

Swiss Choral Society

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la soglia di detto Club. Colà il ticinese trova i suoi convalleneri, con loro si intrattiene, rievocando la sua vallata, il suo borgo, con loro discute le vicende ticinesi, parla della sua occupazione, con loro fa una partita alle carte, al bigliardo.

Da oltre mezzo secolo la Società di Mutuo Soccorso "Unione Ticinese" viene spiegando il suo zelo, fatto di spontaneità, di sincerità, a pro dei ticinesi di questa città. Sodalizio nato allo scopo di tenere uniti, di proteggere i suoi soci. Forse ben poco conosciuto ed apprezzato da prima, con la sua indefessa costanza e lavoro seppe sormontare ogni dura prova e ottenere quel successo che lo pone ormai fra una delle più salde società svizzere in Londra.

Solo pochi giorni, o meglio poche sere fa, tenne una delle sue serate famigliari, la quale una volta ancora manifestò che lo spirito ticinese è pur sempre vivo in tutti. Festa democratica ma non per questo meno allegra, meno ben riuscita. E appunto in questa sua democrazia forse sta il segreto del suo successo.

La bandiera ticinese, dono gentile delle donne ticinesi alla Società, in occasione della commemorazione del suo 50.mo anniversario, nel 1924, fiammante sventolava su quel "Ticino" in miniatura là raccolto. In un angolo, modestamente, si teneva il vecchio vessillo della Società, che se meno bello, è però quello che ne vide le migliori lotte: "Bandiera stracciata onor di Capitano"...Al lato opposto si teneva l'altra bandiera pur tanto cara al popolo ticinese: l'elvetica. E sotto questi amati vessilli fervevano animate le danze, le conversazioni, mentre intorno aleggiava vivo l'amor di patria.

Presto, ai primi di marzo, l'Unione Ticinese terrà la sua festa di gala, nelle vaste sale del Ristorante Monico, festa alla quale sempre partecipa il Ministro svizzero a Londra e dove l'elemento confederato e inglese è sempre ben rappresentato, dimostrando così che i ticinesi, non solo son "bravi soldaa," ma anche sanno guadagnarsi la stima, la simpatia di chi si trova in contatto con loro. E' pur bello e commovente sentire come i nostri vicini parlino altamente, con tanto entusiasmo, del popolo ticinese, laborioso, semplice e leale. E noi, qui a Londra, saremmo dispersi, come foglie spinte dal vento qua e là se non ci fosse la Unione Ticinese che ci tiene assieme, che ci protegge, che non lascia morire in noi l'amore per la terra lontana. E non solo questo noi dobbiamo all'Unione Ticinese. Detta Società spiega le sue energie più oltre, soccorrendo il ticinese perseguitato dall'avversa fortuna—quale amorosa madre, gli stende la mano, cerca di rialzarlo, di metterlo su cammino migliore. Provvede ai vecchi, agli ammalati, ogni anno dà il suo contributo per il Fondo degli svizzeri poveri di Londra. E quando dalla lontana patria giunge un messaggio di dolore, la Unione Ticinese organizza qualche trattenimento per poter mandare il suo soccorso generoso ai colpiti da inondazioni da valanghe, ecc.

Dobbiamo essere riconoscenti alla nostra Società, dobbiamo, in conformità alle nostre forze, aiutarla nei suoi cimenti, aiutarla a brillar via via maggiormente. Così, come il motto nostro vuole "Uno per tutti, tutti per uno."

Ed il lontano Ticino pure non deve dimenticare questo Sodalizio che all'estero, nella grande, ricca nazione inglese, tiene alto il nome ticinese, sa farsi onorare, stimare ed amare.

Unione Ticinese: navicella che non conosca naufragio perché abilmente condotta dal tuo nocchiere, il presidente, non meno abilmente coadiuvato dai tuoi membri, continua la tua solerte, benefica opera e:

*"che ognor fulga nel patrio congresso
"la bandiera del caro Ticino,
"e che il motto che fia suo destino,
"pegno sia di faustissimi di."*

ELENA LUNGI, "Il Dovere."

SWISS CHORAL SOCIETY.

The First Avenue Hotel became a new centre for Swiss functions when a large gathering of our compatriots, numbering about 140, assembled there to celebrate the Annual Banquet and Ball of the Swiss Choral Society, which was held last Friday (Feb. 25th) with Monsieur W. A. de Bourg, First Secretary of Legation, in the chair.

After the two loyal toasts had been duly proposed and honoured, M. de Bourg rose again to express the regrets of the Swiss Minister at having been prevented from presiding, as arranged, owing to an unforeseen official engagement. He had deputed him to offer his best wishes for a successful evening which, in view of the large gathering rendered his (M. de Bourg's) task very easy. M. de Bourg added that he was not altogether a stranger to that Society; in his younger days he possessed a fairly good voice and he was not aware of having lost it until he was mercilessly relegated to the category of passive members by their excellent conductor, M. Rod. Gaillard.

