

Zeitschrift: The Swiss observer : the journal of the Federation of Swiss Societies in the UK

Herausgeber: Federation of Swiss Societies in the United Kingdom

Band: - (1933)

Heft: 590

Rubrik: Swiss Mercantile Society

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SWISS MERCANTILE SOCIETY LTD.

ANNUAL BANQUET AND BALL.

Two very powerful factors combined, influenced the attendance at the successful Annual Banquet of the Swiss Mercantile Society Ltd., which took place last Saturday, at the Midland Grand Hotel, namely, the persistent Influenza Epidemic, and the still more persistent world crisis. In spite, however, of these adverse conditions, over 150 members, and guests "sat down to a sumptuous dinner." — Oh, how I hate this phrase, which appears in almost every report describing a social function; it stands to reason that the participants *have to sit down* in order to enjoy the *sumptuous* meal. Some people will have it, that the fare was less *sumptuous* than on former occasions, whilst others found it "very tasty," as a chef, who can please every *gourmand* and *gourmet*, has not yet been born, I must leave it to every individual participant to decide how "he liked it."

The loyal toasts were proposed by Monsieur C. R. Paravicini, the Swiss Minister, who, as Honorary President of the Society was in the Chair. I noticed with pleasure that when the toast to Switzerland was drunk, one member of the company included the "Swiss Navy," they certainly deserve it.

After the dessert was served, the President, Mr. Lehmann, amongst hearty applause rose and said

This is the first time I have the pleasure and privilege of extending to you all a most hearty welcome on behalf of the Swiss Mercantile Society.

The Annual Banquet is always a pleasant affair, closing a year of work, and it gives an opportunity to meet members who generally do not come to other functions; the Committee is very gratified that in spite of the hard times, so many members and friends of the "Old Guard" have turned up at this reunion. I would ask you to make yourselves quite at home for the evening.

We are highly honoured by the presence of Monsieur Paravicini, the Swiss Minister, our honorary President, and are grateful to him for occupying the chair. We regret the absence of Madame Paravicini, and I am sure that I am voicing the sentiments of all present by asking Monsieur Paravicini to convey to her our respects together with our sincerest wishes for a speedy recovery.

The two years which have just elapsed will probably rank amongst the most difficult in recent times, but I am glad to report that our Society has managed to keep afloat. We have certainly lost many members, some of whom have served the Society faithfully for many years. On the other hand, we had an influx of young members, chiefly students at the College, so that at the end of December we still had 367 members, against 393 two years ago.

As intimated by my predecessor two years ago, the Swiss Mercantile Society has since been converted into a *Limited Liability Company*. Its registration took place on 9th April 1931. The arduous work connected with its formation was done by a small Committee of which my colleague Mr. Stahelin bore the brunt.

In the summer of 1931 our Society had the pleasure of entertaining at the Brent Bridge Hotel the members of the "Studien-Reise" of the Schweizerischen Kaufmännischen Vereins. Amongst them were Mr. Lutz, the then veteran Central President, and members of the Central Committee. Last July we were hosts at Pagani's Restaurant to about 40 Principals and Professors of Swiss Commercial Schools. The party included Prof. Dr. Junod, Dr. Schiess, federal experts on Commercial Education, and also Dr. Lätt.

In both cases the visitors looked over our College and expressed their complete satisfaction with what they saw and gave us the assurance that they would always help us if and when required.

Our oldest undertaking is the *Employment Department*, in charge of Mr. Pfändler, who has a hard struggle under present conditions.

Evening Classes:

The attendance of 630 students during 1932 shows a substantial increase of 243 (531 in 1931) as compared with 1930 (387). This is due to the enrolment of a number of College Students in the coaching classes for commerce for the Royal Society of Arts examinations.

College:

During the last two years monthly average attendance was: 210 in 1931 and 211 in 1932; the highest figures attained were:

262 in June 1931 and

253 in June 1932,

and the lowest:

172 in December 1931 and

172 in February 1932.

This is far short of the high water mark of 384 in June 1930, when Swiss House was packed.

We have now 1 Principal, 1 Vice-Principal, 7 permanent lecturers and 2 temporary lecturers. The steadier average attendance allows of smaller classes and consequently a much more satisfactory form of tuition. The result shows itself again in the examinations.

