

Swiss Mercantile Society

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SWISS FOLK SONGS AT THE LEAGUE OF NATIONS FETE.

It would not be right not to mention in the organ of the Swiss Colony the unquestionably great service which some twenty of its members have rendered to the reputation of our country by participating in the programme of the International Garden Fête, arranged by the League of Nations Union for propaganda purposes at St. Dunstan's, Regent's Park, on July 20th and 21st. Though the grand programme contained about fifty items of an entertaining character, there was hardly a single one appealing more to the taste of the average Britisher than that which comprised the Swiss Folk Songs which Miss Felia Dorio rendered in four performances, gently assisted by her twenty women and men friends, all clad in beautiful and genuine Swiss costumes and inspired by the determination to show to the best of their ability what Swiss folk-songs are and express. Space is not available presumably to mention in detail the many fine songs offered to enthusiastic audiences. It may suffice to state that Miss Dorio had put together very cleverly a string of tunes the text of which represented all our four national languages, and followed one another so as to convey the maximum of change in atmosphere and colour. The great diversity of Swiss traditions was thus clearly put in relief. The tunes of the mixed choir and the solos were fittingly supplemented by some yodels of Mr. Roos; at one time a little dance even was interwoven with the singing. The thanks of the colony are due in the first line, of course, to the untiring zeal of Miss Dorio and her friends, but also to those invisible helpers such as Dr. A. Daeniker and Miss M. H. Reutiner, who had done their best in securing singers and—more difficult even—costumes and preparing the performances technically. The expenses involved through the hire of costumes are unfortunately, as we understand, not covered yet, in spite of the two donations graciously given by the City Swiss Club and the N.S.H. The Secretariat of the latter Society, 28, Red Lion Square, will, therefore, be thankful for any contribution kindly forwarded to it for this purpose. Surely the organizers deserve to be relieved soon of financial preoccupations! It must not be forgotten that they undertake their task on the invitation of the Legation, which had been first approached in the matter. Their performances were given on behalf and for the reputation of the Colony, just as were those of the Swedes, the Lithuanians, the Japanese, etc. Their splendid artistic success has, without any doubt, enhanced the knowledge of our country's art in this City of London—a result at which all of us ought to rejoice.

SWISS MERCANTILE SOCIETY.

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING.

(Communicated.)

After a postponement due to the illness of Mr. G. DeBrunner, President, the Annual General Meeting of the S.M.S. took place on the 11th inst. at No. 1, Gerrard Place, W.1, and in spite of the then prevailing hot weather was attended by over 50 active members. On opening the meeting at 8.15 p.m., after a well-served supper, the President welcomed Mr. H. Martin, both personally and as representing the Legation, Mr. Schubach, of the Trustees of the Educational Fund, and the teachers present. He also informed the meeting of a message from Mr. G. Dimier, expressing regret at being unable to be present.

Mr. G. DeBrunner then gave a short *exposé* of the position of the Society, which now comprises: 14 honorary members, 503 active members, 73 contributing members, 147 donors and contributing firms, and then called upon Mr. J. Pfandler, as Hon. Secretary of the Education Committee, to read out the report of the Education Department, which is by far the main branch of activities of the Society. Mr. B. Bretscher, as Chef des Cours, gave later particulars as to classes.

The results achieved have been most gratifying, both as regards finance as well as educational activities, and call for praise of those who have been instrumental in attaining such a high level. The total expenses of the Education Department, exclusive of furniture and fittings, for the year amounted to £860 15s. 6d., and were defrayed as follows: Fees paid by students £236 3s. 3d., subsidy from the Swiss Government £373 14s. 6d. (so far only £140 received on account and £233 14s. 6d. due in the usual way), by the Educational Fund £250 17s. 9d. It is to be pointed out that this is the first year the Educational Department has been operated on the present basis, and as the accommodation at No. 1 and 2, Henrietta Street, W.C.,

has been occupied only from the 1st of January last, the item of rent will necessarily be higher in future and increase the total. The balance sheet of the Educational Fund closes with an available balance of £614 16s. 11d., plus the £233 14s. 6d. due from the Swiss Government through the central society in Zurich.

That the facilities offered by the Society were appreciated by the young Swiss in London is proved by the fact that 58 evening courses and 11 four-weekly day courses were held during the year and attended by an aggregate of over 500 students, which is a very considerable advance on last year.

These excellent results were rendered possible only by the generous and large-minded way in which donors, both individuals and firms, alike here and in Switzerland, have supported the Educational Fund, and in this connection the S.M.C. as a whole and those in immediate touch with affairs in particular have every reason to feel grateful for the keen interest taken, and the valuable help lent by the Swiss Legation towards the attainment of the worthy objects of the Society in this direction. The best thanks are due to our Minister, also to Mr. H. Martin for their untiring efforts, and to all donors and workers. This was clearly expressed by the hearty cheers when, on leaving the meeting, Mr. Martin presented the Educational Fund with a cheque for £20 on behalf of a friend. The figure of the subsidy will, no doubt, remind many Swiss that the "old country" is not to be forgotten.

