

Life and work of the Colony

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Various papers record the remarkable progress made in Switzerland on the field of electrification of industry and transport. *The Railway Gazette* (13/12) holds that the motor lorry is becoming a serious competitor of the railways:

"Lausanne, to take one Swiss town only, has already discovered that within a radius of about 30 miles or slightly more it is cheaper to send heavy goods by van than by rail."

Schweizerland has a special number in French on navigation on the Rhine.

The new pamphlet in English, *The Free Rhine*, by Mr. Gelpke, is being distributed by the Verein für Schifffahrt auf dem Oberrhein.

A pretty little pamphlet on *Geneva, the seat of the League of Nations*, has been issued by the Swiss Bank Corporation, Geneva Branch.

LIFE AND WORK OF THE COLONY.

CITY SWISS CLUB—ANNUAL DINNER.

We are now able to publish a more complete account of the speech of our Minister, M. Ch. R. Paravicini, and to give in full those of Mr. P. F. Boehringer, President of the City Swiss Club, and Mr. G. Dimier, President of the Swiss Benevolent Society.

M. CH. R. PARAVICINI, SWISS MINISTER: The Swiss Minister, after having referred to the old tradition of the City Swiss Club to extend their hospitality to all Swiss citizens, whether residing in the United Kingdom or coming to London on a temporary mission, said that in spite of the difficult times we are living in, there is no reason for discouragement. If we all do our duty and our work as our country expects us to do it, we shall see—in any case, our children will see—that better times will not fail to follow, thanks to our endurance and to the confidence and energy of those of our countrymen, either abroad or in Switzerland, who are determined to preserve our old Republic as the country of order and liberty.

M. Paravicini then pointed out that in the course of the last summer some of the most prominent Swiss have visited this country. For six months M. Calonder, President of the Confederation in 1918, took his residence in London in order to study English politics and the practice of English law. He was on more than one occasion the guest of the City Swiss Club, before he left London in October, on a mission of the League of Nations in connection with the Aaland Islands. M. Paravicini said that it was of special comfort to all of us to know that M. Calonder had thoroughly regained his health, which, towards the end of last year, had greatly suffered from the tremendous overstrain to which he had been exposed during the war and after the armistice in his difficult position of Swiss Minister for Foreign Affairs. Every Swiss knows, he said, what a great deal M. Calonder has done for our country and that it was he to whom, no doubt, in the last instance, is due the fact that Switzerland joined the League of Nations and has to-day the honour to act as hostess to the General Assembly. He was certain that at any moment this eminent statesman with large views and a generous heart would answer the call of his country whenever it appealed for his help.

M. Paravicini then spoke about M. Gustave Ador, who had been in London on various occasions in connection with questions referring to the entry of Switzerland into the

League of Nations. It is due to M. Ador that the neutrality of Switzerland has been accepted as an established principle and recognised as being in the interest of all nations. There was no need to insist upon the merits of our great countryman. All Swiss, and not only the Swiss, know what he has done, not only for his country, but for the whole world.

To both these men, whom Switzerland has long ago honoured by bestowing upon them the highest distinctions, the City Swiss Club may be allowed to send on this occasion a heartfelt and patriotic message of gratitude.

The Swiss Minister then was glad to have an opportunity, in presence of that representative assembly of the Swiss colony, to express his thanks to Mr. Castelli, Chief Manager of the Swiss Bank Corporation in London, and to Mr. Palliser, official adviser to the Swiss Government on various special questions. He said that each of the two gentlemen, who were that night the guests of honour of the Club, had deserved in the largest way the thanks of all the Swiss of this country, Mr. Castelli by lending us his much appreciated assistance, technical and material, during and after the war, Mr. Palliser by obtaining on numerous occasions considerable facilities for Switzerland on the part of the British Government. Concluding, the Swiss Minister said that all British may be assured that we, the Swiss living on the soil covered by the Union Jack, will never fail to appreciate the kind and fair spirit in which we are always received by this great people.

MR. P. F. BOEHRINGER, PRESIDENT OF THE CITY SWISS CLUB: "Monsieur le Ministre, Mesdames, Messieurs et chers Compatriotes, c'est la première fois que m'échoit l'honneur, en qualité de Président du City Swiss Club, de prendre la parole au banquet traditionnel annuel, qui réunit aujourd'hui dans ce cadre aussi brillant que sympathique, un nombre considérable de nos Confédérés de Londres. Ce n'est donc pas sans une émotion bien compréhensible que je vous demande de me prêter votre attention durant quelques instants et de me faire l'objet de votre bienveillante indulgence.

"Je voudrais tout d'abord retracer rapidement la vie de notre Club au cours de la longue et douloureuse époque que nous venons de traverser, et qui n'a pas encore fait place à l'Eden de paix et de concorde aperçu un instant, au moment de l'armistice, comme un rayon de soleil à travers un nuage. Au lieu du ciel brillant et joyeux que nos désirs étaient en droit d'attendre, nous nous trouvons dans une ère de reconstruction hérissée de difficultés économiques, de frictions politiques, de guerres non ou mal éteintes, de mouvements sociaux inquiétants.