In the monthly Diploma examinations:

In 1931, 313 entered (or 51½% of the attendance) In 1932 451 entered (or 61% of the attendance) and only 6 and 7 respectively failed.

For the Royal Society of Arts examinations (on Commerce):

3 examinations: 59 entered in 1931 — result 37 2nd Class Certificates.

3 examinations: 133 entered in 1932 — result 4 1st Class Certificates and 67 2nd Class Certificates.

For the Institute of Commerce examinations (on Commerce):

49 entered for the 2 Exams. in 1932 — result 31 1st Class Certificates and 18 2nd Class Certificates.

1 secured a Silver Medal.

When one considers that they had to compete on equal terms with English students, you will agree, I am sure, that the results speak well both for the Teaching Staff and for the Students.

Since last Autumn we have divided the College into two sections, viz: a commercial and a literary section. From the Intermediate Class onwards the students are at liberty to make their choice, so that those who are interested in Commerce can follow their bent, whereas those who prefer the liberal arts can do so and each student gets complete satisfaction. As our name indicates, the Commercial Section enjoys the larger attendance.

Before I close I wish to take this opportunity of thanking the members of the various Committees, the Council and the Trustees for their loyal support, work and forbearance. Thanks are also due to the Principal and Lecturers of the College, the Secretary and the Office Staff, for the efficient manner in which they have carried out their duties.

Whatever the future may have in store, you may rest assured that so far as our means will allow us, it is our firm intention to *go on* with the good work started nearly 50 years ago, of providing our young compatriots with the facilities to educate themselves at a small cost. I therefore beg to appeal for your continued support for a cause which we consider to be of great national importance.

The address of the President was much applauded and the cheers had hardly faded away, when our Minister rose to deliver his oration, which was awaited with great interest. He said:

It now falls to my lot to ask you to rise for the toast of the Swiss Mercantile Society. I do so in the pleasant neighbourhood of Madame Lehmann, the gracious lady who represents the female element of the presidency of the Swiss Mercantile Society, and I do so even in the very terrifying neighbourhood of the press.

I wish to say how grateful I am to your President for the words of welcome which he kindly bestowed on me. I can assure you nobody has more pleasure than myself to attend this gathering, the annual gathering of the Swiss Mercantile Society. I say so with all the more emphasis as I have listened, as you all will imagine, with due attention to what your President has said of the activities of the Society in past years. His remarks, if I may say so, have painted a miniature portrait of the circumstances, the situation and conditions in which we live, and that a Society like the Swiss Mercantile Society is able to have, in the month of February 1933, a social gathering of the kind we are attending to-night, certainly shows that the world crisis has not had the influence and effects which one generally supposes it has had. We have taken note with the greatest satisfaction of the remarks of your President, that the Swiss Mercantile Society has kept their flag flying in spite of the adversities of the time, and we all know that such results can only be obtained if the President himself, the Committees of the Society, the Principal and Educational Staff, and all members, and pupils are animated by feelings of sentiment, and by a sense of duty which becomes them, in order to be able to keep up the standard of the association, which is in the real sense of the word connected with the real conditions, and with the circumstances of the times, bad as they may be. I can only say at present that the mere fact that your Society is what it is to-day, is certainly to pay you the highest compliment which any one can suggest, for it must be said that under the present conditions of the world, an association like yours is influenced in such a way, that the very fact of its further existence, and its' further flourishing is nothing less than a miracle.

Now, my friends, if I may refer with a few remarks, without keeping you too long, to the present world crisis as it is called, I may say