The general accounts of the Society close with a satisfactory balance, although it is now supported by the active members' subscriptions only, all donations being devoted to the Education Department, and certain other sums being also expended for this purpose. The accounts were approved after short discussion; the only disquieting item being "Active Members' Subscriptions in Arrear," which stands at £130.

The President, on behalf of the Committee, then proposed that a paid Secretary should be engaged, to act chiefly for the Education Department and in general for the Society. The work has so far been carried on with hardly any expenditure for secretarial assistance, but the considerable development achieved during the last few years makes a solution of this question necessary in the interest of efficiency. After some discussion the meeting voted an expenditure up to £100 a year out of the ordinary income of the Society towards the salary of the secretary, the balance of remuneration being debited to the Educational Department (the whole on condition that the subsidy can be claimed on such expenditure). The Committee were given authority to negotiate on this basis and report to the next meeting.

Then came the revision and confirmation of the rules, some of the points giving rise to animated discussion, which is only a sign of the interest taken by members in the affairs of the Society and the best attainment of its aims. The most important point, on which there had been some division of opinion, was the question of active membership, which was laid down as being limited to Swiss or persons of Swiss origin. The hour getting late, the meeting decided to adjourn the discussion of the rules affecting the Education Department to an Extraordinary General Meeting to be convened in the autumn, so that careful consideration may be given to this matter.

Mr. L. Chapuis, was elected *pro tem.* and conducted the proceedings of giving discharge to the old Committee and election of a new one in a very expeditious way. Hearty cheers were given to the outgoing members, and some of the usual difficulties in getting members, and particularly the younger men, to act on committees, were again experienced. The Society was fortunate in securing again the services of Mr. G. DeBrunner as President, and the committees were elected as follows:—General Committee: G. DeBrunner, hon. president; O. Jaeggi, 1st vice-president; R. Cornu, 2nd vice-president; Alb. Streicher, hon. secretary; Paul Matthys, hon. treasurer; B. Bretscher, asst. secretary; Spahn, asst. treasurer; Alb. Jufer, asst. treasurer; L. Meier, librarian. Education Committee: J. Pfandler, hon. secretary; B. Bretscher, hon. chef de Cours; Hermann Kläeger, treasurer; M. Ryser, asst. chef de cours; J. Wyss, asst. chef de cours. Entertainment Committee: President: H. Cornu, with Messrs. Chapuis, Moser and Jaeggi as members. Representative on Advisory Board Employment Department: Ch. Chapuis. Auditors: R. Schweizer and A. Rosselet. Sports Committee: H. Senn and Strublin. Press Reporter: O. Braga.

The meeting was then closed, the hour being 12 p.m.

Swiss Postal Travellers'

Cheques.

The Swiss Postal Authorities have arranged for the issue in Great Britain of Postal Travellers' Cheques, which can be cashed without formalities at any Post Office in Switzerland. These cheques may be obtained in London from the

SWISS BANK CORPORATION,

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"Schweizerbund" Swiss Club,

74, Charlotte Street, Fitzroy Square, W.1.
(Nearest Station: GOODGE STREET, Tube.)

1st August, 1923:

CONCERT AND BALL

With the assistance of the
GYMNASTIC SOCIETY "SCHWEIZERBUND"
8 p.m. till 2 a.m.

Cold Dinner served in the Hall. All Swiss are welcome.
THE COMMITTEE.

LE SWISS INSTITUTE

Célébra la FETE NATIONALE par un

CONCERT PATRIOTIQUE

le 1er Août, à 7.45 p.m., à

MEMORIAL HALL, Farringdon Street
(near Ludgate Circus).

sous la présidence d'honneur de
M. CH. PARAVICINI, Ministre de Suisse.

ENTRÉE LIBRE. Tout Suisse est cordialement invité.

UNION HELVETIA CLUB,

1, Gerrard Place, Shaftesbury Avenue, W.1.
(Opposite Shaftesbury Theatre.)

Swiss National Day Celebration.

Wednesday, August 1st, 9 p.m. to 2 a.m.

Patriotic Function and Ball.

Swiss Sketch, Gymnastic Displays
and many other attractions.

All members and Swiss friends are cordially invited.
The Clubhouse Committee.

EGLISE SUISSE, 79, Endell St., W.C.2.

Dimanche, 29 Juillet, 11h.—M. J. Ramseyer.
6.30.—Pfr. U. Wildbolz.

FORTHCOMING EVENTS.

Wednesday, August 1st, at 7.45 p.m.—SWISS INSTITUTE: Patriotic Concert at the Memorial Hall, Farringdon Street (near Ludgate Circus). In the Chair: The Swiss Minister.

Wednesday, Aug. 1st, from 8 p.m. till 2 a.m.—SWISS CLUB "SCHWEIZERBUND," 74, Charlotte St., Fitzroy Square, W.1: Concert and Ball (see adv.).

Wednesday, Aug. 1st, from 9 p.m. till 2 a.m.—UNION HELVETIA, 1, Gerrard Place, W.1: Patriotic Function and Ball (see adv.).