

Swiss Accordion Club

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NEWS FROM THE COLONY.

CITY SWISS CLUB.

La première assemblée mensuelle de l'année 1938-39, précédée du dîner traditionnel, a eu lieu mardi 3 mai, comme d'habitude, au Restaurant Pagani, sous la présidence de M. Louis Chapuis, le nouveau président.

Une quarantaine de personnes étaient présentes, dont quelques invités parmi lesquels le Major Paul de Vallière, éminent officier d'état-major de l'armée suisse, venu à Londres pour donner sous les auspices de la Nouvelle Société Helvétique la conférence sur la Suisse, annoncée pour jeudi 5 mai, ainsi que M. Weil, fils d'un des membres du Club et dont les talents de violoniste ont été plus d'une fois appréciés dans la colonie.

Répondant au toast de bienvenue aux invités, porté par le président, le Major de Vallière, dans une causerie improvisée, parla d'abord d'une caractéristique des Suisses, notamment de leur complexe d'infériorité en présence d'étrangers. L'orateur montra combien l'effacement et la modestie sont dans bien des cas non seulement faux et déplacés, mais encore préjudiciables. La Suisse, dit-il, joue dans le monde un rôle dont les proportions ne se mesurent pas aux dimensions de nos frontières. Pour résister à cette tendance, il faut connaître son pays, son histoire.

Puis le Major de Vallière en vint à parler, bien naturellement, de l'armée suisse, plus populaire — dit-il — aujourd'hui que jamais. Dans un exposé à la fois simple et lucide, il donna un tableau extrêmement intéressant et instructif sur la rapidité de mobilisation, sur la perfection et supériorité du matériel de guerre, fabriqué à présent entièrement en Suisse, sur les mesures prises pour la défense nationale, etc., etc.

L'orateur faisant allusion à un film de l'armée suisse, réclamé par les Américains et les Anglais et en train d'être tourné, déclara qu'il montrera l'armée dans le cadre des beautés naturelles du pays et aussi dans des exercices adreux. Ce film sera prêt à la fin de l'année et constituera de la bonne propagande à plus d'un point de vue.

En conclusion, le Major de Vallière fit part à l'assemblée des dégâts malheureusement très considérables causés à l'agriculture suisse, comme d'ailleurs à celle des pays environnants, par un retour de froid au mois d'avril après un mois de mars plutôt doux. A part cette catastrophe qui pèse lourdement sur le paysan, l'impression que donne la Suisse — dit-il pour terminer — est celle de grand travail, d'aisance, d'ordre, de propreté. Mais il déplora la tendance à la centralisation, qui se manifeste dans certaines parties du pays et qui risque de détruire tant de ses principales caractéristiques et pourrait bien être funeste.

Le président et l'assemblée témoignèrent éloquentement leur appréciation envers le Major de Vallière pour son excellent causerie.

Sur l'invitation du président, M. Weil fit 'répondit' à son tour par l'exécution parfaite de morceaux choisis de violon, accompagné au piano par M. Dick, le populaire chef de l'orchestre suisse; ces productions furent chaleureusement applaudies.

Quant à l'ordre du jour de l'assemblée, il peut être mentionné en peu de mots: deux admissions, une démission; la seule réunion d'été avec dames est fixée au mardi 28 juin au Brent Bridge Hotel et il est décidé de tenir l'assemblée mensuelle du 7 juin au Restaurant Pagani, tandis que, comme d'habitude, celles de juillet et août sont abandonnées.

Ces notes seraient incomplètes sans un mot de félicitation bien méritée au Comité, qui a su procurer aux membres une soirée aussi intéressante et agréable. Elle promet bien pour les assemblées à suivre.

J.Z.

50th ANNIVERSARY OF THE SWISS Y.M.C.A. LONDON. (Schweiz. Christlicher Verein junger Männer.)

The Swiss Y.M.C.A. London is shortly celebrating its 50th Anniversary of its existence. The following is a brief outline of the history of the Association:

The Young Men's Christian Association, founded by Sir George Williams in 1844, soon extended its fellowship to foreigners in London and in 1860 already a number of Swiss young men were placed on the roll of its active membership. As the number of members then rapidly increased, the Germans and the Swiss, always on the best terms, united to form an independent Section of the Association, and in 1872 secured their own premises at 28, Finsbury Square, where for many years they were privileged to work together in a spirit of true Christian Brotherhood and mutual helpfulness. It was not until 1888 that the late Rudolf Horner, who eventually became one of the General Secretaries to the Head-

quarters of the world-wide Movement at Geneva, founded the Swiss Young Men's Christian Association.