perhaps, that the saying that, every evil in this world has at the same time in itself the germ of the remedy, with which it can be cured, is certainly applicable to the present situation. The question is only to know what that remedy is. I may say that every morning every one of you reads in the papers columns, and columns of reports about negotiations, conferences and agreements made by statesmen, diplomats and politicians. I wonder if that is the real remedy for the crisis. I ought not to express any doubt on that question because, after all, I myself am supposed to be a diplomat, but if we look at things as they are, in spite of the conferences about unemployment, the conferences about disarmament, and the conferences about reparations, has the situation altered a great deal? I am afraid you will answer that it is to-day at least, or at the best exactly the same as it was about twelve months ago. If this is not the remedy, it must be somewhere else. We are tempted to think that the remedy is in the endeavours, and in the wish to do something, and to do just the thing which would help us by ourselves. That is perhaps not so wrong after all. The world has been in bad conditions before now. We say that the world has never seen a crisis like the present one, what do we know about it? If some people say that it was just as bad 100 years ago, they cannot speak of their own experience. In the times of the Romans, the Assyrians and the Egyptians they had crises just as bad as ours, and the world is going on, and we are still living, and if we are as well as we are to-night at the Midland Grand Hotel in 10 years time, what more can we want. The Swiss Mercantile Society has a very fine vocation. The sense of what I am aiming at is, in every crisis and in every epoch of difficult times and complications every one of us has to do his duty. It is a question of the survival of the fittest, and the fittest are produced among others by the Education Department of the Swiss Mercantile Society. Therefore I say, and that is the point I wish to aim at, that this is the way in which the crisis can be fought, and brought to an end. I suppose that this means probably nothing to the students of the Swiss Mercantile Society's College, although perhaps there are not many of them who will hear me to-night, as your President says, that the young element is missing. I do not agree with him anyhow as far as the female element is concerned. I say nothing new in repeating, that the survival of the fittest is certainly a doctrine which has been laid and emphasised before the classes of the Swiss Mercantile Society. I am sure the Principal of the Education Department, who is here present will support me in saying, that he does not miss any opportunity in bringing home this special element, and this special doctrine to the young generation.

Mr. President, I will now not keep you any longer with my philosophy which means nothing new to us, and which is the essence and element of existence, the element which means and which really is, the existence of your Society. I raise my glass in honour of the Swiss Mercantile Society and ask you to confirm that the Swiss Mercantile Society is to-day in spite of the world crisis at the top of its form.

The Minister on resuming his seat received a hearty ovation from the whole assembly.

Mr. Stahelin then extended a hearty welcome and greetings to the official guests, mentioning that the Society greatly appreciated the presence of Monsieur Paravicini and his collaborators, he said, "Our pleasure is naturally tinged with regret at the absence of Madame Paravicini, may we ask you, Sir, to be good enough to convey to Madame our sincere wishes for a speedy and complete recovery."

He mentioned that the company was also honoured by the presence of M. Ch. de Jenner, Counsellor of Legation, M. W. de Bourg and M. W. Rüfenacht, First Secretaries of Legation, and M. P. Hilfiker, Chancellor of the Legation. He expressed his great pleasure at seeing amongst the guests M. Vincent Paravicini, the son of the Swiss Minister.

He informed the gathering that the Press was represented by Dr. H. W. Egli of the "Bund," and Mr. and Mrs. A. Stauffer of the "Swiss Observer." He greeted M. G. E. De Brunner, who represented the Trustees and M. and Mme. Hahn, representing the Swiss Church.

M. Stahelin voiced his pleasure at seeing the following representatives of the sister Societies present:

City Swiss Club: M. G. Marchand, Vice-President, and M. J. Zimmermann, Hon. Secretary; Fonds de Secours: M. Gamper, Vice-President and Mme. Gamper; Société de Secours Mutuels: M. C. Campart, President and Mlle. Campart; Nouvelle Société Helvétique: M. A. F. Suter, President and Mme. Suter; Swiss Institute Orchestral Society: M. W. Pellet, President and Mme. Pellet; Swiss Choral Society: M. J. Gerber, President and M. E. Ritzmann, Hon. Treasurer; Swiss Rifle Association: M. Chas. Strublin, Hon.

Treasurer and Mme. Strubin: Schweizerbund (Swiss Club): M. Caluori, Vice-President and Mme. Caluori: Swiss Gymnastic Society: M. J. Christen, President and M. E. S. Block: Unione Ticinese: M. Lucca and M. Orelli.

In his address he included the Ladies to whom he paid a great, and may I add, a well deserved tribute. Mr. Stahelin's speech was much applauded, in particular his remarks to the Ladies.

The President's hammer sounded again, and M. G. Marchand, Vice-President of the City Swiss Club, rose to reply on behalf of the official guests, he said:

Tout en étant très sensible au privilège qui m'échoit de répondre à la santé qui vient d'être portée aux invités, je déplore l'absence de Monsieur Schupbach, Président du City Swiss Club, qui était chargé de cet agréable devoir et s'en serait acquitté beaucoup mieux que je puis le faire. M. Schupbach se serait fait une fête d'assister cette année à votre Banquet en sa double capacité de Trustee de votre Société et de Représentant du City Swiss Club. Il m'a chargé de vous le dire et de vous exprimer ses plus sincères regrets.

