

Swiss Mercantile Society Limited

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So Old Boys have had the good luck to get away from the danger zone and Young Boys are again serious challengers for the leadership, having three games in hand over Grasshoppers and only 5 points behind. It is an ill wind etc.!

The success of Basel in that high scoring game with Chaux-de-Fonds will please the many "Basler" in our Colony and sweeten the pill of knowing F.C. Basel at the bottom of the League and in dire need of points to escape relegation. F.C. Old Boys were just as badly off had not a miracle (Servette) presented them with four golden points.

In the only Championship match last Sunday, Aarau drove another nail into Old Boys coffin, defeating them 4-1.

M.G.

NEWS FROM THE COLONY.

SWISS MERCANTILE SOCIETY LIMITED.

The Swiss Mercantile Society held a Cinderella Dance at the Midland Grand Hotel, St. Pancras, on Saturday, February 6th. This was the last Dance of the season which was held in lieu of the customary Banquet. Thanks to the efforts of the Committee who left no stone unturned to ensure a pleasant evening to those who attend these social functions, there were again over 100 members and friends present. The indefatigable "Cambrian Syncopated Orchestra" had hardly struck the first chords, when the spacious dance hall was filled with the worshippers of Terpsichore. Everyday cares and worries, the signs of the present times, were soon forgotten and all seemed to have a single determination, to enjoy themselves. The interval arrived and the party adjourned into the dining hall where an excellent supper was served. Even the "gourmands" were able to satisfy their palates although it was not the sumptuous dinner of yore.

On having offered the loyal toasts to His Majesty "The King" and "Switzerland," the President of the Society, Mr. M. Paschoud, surveyed the activities of the S.M.S. during the past year in the following terms:

This year, as you are probably aware, our Society decided, for reasons of personal economy, to abandon the usual practice of having a Banquet, and it is not for me to discuss here the expediency of such a measure, which has found support in many quarters, but has also met with criticisms in others. One thing, however, is clear, that is, that in spite of this gathering not being an official Banquet, we must not miss the opportunity of acquainting the many friends of our Society with what we have done during the past year.

You are some of these friends, and you show your interest in us by coming here, and it is a pleasure for me to extend to you all a hearty welcome on behalf of the Swiss Mercantile Society Ltd. I hope you will forgive me if I deprive you of a possible dance or two by asking you to listen to a short review of the activities of the S.M.S. during 1931. There will be no description of ships sailing the high seas, admirals, etc., but on the contrary, we will remain on terra firma, which means that we shall only deal with plain facts.

When I addressed those present at the 1931 function, I mentioned that the lengthy task of converting our Society into a Body possessing a legal status was nearly ended. Since April last year, this is the case, and the Swiss Mercantile Society is to-day a registered company limited by guarantee, and though well over 40 years of age, has therefore only just attained its majority. The character of the Society has not changed, only its outward form, and our aim is still the same, that is to help our compatriots, and do something for our Country. We cannot yet offer to our Members the direct advantages we should like, but we hope in time to improve in that direction, and if they will continue to support us, we are bound to succeed in our efforts. This does not mean that we give them nothing in return for their yearly subscriptions as some of them seem to think, and if they will only go into the question, they will find that at some time or other they derived, or can derive some benefit out of the S.M.S. membership.

Our main activity for the present is educational, and in spite of the terrible times in which we are living, and which give us all food for thought as regards the future, we are pleased to say that the result is on the whole satisfactory. Our evening classes show a distinct increase, and it is evident that our Members, and the Swiss in London are realising the seriousness of the situation, and want to store up, if not money, as this is impossible now, (Lord Snowden having had the lot), at least knowledge to be better able to surmount the difficult times ahead.

We had last year 53 evening classes with 511 students as against 49 classes with 378

students the previous year. This increase is chiefly due to the new classes of commercial science which we did not have the year before, but on the other hand, we had no French classes.

As to our College, it is naturally affected by the general stagnation of business, but though the number of students, which is at present 169 is lower than we should wish, we are keeping our end well up, and the results obtained are most satisfactory. The Diploma which we give to the successful candidates at our final Examination is more and more in demand, and whereas in 1930 out of 909 individual students 329 sat for it, in 1931, 313 students out of the total of 613 took the examination. Thus with a decrease of 33% of the total number of students, the percentage of candidates for the examination rose from 36% in 1930 to over 51% in 1931.

The fame of our College is spreading not only in Switzerland, but also in other countries, and we had again recently the visit of official delegates of a foreign Power who asked to be allowed to study our system in order to open a college for their own nationals on the same lines as ours, and this is by no means an isolated instance. By judicious advertising in Switzerland, we are maintaining a fair average, and our students remain with us longer than formerly as we provide additional lectures to meet the needs of the more advanced students. The average stay last year was 4 months against 3½ months in 1930, and instead of extremes in the monthly returns, the attendance was more regular, varying from 191 in January to 262 in June, to drop again to 172 in December. The monthly average was 210 against 275 the previous year. Judging from the numerous inquiries we receive at present we are looking forward to numerous arrivals in the coming months.

With the decrease on income resulting from the lower attendance, we should be hard put to it to make ends meet, were it not for the generous support from the Swiss Government and also the numerous friends who are contributors. You may perhaps not all be aware that our yearly expenditure is no less than £8,000. We wish to seize this opportunity for expressing our gratitude to our Home Government, and to our Patrons, for their generous help, hoping that they will continue to give it to us in the future, and to thank our Principal, Mr. Levy, our Staff of Lecturers, our Office staff, for their loyal services, and last but not least, the Committee Members, the Council, and the Trustees who give so much of their time and attention to the S.M.S. for no other reward but that of having done a good deed.