The Swiss continued to work successfully alongside their German friends, whom they followed in 1910 to their larger and more commodious Quarters at City-House, City Road. The work was prospering and in full swing when the Great War intervened, dispersing our several groups and painfully severing many happy connections. The Swiss Y.M.C.A., now a self-supporting Association, found its new Quarters at Ashburton Club, Red Lion Square, and though much reduced in members has held the "Fort" and kept through the great crisis its tradition unbroken. From Red Lion Square we moved to the Foyer Suisse in Upper Bedford Place, where we stayed for about 12 years and since October, 1936, we are at our present address, Westgate House, 28/29, Bedford Place, W.C.1, the Home of the German Y.M.C.A.

To-day we are practically in the same position as in 1914/1918, like all the other Swiss Societies in London, we feel the total absence of young Swiss, being prevented to take up positions in England, on account of the restrictions placed on Foreigners, regarding employment. This has naturally caused a curtailment in our activities in some directions, but does not by any means indicate, that we are on the brink of closing down, all earthly institutions have their peak and lean times. However, you may ask, what is the result of our 50 years of labour? Many hundreds of young Compatriots have during these years passed through our Association and proclaim, that their stay in England has not only been of great educational value, but that their association with the Swiss Y.M.C.A. has brought about a great change in their moral and spiritual life. A proof, that this was not only a temporary experience, is the fact, that every year, on the last Sunday in August, our old Members, who have meanwhile returned to Switzerland, are meeting in Zurich for a Conference together with Friends who have passed through the Groupe Suisse in Paris, to commemorate the happy days they have spent in our midst. These Conferences are being held now for over 45 years.

Y.M.C.A.'s of which our Society is a small group, are to help Men young and old, to get to Peace with God, and this has been our endeavour in the past and is for the future. Religious circles have never been and are getting less and less popular, the man's religion is his private affair, and the need of attending bible studies in these modern times, is to-day being appreciated only by a very small number, this applies, of course, to all Nationalities. Our ideals being of a religious character, it is needless to say, that our Association does not figure very prominently in the Swiss Colony in London, even many readers of the Swiss Observer may not know of our Institution. We would therefore heartily invite all Friends who can sympathize with our cause, to attend the following meetings arranged for our Jubilee festival:

Sunday, 15th May, 11 a.m. Service at the Swiss Church (St. Anne's and St. Agnes) Gresham Street, E.C.1, Preacher the Rev. D. Witzig, of Aarau. In the afternoon at 4.30 p.m. we have our principal meeting at Westgate House, 28/29, Bedford Place, W.C.1. We also invite all Men in the Swiss Colony to attend our Bible studies with free discussions, which take place at Westgate House every Thursday at 7 p.m. Occasionally other meetings such as Socials, Lectures, Rambles, etc., are being arranged. Being a self supporting Society, we also appeal to the Generosity of all well wishers to our Association, by sending us a Jubilee gift, many thanks in anticipation.

Swiss Y.M.C.A. Committee.

SWISS ACCORDION CLUB.

It was with great pleasure that I followed an invitation extended to me by the Swiss Accordion Club to attend their Grand Social Supper Dance at 74, Charlotte Street, on Friday, April 29th. I met many people I knew there and was welcomed by the President, Mr. Häusermann. The Dance had already started and, though the evening was young, everybody was merry and bright and waiting for the Concert to begin. — Among the crowd I noticed Mr. Gandon, the smart conductor of the Accordion Players, busying himself efficiently with getting everything ready for the start. This start had to be delayed a little as the patrons and friends of the band were rather late in arriving. At 9.30 the band struck up with a fine Swiss Military March which made you settle down and listen. It was at once apparent that the band had made much progress since their last Concert in February. Miss Niggli and Mr. Gandon followed with a Duet, "Gondolieri," — ah, what a beautiful valse this was, — a couple of gondolieri gliding along softly to the tune of their serenading accordions, — it was really excellent and, of course, "brought the house down." The band continued with an "Appenzeller Ländler," — one of those we are used to hear in Switzerland an ere Chilbi; jolly good!

