest kind reigned supreme, with families and friends happily commingling. The visitors found their Omaha and Nebraska compatriots men and women after their own hearts. They were made thoroughly at home and the mother tongue of the land of Kaiser Wilhelm resounded in song and story in groups that left dancing to the young and frisky. Groups of warriors whose hair is gray and beards grizzled with the passing of years took supreme enjoyment in recalling scenes and incidents of the days when they keenly awaited the call of the battle bugles, and many a kindly word was spoken for other comrades who have gone from earth these many years. Men of the Landwehr Verein also found congenial topics, either among themselves or mixing with the older warriors, while youngsters of the grand old stock listened with eyes wide open and mouths agape to the tales of war and its alarm. Trained singers took delight in making the rafters ring with typical German songs that often brought

the listeners to their feet to join in with patriotic gusto.

Military Mass With Veterans as Celebrants.

This morning at 10 o'clock the people of Omaha will have an opportunity seldom offered in this country to witness a military field mass, celebrated in the open, just as was the custom in the old land before the soldiers went forth to the clash of battle. A temporary altar and pulpit have been erected in one of the valleys near the German Home, South Thirteenth and G streets, and thousands can find accommodation on the hillside surrounding the altar. Father B.

World's Seven Bibles

The world has seven bibles. They are the Koran of the Mohammedans, the Eddas of the Scandinavians, the Tripitaka of the Buddhists, the Five Kings of the Chinese, the Three Vedas of the Hindus, the Zendavesta and the Scriptures of the Christians.

The Koran is not older than the seventh century of our era. It is a compound of quotations from the Old and New Testaments, the Talmud and the gospel of St. Barnabas. The Eddas of the Scandinavians were published in the eleventh century and are the most recent of these seven bibles. The Buddhists' Tripitaka contain sublime morals and pure inspirations. Their author lived and died in the seventh century before Christ.

The sacred writings of the Chinese are called the Five Kings, "king" meaning web of cloth or the warp that keeps the threads in their places. They contain the choicest sayings of the best ages on the ethico-political duties of life. These sayings cannot be traced to a period higher than the eleventh century. B. C. The Three Vedas are the most ancient books of the Hindus and it is the opinion of great scholars that they are older than the eleventh century B. C.

The Zendavesta of the Persians is the grandest of all the sacred books next to the Bible. Zoroaster, whose sayings it contains, was born in the twelfth century B. C.

Since St. Magdalen's church, himself a veteran, will celebrate high mass, and the singing will be rendered by a male choir of forty voices, under the direction of Prof. Reese. There will be, besides the organ accompaniment, a double quartet of instruments, and the spectacle cannot fail to be of the most impressive character.

The altar will be surrounded by former soldiers of the German army, and at intervals during the mass a firing squad of veterans will deliver volley salutes. The sermon will be preached by Father Alois Kampmann of Sidney, long a personal bodyguard of Emperor William II. Father Kampmann is a real warrior figure, over six feet tall, strong and straight. It is told of him that he possessed the confidence of his emperor to such an extent he was selected to sleep before the door of the German ruler during his term of service.

Sunday afternoon the German Home grounds and building will be the scene of reunions and general visiting, with various forms of entertainment to enliven the hours.

Grand Parade on Monday Morning.

Monday morning the grand parade of the veterans will pass over the principal streets, moving at 9 o'clock, in order to be out of the way of the parade of the labor unions, which move at 11. It is expected that several thousand marchers will be in line from Omaha, Nebraska and the adjoining states. From almost every city in this state and from many in Iowa delegations will be present to take part in this annual parade in uniform. National President Mueller and his staff will be in line, with all the officers of the various organizations on the national roster.

Monday afternoon and evening are to be given over to a great "fest" at the German Home and park. A military band concert will be given all afternoon and evening, "mit kasendonner und feuerwerk," which freely translated means much unrestrained joy and the noise of fireworks. The particularly toasted veterans at this picnic will be those who win in the sharpshooters' tournament, which is to be a feature of Sunday afternoon, as well as the national officers and distinguished delegates.

Nothing startling is expected to occur at the business sessions of the Kriegerbund, except that the

struggle for the honor of entertaining the Western Kriegerbund next year is expected to be very keen. Grand Island and West Point, in Nebraska, and Manning, in Iowa, are the contenders for the next meeting.

Following are the present officers of the National Kriegerbund: Richard Mueller, president, New York; August Borser, Cincinnati, O., first vice president; John Schatz, Watertown, Wis., second vice president; Michael Milhauser, Albany, N. Y., treasurer; A. F. Mertens, South Omaha, secretary.

Officers and Roster of Western Branches.

The officers of the Western Kriegerbund are: A. F. Mertens, South Omaha, president; R. E. Hinrichs, Jansen, Neb., vice president; Ernst Koenig, Omaha, secretary; J. F. Harthorn, Denton, Ia., financial secretary; Hans C. Wiese, Bennington, Neb., treasurer.

Comprised in the western division of the order are thirty of the most active local "bunds" in the country, and as will be seen from the following list, Nebraska veterans of the German armies are numerous and strongly organized: German Landwehr-Verein, Omaha, Neb.; Bennington Landwehr-Verein; German Landwehr-Verein, Hartington, Neb.; German Landwehr-Verein, Papillion, Neb.; German Landwehr-Verein, West Point, Neb.; German Landwehr-Verein, Hildreth, Neb.; German Landwehr-Verein, Jansen, Neb.; German Krieger-Verein, Manning, Ia.; German Landwehr-Verein, Grand Island, Neb.; German Landwehr-Verein, Columbus, Neb.; German Landwehr-Verein, Howells, Neb.; Veterans and Krieger-Verein, Clatonia, Neb.; German Landwehr-Verein, Seward, Neb.; German Krieger and Landwehr-Verein, Auburn, Neb.; German Landwehr-Verein, Norfolk, Neb.; German Krieger-Verein, Sheridan county, Nebraska; German Landwehr-Verein, Dunison, Ia.; German Krieger-Verein, Woden, Ia.; German Landwehr-Verein, Marion and Dickinson counties, Kansas; German Landwehr-Verein, Stanton, Neb.; German Krieger-Verein, New Hampton, Ia.; First German Landwehr-Verein, McCook county, Salem, S. D.; German Landwehr-Verein, Fuld, Minn.; German Krieger-Verein, Lincoln, Neb.; German Military Verein, Falls City, Neb.; Krieger-Verein, Leigh, Neb.; German Krieger-Verein, New Salem, N. D.; German Kriegerbund, Washington county, Hanover, Kan.; German Landwehr-Verein, Hastings, Neb.