Monsieur Stahelin vient de prononcer des paroles très aimables à l'égard de vos invités. Je ne chercherais pas à vous offrir en échange, des fleurs de rhétorique écloses à la chaleur d'une fin de Banquet, mais vous dirai très simplement, dans l'intimité de cette réunion familiale, combien nous apprécions votre hospitalité aussi compréhensive que bienveillante. — En conviant à votre table les Collaborateurs de notre Ministre, les Représentants de nos diverses Institutions et ceux de toutes vos Sociétés sœurs, vous avez tenu, en dépit des circonstances difficiles, à maintenir une belle tradition et la réponse magnifique qu'à reçu votre généreux appel vous montre d'avantage que peuvent le faire mes modestes paroles, la place que la S.M.S. occupe au sein de la Colonie Suisse en général et dans le cœur de ses Représentants, en particulier.

Il me serait difficile de trouver une expression nouvelle et digne d'être ajoutée aux éloges que vient de vous adresser notre Ministre. Je ne saurais donc mieux faire que de m'y associer sans réserve, tout en me permettant, Monsieur Le Président, au nom du City Swiss Club ainsi qu'en celui de tous vos invités, de vous féliciter chaudement de l'honneur que vous a conféré la S.M.S. en vous appelant au fauteuil de la Présidence. Nous sommes persuadés que le choix est des plus justifié et vous souhaitons une longue et heureuse activité.

A vous tous, Mesdames et Messieurs, qui avez si chaleureusement accueilli la santé qui a été portée aux invités, je dis un chaleureux merci et je demanderai à tous les invités de se lever et de boire avec moi à la santé et à la prospérité de la Swiss Mercantile Society.

This speaker, who, by the way, is a very old friend of the Swiss Mercantile Society, was heartily cheered on resuming his seat.

The last speaker was M. J. Pfander, who made the appeal for "Charity." In moving terms the speaker referred to the very valuable work done by the Swiss Benevolent Society for those of our less fortunate compatriots and his ardent appeal met with a ready response, some £28 having been collected.

M. Lehmann informed the company that a letter was received from M. Paschoud, his predecessor, from Paris, regretting his absence for business reasons, and wishing the Society every success.

The official programme having been concluded, the banqueting hall was cleared for dancing. Dancing started soon after ten and lasted until the hour of one.

The Swiss Mercantile Society deserves to be heartily congratulated for the way in which this banquet was arranged and managed, it was a thoroughly successful and enjoyable evening.

ST.

SWISS GYMNASTIC SOCIETY.

The Annual General Meeting of the Society took place on Wednesday 11th January, 1933, at the "Schweizerbund" after a very successful year in every way. In spite of the depression and absence of young Swiss from London, the Society attended the Centenary Federal Gymnastic Festival in Aarau with great success, thus completing the "hat-trick" of three consecutive Federal laurels since 1925, a record which will probably stand for many years to come. The Society is to-day as healthy and as strong as in 1925, there being active members, ladies, juniors and in the coming year veterans teams, to show that with hard work and good will even the depression and all difficulties can be overcome. The president, Mr. J. Christen did not forget to return thanks once again to all supporters and friends of the Society who so handsomely helped at the time of need. The new committee for 1933 is composed as follows:— J. Christen, President;

G. Kummer, Vice-President; H. Humbel, Hon. Secretary; C. L. Schlaeppli, Hon. Treasurer; H. Knoll, leader; C. L. Schlaeppli, Vice-Leader. Messrs. Conrad Vetterli, Stein a/Rhein, Walter Schneeberger (the retiring leader since 1925) and E. S. Block were elected honorary members of the Society. The Finances are in a satisfactory condition, a deficit of £15.0.0 for 1931 having been converted into a credit balance of £12.0.0 for 1932 in spite of the trip to Aarau and its accompanying expenses. Practice evenings for active members are as follows:— every Wednesday at 8.30 p.m. Juniors every Wednesday at 7 p.m. and Ladies every Monday at 8.30 p.m. at 1, Gerrard Place, Shaftesbury Avenue, W. 1. Veterans practice evening to be arranged.