By now many more listeners had arrived and joined in the dancing which followed. Thus a most agreeable break was made before the Accordionists began their second part of the programme. This consisted also of three pieces: "Turnermarsch," "Ländlermarsch" and the "Filzbacher Ländler," all played with fine rythme and feeling. The "Ländlermarsch" was played by the young members of the club only and it was grand to see and hear these tiny tots perform as if they had been studying accordion playing for years, yet were those who had not played for longer than six months. I want to attend a rehearsal one day to find out just how Mr. Gandon does it, — he must be a marvellous teacher! —

After a further interval of dancing the band gave us the last part of their performance. "Sonata di Sera," a slow movement, in parts pianissimo and very soothing, easily the best piece of the evening. This was followed by another duet, a Ländler "De Dibi Däbi" (I am still trying to find out what it means, or have we such names in Whitehall?). This duet was played by Miss Heinz and Mr. Gandon, very efficiently, on a piano accordion and Chromatic. And then came the last piece, a well known Swiss March "Durch Wald und Flur" played by the entire band, a splendid performance. —

I must say here that throughout the programme the audience was most responsive and gave hearty and prolonged applause which was indeed well deserved. Mr. Gandon is indeed to be congratulated on his success with the band and I would like to wish him luck, courage, perseverance ... but then Mr. Gandon possesses all these already and has the gift of passing them on to his players, hence success upon success! —

Our "table" bought about a million tombola tickets from most bewitching ladies, — but our luck was out! However, we found consolation in some admirable yodels sung by Mrs. Rossier and Mrs. Aebersold who were accompanied at the piano by Mrs. Schaefer. I would have liked to hear many more verses, but I waited in vain for those verses we applied to these famous yodels when schoolboys in the "Mutze-stadt."

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Dancing then continued to a lovely dance band. I must congratulate Miss Niggli on her dance band. I know she has been working hard rehearsing, but she found that it was worth while and she looked radiantly happy with her success. I hope that the Accordionists will again engage that particular dance band which was definitely a great success. —

And now I am sure we are all looking forward to hear the Swiss Accordion Club again "in play" on June 16th at the Fête Suisse, at Central Hall, Westminster. Till then, dear friends, the best of luck, and thank you for a most enjoyable evening. —

epd.

FILM NEWS.

THE CHALLENGE, the new Matterhorn film is ready for exhibition and will be shown to the public from May 9th at the Pavilion in Piccadilly Circus.

It is a wonderful film, which will achieve general admiration and should be of special interest to the Swiss.

Those who had the opportunity to see former screen plays dealing with the same subject will be favourably surprised from beginning to end. It is eighty minutes of genuine entertainment without one dull moment. Scenery and photography are of the best; I don't think, I have ever seen anything to approach it in any alpine film.

The acting has to be described in superlatives too. As far as it concerns Louis Trenker, the star of many mountaineering plays, one knows that in the part of Carrel he should be entirely in his element. The newcomers in this type of film, notably Robert Douglas as Whympfer, Frank Birch as Rev. Hudson, Geoffrey Wardwell as Lord Francis Douglas and Moran Caplat as Hadow, actors we never saw before in climbing scenes of this kind, give a very remarkable performance. "The climbing parson" Rev Hudson, who has in reality at least Whympfer's equal, is remarkably characterised by Birch.

The romantic side of this film is also different from the usual "sloppy" stuff so often seen in pictures. It is treated in such a way as to improve the general interest. Important details like the order of Whympfer's party on the rope when the accident occurs; how Hadow slips and pushes Croz over; how the rope breaks between Lord Francis Douglas and Taugwalder — are carried out with great accuracy. Other incidents like Carrel's finding of Whympfer when the latter had injured himself on one of his first attempts on the Matterhorn — where, in reality, Whympfer had to drag himself to Zermatt without help; or giving to the bachelor guide Croz, from Chamonix, a wife of Swiss nationality; the accusation of Whympfer for having cut and thrown away the rope — a fact quite impossible as the guide Taugwalder stood between Whympfer and the broken rope — and the friendship between Carrel and Whympfer are fictitious without being objectionable. It may even be that just these little liberties, which surprise those who know the facts, give this climbing film a more general interest.

The climax of the film is — at least from an alpinist's point of view — when the climbers get to the top of the Matterhorn and exclaim: "We are the first human beings who put their feet on the top of this mountain since the beginning of the world" — and, on Hudson's suggestion, take off their hats and thank God for guiding them safely to the top. How little do they realise that within an hour four of them would perish in a terrible way, falling down to the Matterhorn glacier four thousand feet below. — Never has an Alpine drama been filmed in such a realistic and terrific way!

A.T.

SWISS FILM NEWS.

We give below particulars of some bookings of a Swiss film entitled "Mountain Barriers," which can be described as featuring the Loetschberg region with partial ascent of the Bluemlisalp, and showing the quaint customs in the Loetschberg Valley.