Mr. J. Manzoni, the President of the Society, who was loudly cheered on rising, expressed his satisfaction that in his unavoidable absence the Swiss Minister had sent them M. de Bourg, who, needless to say, was not less welcome to them. Mr. Manzoni then gave a short survey of the activities of the S.C.S. during the last twelve months; he especially referred to the success of their con-

cert, to the visit—unique in the annals of the Colony—of the Swiss Yodlers, and to the many occasions on which they had enhanced the success of other social functions in the Colony by their active co-operation. He was glad to notice that their patriotic efforts and services found an ever-increasing recognition in our Colony; at the end of 1925 their contributing members did not reach a score, twelve months later they numbered 83, and to-day they were just below a hundred. They had one lady among them, Madame de Cintra, the daughter of that great man who for a generation had been the pride of our Colony. In concluding, Mr. Manzoni made a fervent appeal for unity, without which nothing great could be achieved; they had done well in the past, but they had to do still better in the future.

The toast of "The Ladies" was submitted by that unsurpassed pastmaster in feminine flattery, Mr. Fred Isler. He said that though after two years' solitary meditation in the wilderness of Kent he had emerged with the renewed determination of remaining a bachelor, he could restrain himself to-night from relieving his heart and soul of that mental torture and anguish which had been his sole companions during all that time. He felt a better man—better able, he thought, to resist temptations, which of course did not mean that he had become utterly unresponsive to the natural charms and subtle devices of the fair sex. He proceeded to concoct an ingenious and original crossword puzzle, substituting alternate descriptions for the traditional feminine attributes.

Mr. E. Bommer, the untiring secretary, then proposed the health of the official guests. After voicing the regrets of all present at the absence of Monsieur and Madame Paravicini, he welcomed, in the first instance, the "Press," represented by Mr. P. F. Boehringer (*Swiss Observer*) and Mr. J. Halperin (*Neue Zürcher Zeitung*) and then referred to the presence of Monsieur Rod. Gaillard, the conductor of the choir, Miss Nellie Meyrat and Mr. Warr. The various societies had sent the following delegates:—

Mr. G. Marchand, City Swiss Club; Mr. Brand, accompanied by Mrs. Brand, Swiss Mercantile Society; Mr. J. Joss, Swiss Institute; Mr. Pache and Mr. Bernhard, Swiss Club "Schweizerbund"; Mr. W. Notari, Unione Ticinese; Mr. Finger, accompanied by Mrs. Finger, Union Helvetia Club; Mr. G. De Brunner, Swiss Relief Association.

Mr. H. Joss suitably responded on behalf of the guests; he said that arrangements had been made with the Swiss Choral Society and the orchestra of the Swiss Institute to give a joint concert in the coming autumn which he was sure the whole of the Colony would generously support.

The official part of the evening terminated in good time for the "suburbians" to enjoy dancing before the departure of the last trains, but the lure of the spirited dance band, added to an ideal dancing floor, was such that the hall remained crowded till two in the morning. A number of musical turns interposed during the evening were received by the audience with unrestrained applause; the choir suffered somewhat under the unfavourable acoustic conditions; the solos of Miss Nellie Meyrat, admirably accompanied by Mr. Warr, showed her sweet and melodious voice at its best and earned her a continuous request for encores.

Amongst those present (not already mentioned) were Mr. and Mrs. C. Brüllhard, Mr. and Mrs. P. Dick, Mr. F. de Ligi, The Rev. C. Th. Hahn and Mrs. Hahn, Mr. and Mrs. W. Haffter, Mr. G. Jenne, Mr. and Mrs. W. Lehmann, Mr. E. Lutz, Miss N. Meyrat, Mr. Warr, Mr. and Mrs. S. B. Reynier, Mr. Rossier, Mr. and Mrs. G. Ross, Mr. and Mrs. E. Rietmann, Mr. and Mrs. F. G. Sommer, Mr. A. C. Stahelin, Mr. and Mrs. C. J. Searle, Mr. and Mrs. Ch. Strublin, Mr. and Mrs. W. Wyss.

SWISS MERCANTILE SOCIETY.

Below is given a brief report of the Annual General Meeting, held at "Swiss House," Fitzroy Square, W.1., on Wednesday, Feb. 23rd. The Meeting, which was preceded by a supper, was declared open at 8.15 p.m. by the President, Mr. A. C. Stahelin, who welcomed Dr. C. Rezzonico, First Secretary to the Swiss Legation, the Trustees, and the Teachers of the Day School and Evening Classes. He also announced, with very much regret, the death of Mr. G. Aguet, Contributing Member of the Society, upon which sad news all present paid a silent tribute.