"Aujourd'hui que nous sommes, en Suisse, en tout ou en partie, libérés de ces dures épreuves, nous rendons grâce au Très-Haut, qui nous a si merveilleusement protégés dans cette débâcle mondiale, et nous adressons un hommage ému à la mémoire de tous ceux qui ont sacrifié leur vie pour leur pays.

"Pour des raisons de sentiment, du reste fort naturelles, et sur lesquelles il serait donc vain de m'étendre, le Club a cessé, depuis 1914, d'organiser des banquets annuels dans le genre de celui-ci. Mais, à l'effet de garder entre compatriotes, le même contact étroit et confiant que celui qui nous réunissait avant la guerre, le Club a organisé des soirées moins solennelles, plus modestes, où tous les cœurs pensaient d'autant plus à la patrie qu'elle avait été à plusieurs reprises en face de problèmes embarrassants, tels que la conflagration européenne, la mobilisation générale qui en fut chez nous la conséquence, et les lourdes chaînes mises à son commerce et à son industrie, entravés depuis

presque six ans dans leur respiration économique normale, et le jeu de leur activité naturelle.

“Le City Swiss Club est heureux de pouvoir exprimer ce soir à notre Légation nos sentiments réitérés de reconnaissance pour le dévouement et la compétence qui ont présidé à ses efforts soutenus en faveur de nos industries, de notre commerce et de nos concitoyens aux prises avec des difficultés de mille et une espèces.

“Lorsqu'en 1915, les Gouvernements alliés imposèrent à notre pays la création d'une Société de Surveillance économique, le Gouvernement fédéral eut la main particulièrement heureuse en s'assurant la collaboration de M. Palliser qui, depuis cinq ans voue toute son intelligence et tout son dévouement aux intérêts de la Suisse.

“M. Palliser, pendant cette longue période de semi-blocus de notre pays, a rendu à la Suisse de très grands services, tant comme directeur du Bureau de Londres de la SSS, que comme représentant au 'Wheat Executive,' ainsi que par le zèle éclairé qu'il a mis à résoudre, avec notre ami regretté Robert Honegger, nos questions d'affrètements.

“En outre, il s'occupe encore aujourd'hui du ravitaillement de la Suisse en charbons et de la question de la navigation du Rhin, pour laquelle il a été adjoint à la légation au titre de Technical Adviser.

“Je ne voudrais pas, Mesdames et Messieurs, surcharger mon discours de statistiques souvent mal digérées et toujours aussitôt oubliées, et je me bornerai de relever le fait que d'après les chiffres que la Légation a bien voulu me fournir la valeur des exportations de marchandises anglaises à destination de la Suisse a augmenté de 112 Millions de francs en 1915 à 363 Millions de francs en 1919, c'est à dire une plus-value de 250 Millions de francs.

“Devant les problèmes toujours plus nombreux concernant le développement de nos échanges commerciaux et l'importance de plus en plus considérable prise par Londres en fonctions des intérêts de la Suisse, le Conseil Fédéral a créé à Londres en septembre 1917 un poste d'attaché commercial qu'occupe depuis plus de trois ans M. Henri Martin.

“Comme vous le savez, sa tâche consiste tout d'abord à nouer et à aider à la création de relations commerciales entre industriels suisses et acheteurs anglais ou producteurs anglais et consommateurs suisses.

“Il a également pour tâche de suivre de près la politique du Gouvernement britannique en matière de tarifs et de protection des industries essentielles. Il s'occupe de propagande à l'effet de faire connaître dans le Royaume-Uni les ressources de notre pays, et il s'attache à beaucoup d'autres sujets connexes qu'il me reprocherait de détailler plus avant.

“M. Martin s'est occupé en juin 1918, avec notre ami Monsieur Jean Baer, d'organiser la Commission Suisse de Londres pour l'étude de questions économiques, qui compte environ 25 membres importants de notre colonie, représentant un grand nombre de nos industries nationales les plus connues. M. Martin m'a souvent dit combien, par l'échange continuel de lettres qu'il entretenait avec beaucoup de membres de la Commission sur des sujets techniques, il obtenait d'eux des informations de valeur, des conseils ou suggestions utiles faisant profiter celles de nos maisons établies en Suisse en faveur desquelles les renseignements étaient demandés.

“Puisque je signale les institutions nouvelles qui travaillent en silence au développement de nos échanges économiques, je désirerais mentionner qu'en 1919 le Gou-

vernement britannique a créé à sa Légation de Berne un poste de premier secrétaire commercial occupé par M. Cahill. Celui-ci a favorisé la création à Bâle, avec succursale à Lausanne, d'une Chambre de Commerce anglo-suisse. Nous souhaitons à cette Chambre tout le succès que mérite un aussi noble but.

“A la même occasion il s'est fondé l'Anglo-Swiss Review, une revue mensuelle qui paraît depuis mai 1920. Cet organe, rédigé dans l'esprit de la plus grande cordialité et de compréhension de nos institutions, contient sur la Suisse, ses industries, son commerce, sa navigation, des articles du plus grand intérêt qui viennent, de ce côté du détroit, semer dans le Royaume-Uni la bonne graine helvétique.