Olympic Theatre	Liverpool	6 days	May 9th
Forum	Liverpool	14 days	..
Langham	Pinner	7 days	..
Ealing	Forum	7 days	..
Enfield	Savoy	7 days	..
Winchmore Hill	Capital	7 days	..
Wembley	Regal	7 days	..
Muswell Hill	Ritz	7 days	..
Harrow	Dominion	7 days	..
Neasden	Ritz	7 days	..
Golders Green	Lido	7 days	..
Acton	Savoy	7 days	..
Edgware	Ritz	7 days	..

Z' BAERN U IM BUNDESHUS.

Von C. A. Loosli, dem urchigen, schalkhaften Bümplizer Schriftsteller, ist jüngst ein Band, "Erlebtes und Erlauschtes" erschienen (Verlag Löpfe-Benz, Rorschach), der eine Fülle von köstlichen Anekdoten enthält. Die folgende Kostprobe mag es bezeugen (wobei wir die Geschichtelein zum Teil etwas verkürzen):

"Du mir au"

Ein Regierungsrat hatte einem Freund ein Darlehen gemacht und musste ihn später — aus eigener Geldverlegenheit — darum ersuchen, die Summe wenn möglich ganz oder zum Teil zurück zu zahlen. Er schrieb dazu ein freundliches Brieflein und fügte als Nachschrift die Worte bei: "Du mir au."

Der Freund zahlte sofort das Geld zurück, und als sie sich wieder persönlich trafen, wollte er noch wissen, was denn die Nachschrift eigentlich bedeuten sollte?

Worauf der Regierungsrat erwiderte: "Hm, i ha dänkt, we du de my Brief gläse heigisch, so sägisch de: — dä cha mir i d' Schuech blase, un uf das ha-n-i grad zum vorus wöue-n-antworte!"

Subventionen.

Der langjährige Regierungsrat und Erziehungsdirektor Gobat war einmal stark darüber erzürnt, dass ein verlangter Kredit für die Primarschule vom Grossen Rat abgewiesen, dagegen ein solcher für die Rindviehzucht bewilligt wurde, und er schaffte seinem Unmut wie folgt Luft:

"Wenn man im Kanton Bern staatlich gefördert werden will, muss man schon als Kalb, nicht aber als Menschenkind und späterer Primarschüler zur Welt kommen. Würde ich an die Seelenwanderung glauben, so zöge ich bei uns zu Lande das erstere vor."

Worauf sein Kollege Ritschard ihm gelassen neckisch bemerkt haben soll: "Ja schon, aber weisst du, Gobat, man kann aber nicht zweimal dasselbe sein!"

Redebütten.

Ein Basellandschaftlicher Nationalrat meinte eines Tages: "So steht es in der Botschaft des Bundesrates; also muss es wahr sein Ich glaube es aber dennoch nicht ..."

Ein anderes Mal: "Ja, meine Herren, die Veredelung des Rindviehes geht nicht nur uns Landwirte, sondern jeden von Ihnen ganz im besondern an."

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FORTHCOMING EVENTS.

Wednesday, May 11th, at 7.45 p.m. — Swiss Mercantile Society — Monthly Meeting, followed by a lecture on "The European Situation" by Dr. G. P. Gooch, M.A., at Swiss House, 34/35, Fitzroy Square, W.1.

Sunday, May 15th — The Symphonic Social Choir — Concert and Dance — at the Brent Bridge Hotel, Hendon.

Friday, May 20th — Nouvelle Société Helvétique — Supper at 6.30 p.m. sharp, to be followed by a causerie by Gottfried J. Keller, Esq., London Correspondent of the Agence Télégraphique Suisse, Berne, on "The Political Situation in Europe," at the "Foyer Suisse," 15, Upper Bedford Place, W.1.

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Dimanche 8 mai, Fête des mères :
 11h. — Prédication — Mr. U. Emery.
 11h. — Ecole du dimanche.
 7h. — Culte — Mr. U. Emery.
 Le Pasteur Emery reçoit le Mercredi de 11 heures à midi 30, à l'église, 79, Endell Street, W.C.2. S'adresser à lui pour tous les actes pastoraux. (téléphone : Museum 3100, domicile : Foyer Suisse, 12, Upper Bedford Place, W.C.1.)

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Sonntag, den 8. Mai 1938.
 11 Uhr morgens, Gottesdienst und Sonntagschule.
 7 Uhr abends, Gottesdienst.
 8 Uhr, Chorpöbe.
 Anfragen wegen Religions-bez. 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.