In closing, allow me once more to call on the Members of our Society to attend the Meetings, and show interest in the Swiss Mercantile Society of which they are so called Active Members. If a word can be abused, this one is by the majority of them, unless it be that they are active in their reluctance to leave their Homes which you Ladies know so well how to make attractive and comfortable. Too much sweetness cannot be properly appreciated, and if you will recollect the saying, "Absence makes the heart grow fonder," occasional absence from your fireside, even if it is only to come to a short meeting, followed by a long "Jass," may make you appreciate all the more the bliss at home. In times of stress as the present, we have to stand together. We Members of the S.M.S. are citizens of a Country, small in size but great in many other respects, let us remember our Motto "One for all, and all for one," and act up to it. Ladies and Gentlemen, I again beg your forgiveness for this long verbal infliction listened to so patiently, and I will only ask you further to all rise and drink to the health and prosperity of the Swiss Mercantile Society.

The address was received with a hearty ovation and the President thereupon called on Mr. A. C. Stahelin, Chairman of the Education Committee, who made an eloquent appeal on behalf of the Swiss Benevolent Society who are feeling the stress of the times. Mr. Stahelin did not wish to be apologetic for trying the patience of the party, who were on tenderhooks for dancing, with a further oration. He fulfilled his duty willingly and was not going to worry them with a long tale.

"Whatever has to go by the board," he reiterated, "let us not forget the Swiss Benevolent Society who need help to-day more than ever. Make up your minds to give, and as this is the first time I am making this appeal, my reputation is in your hands, please be generous." Mr. Stahelin's words bore fruit. The collection yielded approximately £10 which amount will be handed to the Swiss Benevolent Society.

After an invigorating repast the dancers set again to work and those who were at the right time on the right spot could even gain for themselves a "Spot prize." The curfew bell rang far too soon and when the clock struck midnight the

Cinderellas rushed away. However, a great number of eager dancers continued under "dry" conditions till one o'clock, an extension for "dancing" having been obtained.

W.B.

SWISS CHORAL SOCIETY.

The Swiss Choral Society, like a good many of her sister Societies has decided, for obvious reasons, to curtail her social activities and to dispense with the customary Annual Banquet.

Although the present time hardly lends itself to much festivities, it has been resolved to hold a Buffet Dance at the First Avenue Hotel, on Friday, the 19th inst.; in doing so, the Swiss Choral Society is determined to cheer those up, who require cheering up, and how can this be better done than by taking them into the land of songs? They will, as a special number in the programme, render a few songs, and as an extra favour, one member, owner of a golden voice, has consented to sing one or two "Lieder."

It can, therefore, be gathered that, the Swiss Choral Society is making frantic efforts to assure their visitors of an enjoyable evening, and all those on which the burden of their daily struggle lays particularly heavy, should come along. They will be carried back, on wings of song, to their homeland, they will once again dream, the dream of their youth, of those care free happy days. To get a glimpse of this golden time, do come on Friday, February 19th to the Swiss Choral Society Buffet Dance, which begins at 8 o'clock, at the First Avenue Hotel, High Holborn, W.C.1.

SWISS CHORAL SOCIETY.

Buffet Dance

on

Friday, February 19th 1932

at

First Avenue Hotel, High Holborn, W.C.1.

from 8 to 2 a.m.

This Dance will take the place of the Annual Banquet and will be the only official function of the Season. All Members and friends are cordially invited.

Tickets at 5/6 (Refreshments included) can be obtained from Mr. John Gerber, 99, Gresham Street, E.C.2., or Mr. A. Stauffer, 23, Leonard Street, E.C.2. (Phone: Clerkenwell 9595 or any member of the Choir.)

POUR L'AMITIE FRANCO-SUISE.

UN ARTICLE DE M. HANOTAUX.

Le *Temps* reproduit un article de M. Hanotaux, ancien ministre des affaires étrangères, publié dans *l'Eclair* de Nice et intitulé "Nos voisins d'abord." Cet article rappelle à M. Laval les maigres résultats de ses voyages en Allemagne et aux Etats-Unis.

"Pourquoi le président du Conseil ne ferait-il pas visite aux Italiens, aux Suisses, aux Belges et aux Espagnols?"

Voici ce que M. Hanotaux dit à ce sujet de la Suisse: "La Suisse, aérée des républiques modernes, est un pays sage, honnête, loyal, équilibré au milieu des populations et des forces qui se partagent l'Europe. D'un commun accord, on lui a fait confiance en établissant à Genève le siège de la S. d. N. Or, nous sommes voisins, amis et nous nous connaissons à peine. M. Motta, président de la Confédération, est un Européen considérable, dont le mandat renouvelé sous les diverses formes constitutionnelles le perpétue aux affaires comme le chef moral de son pays. C'est un Latin, un intellectuel, un orateur éminent, un simplificateur. La Suisse, riche et laborieuse, qui est devenue un des asiles de la fortune universelle, n'a pas été sans éprouver quelques déboires dans les affaires économiques et financières. Aussi, il faut causer et si M. Laval ne peut aller ni à Genève, ni à Lausanne, on trouvera bien quelque Locarno pour une rencontre amicale et de grande utilité mutuelle."

Gazette de Lausanne.

LITERARY & MUSICAL EVENING.

MONSIEUR JEAN BARD,

Professor of Elocution at the Conservatoire of Geneva.

and the

SWISS INSTITUTE ORCHESTRA

at Conway Hall, Red Lion Square, W.C.1

on

Wednesday, February 17th 1932, at 8.15