“Et maintenant, Mesdames et Messieurs, je vous souhaite au nom du City Swiss Club, de passer avec nous une excellente soirée et je vous prie de boire à la prospérité de notre chère Patrie, vers laquelle se tournent ce soir nos cœurs et nos regards.”

MR. G. DIMIER, PRESIDENT OF THE SWISS BENEVOLENT SOCIETY: “We are celebrating to-day the 50th Anniversary of the Foundation of the Swiss Benevolent Society in London. You will find on your table a little booklet, giving you the principal events which took place during these 50 years. We have mentioned therein the names of those of our compatriots who gave their services for the relief of their less fortunate brethren. We thought it was our duty to do this and thus testify our gratitude to them for the devotion they have displayed in their lifetime. During this half-century we received, all told, about £30,000 and spent about £25,000 in distributing relief. This money was received from the following sources:

Annual Subscriptions and Donations ...	£14,500
From the Federal Government and Cantons ...	£2,750
Collections at the City Swiss Club ...	£3,830
Swiss Church ...	£1,660
(Out of which £350 was the proceeds of a Bazaar held in 1893)	
Charity Sermons ...	£1,050
Secours Mutuels ...	£250

“Sundry smaller items from our other Swiss societies in London, amongst them: The Swiss Mercantile Society, The Schweizerbund, Union Helvetia, Unione Ticinese, Swiss Institute and Swiss Sports. Amongst the private donors we have much pleasure to mention the firm of Messrs. Nestlé's & Anglo-Swiss Condensed Milk Co., who alone have given us during the last six years £2,000; our late Minister, Mr. Carlin, who gave us nearly £1,000; and the Swiss Bank Corporation, £200. To all these, and all the other subscribers, large and small, our Committee wishes me to tender our most hearty thanks.

“Our late Minister, Mr. Carlin, who took the deepest interest in our work, realising the danger our pensioners were running, through the small capital we have at our disposal, interest of which brings in about £150, very kindly, on the eve of his departure, gave us £200 to go towards a special fund called 'Fondation Carlin.' This capital to remain intact, and the interest of it only to serve for the payment of our pensions, amounting to-day to nearly £400. We therefore decided to make our 50th Anniversary the occasion of a special appeal to the colony in favour of that fund, and I would make the following suggestions: I should like every member of the Swiss colony to take a working interest in this by mentioning this appeal to their Swiss friends who might not have

heard about it, and get them to send their offerings to our Honorary Treasurer. I would also suggest to our compatriots who are at the head of Swiss firms in London, and also to the representatives in London of Swiss houses to send one of our little books to their firms in Switzerland with a nice letter asking them for their support. I would go further and suggest, these gentlemen asking the English firms from whom they are buying, the same as they ask us to help us in their turn in this our only Swiss Charity Fund. I may here state I have already received a few very nice letters with cheques for this cause from both English and Swiss firms to whom I had written.

"Now, Ladies and Gentlemen, my final appeal is to you here to-night. I trust you will do your duty handsomely and come to the rescue of our poor and distressed compatriots who, after long years of toil, are no longer able to work and earn their living. Take compassion on them and grant us the means to cheer their last days upon this earth. It is our mother to us all who begs this sacrifice from you for her poor children. Remember the splendid education she gave you which has enabled you to obtain good remunerative situations and thus live in comfort and luxury. By subscribing to our Fund you will show her your gratefulness and you will have in your hearts the satisfaction of having done your duty to the country you love so much."

UNIONE TICINESE. — FESTA FAMILIARE. Giovedì scorso, 9 corrente nei locali dello Schweizerbund gentilmenti messi a disposizione, l'Unione Ticinese teneva una festa familiare. Cominciava con un ben apprezzato concerto, dove tante valentie istrioniche e musicali di soci e simpatizzanti furono debitamente apprezzate ed applaudite dai numerosi intervenuti.—Segui una cena animatissima e

per ultimo un ballo in famiglia che si protrasse fino alle due del mattino.—Una sola cosa a lamentarsi: che gli spaziosi locali dello Schweizerbund non lo erano abbastanza per poter contenere con comodo i numerosi intervenuti. E ce n'era ben donde! Causa le restrizioni di guerra e dopo guerra erano sei anni che i Soci e famiglie non avevano avuto occasione di trovarsi a fraterno ed intimo convegno. Appena possibile hanno voluto mostrare che quantunque lungi dalla madre terra lo spirito della libertà ed eguaglianza potrà essere piegato ma non infranto. Il nostro Presidente nel suo breve saluto e benvenuto prima del Concerto e durante la cena ha interpretato a meraviglia lo spirito e il significato e raccolse ben meritato applauso. Gli utili della festa, unitamente all'importo della questura, vendita di fiori durante la serata, andranno a beneficio della benefica opera Fonds des Secours pour les Suisses pauvres à Londres. Facciamo voti che sarà possibile per l'avvenire tenere tante altre simili feste dove le amicizie si rinfrancano le conoscenze si riannodano e lo spirito di patriottismo si rinfranca ad incremento del buon nome del Ticino e della Madre Patria.

S. BIANCHI.

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