New Members are heartily welcome and every attention and training will be given to beginners.

X.Y.Z.

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COMFORTABLE furnished rooms, near Victoria Station. Gas fires, electric light, etc. Reasonable price. 53, Lupus Street. Phone, Victoria 0557.

FORTHCOMING EVENTS.

Monday, February 13th, from 9 p.m. to 2 a.m. — Société Culinnaire Suisse — Grand Ball — at the Union Helvetia Club, 1, Gerrard Place, W.1.

Wednesday, February 15th at 8 o'clock — Nouvelle Société Helvétique — Annual General Meeting, at "Swiss House," 34/35, Fitzroy Square, W.1. The Causerie by Dr. E. Kessler on "Neutrality" has to be postponed.

Saturday, February 18th at 5.30 p.m. — Swiss Young Men's Christian Association — Familienabend (Social): Rev. Scheibler from the Basle Mission will tell us about Africa, at The Foyer Suisse, 15 Upper Bedford Place, Russell Square, W.C.1. Everybody cordially invited.

Wednesday, February 22nd, at 8 o'clock — Swiss Mercantile Society, Ltd., — Annual General Meeting — at "Swiss House," 34/35, Fitzroy Square, W.1.

Vendredi, 24 Février à 8 heures — Union Chrétienne de Jeunes Gens — Conférence — Recital par M. le Prof. Louis Bourgeois, avec le concours de Mme. Borzy-Bourgeois, Cantatrice at 15, Upper Bedford Place, Russell Square, W.C.1.

Saturday, February 25th, from 6.45-12 o'clock — City Swiss Club — Dinner and Dance at the May Fair Hotel.

Saturday, February 25th at 2 and 4 o'clock p.m. — Film Show at King George's Hall, Caroline Street, Tottenham Court Road, W.C.1.

Saturday, March 25th, at 7 p.m. sharp (Reception 6.30) — Swiss Club Birmingham — Dinner and Dance — at the Grand Hotel, Birmingham.

The Seventeenth Swiss Industries Fair

will be held at

BASLE

March 25th to April 4th, 1933.

for Information apply to:

**THE COMMERCIAL DIVISION OF
THE SWISS LEGATION,
18, Montagu Place, Bryanston Square, W.1.**

or to:

**THE SWISS BANK CORPORATION
99, Gresham Street, E.C.2.; or at Basle.**

Information regarding Travelling facilities may

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**THE SWISS FEDERAL RAILWAYS,
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Dimanche, le 12 Février, 11h. — M. le pasteur G. Borel.
6.30. — M. R. Desaulles.
7.30. — Répétition du Choeur.

SERVICE FUNEBRE.

A l'Eglise Suisse et au Crématoire de Golders Green, Madame Alice de Cintra, née Dimier, née le 5 Juin 1866, décédée le 30 Janvier 1933 dans sa 66e. année — le 3 Février 1933.

Pour tous renseignements concernant actes pastoraux instructions religieuses, etc., prière de s'adresser à M. R. Hoffmann-de Visme, 102, Hornsey Lane, N.6. (Téléphone: Archway 1798). — Heure de réception à l'église: Mercredi de 11h. — 12.30.

SCHWEIZERKIRCHE

(Deutschschweizerische Gemeinde)

St. Anne's Church, 9, Gresham Street, E.C.2.

(near General Post Office.)

Sonntag, den 12. Februar 1933.

11 Uhr morgens, Gottesdienst und Sonntagsschule.
7 Uhr abends, Gottesdienst.
8 Uhr, Chorprobe.

BESTATTUNG.

Am 3. Februar wurde der am 30 Jänner verstorbene Caspar Emil Léon Gafafer bestattet, Bürger von Wartau (Bezirk Werdenberg, St. Gallen); geb. am 19. 8. 1872.

Anfragen wegen Religions- bzw. Confirmandenstunden und Amtshandlungen sind erbeten an den Pfarrer der Gemeinde: C. Th. Hahn, 43, Priory Road, Bedford Park, W. 4 (Telephon: Chiswick 4156) Sprechstunden: Dienstag 12-2 Uhr in der Kirche, Mittwoch 5-6 Uhr im "Foyer Suisse."

Printed for the Proprietors, by THE FREDERICK PRINTING CO., LTD., at 23, Leonard Street, London, E.C.2.