Mr. Stahelin then read the 38th Annual Report of the General Committee for the year 1926, the most important features of which were as follows: "The general conditions, on which the development of the Society depended, were not better in 1926 than in the previous year. The difficulties experienced in obtaining new members were shown in the small number of admissions, which amounted to only 28 during the whole year, while the resignations numbered 42. On Dec. 31st, 1926, there were 14 Honorary Members, 13 Corresponding Members, 81 Contributing Members, 322 Active Members (27 Ladies and 295 Gentlemen) and 40 Contributing Firms, Donors

and Guarantors. The outstanding event of the year under review, and a further milestone in the history of the Society, was the acquisition of Swiss House, the obtaining of which was made possible through the prosperity of the Day School, and the resulting need for larger and better accommodation. The various problems connected with "Swiss House," which was opened to Members and Students on December 11th, 1926, led to the formation of a special House Committee, consisting of 5 Members. During the past year 11 meetings were called in order to deal with the Society's business, and the attendances in general have been slightly better than in 1925. As regards Finance, with the exception of the amounts spent on Entertainments, and a slight increase in the Library Account, reductions had been effected in all fluctuating expenditure, also the amount of outstanding contributions was lower than had been the case for some years, which spoke highly of the endeavours of Treasurers and Members. The Annual Banquet and Ball, also several Cinderella Dances, were held as usual with great success, a further proof of the "Kameradschaft" existing in the Society.

The report of the Education Department was read by Mr. J. Pfändler, the Hon. Secretary. Mention was again made of the removal of the department's activities, in December last, from Henrietta Street to "Swiss House." Great indebtedness was expressed to our Minister, M. C. R. Paravicini, and to Dr. C. Rezzonico for their active interest and kind assistance on many occasions and the goodwill shown to the Society by them and various other members of the Swiss Legation. They were also indebted to the Trustees, Messrs. Barbezat, De Brunner, Gamper, Eichenberger and Schupbach, for their valuable counsel and advice, and particularly for shouldering the responsibility of signing "Swiss House" lease on the Society's behalf. High appreciation was accorded to the Directors and Secretary of "Swiss House Proprietary, Ltd." for the very favourable purchase terms of the lease of "Swiss House." Hearty thanks were further expressed to the Contributing Members, Guarantors and other patrons of the Society for their generous subscriptions and donations. The installation of "Swiss House" and new schemes and problems arising from the present developments, had caused an unusual amount of work. With regard to the Day School, said Mr. Pfändler, in his report, it was very gratifying to be able to record further progress in the daily attendance, which had varied from 99 students in the month of March to the record number of 156 in November. Based on this monthly average, the total number of students for the whole year amounted to 1,547, as against 1,404 for the previous year. In this connection, appreciation was expressed of the untiring devotion shown by the Head Master, Mr. O. Ph. Masterman-Smith, his Assistant, Miss E. B. Mann, and Mr. A. Schutz, Secretary and Teacher, in the execution of their duties. Accounts were then carefully gone into and it was noted with pleasure that the Department was not only able to present record figures of activity, but also favourable accounts.

Mr. B. Bretscher, President of the House Committee, then read the report of his Committee, which took charge of the maintenance, social functions and accommodation of "Swiss House," and prepared the necessary rules and regulations for "Swiss House" as a licensed Club House, and rules for Day Students. No effort was spared to make the Members' Room as attractive and as comfortable as possible.

Then followed the report on the Evening Classes, read by Mr. A. Schutz. Owing to the prevailing conditions, he said, the formation of such classes had become a difficult task and, therefore, a decrease both in the number of classes and students is not surprising. Whilst in 1925 50 classes, attended by 331 students, were held, last year only 43 classes could be formed, and these were attended by 257 students. The average attendance had also dropped from 76.19% in 1925 to 70.32% in 1926. Heartiest thanks were expressed to the Teachers for their splendid work. Despite adverse conditions, the Committee would spare no pains to arrange as many classes as possible in the future.

The four Reports were unanimously accepted and approved of by the Meeting.

The various Accounts having been carefully discussed and gone into, and the Auditors having informed the Meeting that they had examined them and found them correct, they were duly passed.

The proposed Rules of the House Committee were then read and approved, and also the additions and alterations of the General Rules of the Society.

CITY SWISS CLUB.

CINDERELLA DANCE

at PAGANI'S RESTAURANT, on

SATURDAY, MARCH 19th, at 6.30.

Tickets at 10/6 (incl. Supper) may be obtained from Members of the Committee.