

Swiss Mercantile Society

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SWISS CHORAL SOCIETY.

On Sunday, the 29th of January, the Annual Dinner of this the Benjamin of our Swiss Societies took place at the Schweizerbund, 74 Charlotte Street, W.1. The attendance was uncomfortably good, in fact sufficiently large to hold an "overflow" dinner in the adjoining room.

The repast over, the president, Mr. J. Manzoni, asked the company to remain upstanding for a few moments in memory of the late Mr. Rud. Niedegger, a young member who succumbed a week ago to an attack of influenza. The guests and honorary members were then heartily welcomed by the president; amongst the latter he was specially gratified to single out Messrs. Hohl, Wyss, Wetter and Schell. It was a great satisfaction for him to state that the many difficulties which had been anticipated when the Society was founded on Nov. 19th, 1920, had now been overcome; many a disappointment had been his lot, disappointments which at the time he preferred to keep to himself so as not to discourage the members of his Committee. If he had not always succeeded in reconciling dissentients it was thanks to the whole-hearted support which he had received from the majority of the members that he was still proud to be their president. The Society owed a debt of gratitude to the Union Helvetia and Schweizerbund, who generously put at their disposal the necessary accommodation for holding the weekly rehearsals, and he appealed to the active members to assist the conductor both by regular attendance and strict discipline. He was looking forward to an increased membership, and, turning to Mr. Wyss, thought that there was much undiscovered talent in the ranks of the Union Helvetia. At the conclusion of his address Mr. Manzoni presented a case of cutlery to Mr. Suter as a wedding-gift from the choir.

Mr. Wyss, hon. president, replied and complimented Mr. Manzoni and Mr. Pestou, the conductor, on the great success which they had achieved in such a short time; he would willingly take the hint from the president, but it seemed to him that most of the young Swiss in our Colony were forsaking our beautiful songs and turning to other amusements.

During the evening the choir delighted the visitors with a good many old and new numbers. The songs were rendered to perfection, chiefly due to the homely atmosphere which imparted to the singers the necessary self-confidence. The gathering was typically Swiss and could not better be described than by the title of one of their songs:—

"Ein Prosit der Gemütlichkeit!"

SWISS MERCANTILE SOCIETY.

(FOOTBALL SECTION.)

In spite of the discouraging experiences of the last football season, the Committee of the S.M.S., with the approval of the active members, has again granted a credit to the youngest section of the Society.

We are glad to report that this year's outlay from the Society's funds has amply justified itself, as over 23 members are on the playing list, which enabled the Sports Committee to put two teams in the field.

The above mentioned Committee has been fortunate enough to book a first-class playing ground at Perivale, within reasonable reach of the players.

The first team, which includes several players well known in football circles at home, has played up to now 14 matches, of which 6 were won, 1 drawn, and 7 lost. As an explanation, but not excuse, we may mention that 4 of the matches lost were played with only 9 men in the field.

It gives us great pleasure to comment on the very able way in which the home matches have been refereed by Messrs. Paschoud, Grether and Senn.

There are still 9 matches on the programme, and we sincerely hope that the first eleven, under the efficient captaincy of Mr. Wintsch, will add new victories to the old ones.

The second team has also come fully up to the expectations of the Selection Committee.

Throughout the present season there has been a wonderful spirit of good sportsmanship, and it is gratifying to see that our compatriots have acquired a good and honourable name in the English Amateur Football world.

The Sports Committee, under the energetic leadership of its president, Mr. H. Senn, ably seconded by Mr. Paschoud, may well be proud of its achievements.

A. S.

GOLD MINTED IN SWITZERLAND.

The Editor "The Swiss Observer."

Sir,—The statement in the issue of the 28th inst. of "The Swiss Observer" to the effect that the Swiss Confederation did not mint its own gold coins is incorrect.* The following table enumerates the 20-Franc and 10-Franc pieces which were minted at the Swiss Federal Mint in Berne up to and including the year 1920. The total number of 20-Franc pieces so issued up to and including 1909 was 5,755,000—Fr. 115,100,000.

Swiss gold coins have been struck in Switzerland by Celtic and Gaelic tribes (the Helvetii Boii and the neighbouring Sequaner, then the Rhaetier, Allobroges and the tribes of the Rhone valley) between 2000 B.C. and 58 B.C.; usually of the type of the "Regenbogenschüsselchen." Also the Romans struck gold coins in Augusta Rauracorum and Vindonissa; then came (after 496 A.C.) the Merovingian and Carolingian (about 760 A.C.).

The Swiss cities of Zurich, Berne, Burgdorf, Zofingen, Solothurn, Schaffhausen, etc., as well as the ecclesiastical princes of Rheinau, Basle, Chur, St. Gallen, Lausanne, Sion, etc., all minted gold coins (some Bracteate or one-sided impressions) in the period of 843—1291 A.C.; these as also most of the Cantons were later on up to the République Helvétique (1798 to 1803) and again after the latter's short existence, namely from 1803 to 1848, responsible for a great variety of issues of gold coins. The République Helvétique struck in the year 1800 beautiful 16-Franc and 32-Franc pieces, now very scarce. Some of the Swiss Cantons can boast of having minted their gold coins from their own gold; for instance, the 16-Franc pieces of 1813 of the Canton Graubünden (only 70—100 were struck in the mint of Berne) were struck from gold which came from the Calenda near Felsberg. The gold coins struck within the borders of Switzerland of to-day compare with regard to their aesthetic merits extremely favourable with the products of other countries.

I enclose my card.

20-Franc pieces.		20-Franc pieces.		10-Franc pieces.	
1883	250000	1904	100000		
1886	25000	1905	100000		
1888	4400	1906	100000		
1889	100000	1907	150000		
1890	125000	1908	350000		
1891	100000	1909	400000		
1892	100000	1910	375000		
1893	100000	1911	350000	100000	
1894	120000	1912	450000	200000	
1895	20000	1913	700000	600000	
1896	40000	1914	700000	200000	
1897	400000	1915	750000	400000	
1898	400000	1916	30000	—	
1899	300000	1917	—	—	
1900	400000	1918	—	—	
1901	500000	1919	—	—	
1902	600000	1920	—	—	
1903	200000				

* The statement referred to appeared under the heading "Notes and Gleanings" and was quoted from the "Daily News" of Jan. 17th last.—"S. O."

FORTHCOMING EVENTS.

Saturday, February 4th.—SWISS MERCANTILE SOCIETY: Cinderella Dance at the Midland Hotel.

Tuesday, Febr. 7th.—CITY SWISS CLUB: Monthly Meeting and Supper at 7 p.m.

Tuesday, Febr. 7th.—UNION HELVETIA: Monthly Meeting at 10 p.m.

Wednesday, Feb. 8th.—SWISS MERCANTILE SOCIETY: Monthly Meeting, preceded by Supper, at Union Helvetia Club, 1, Gerrard Place, W.1, at 8.30 p.m.

Friday, Feb. 10th.—SWISS INSTITUTE: Lecture by W. J. Austin, Esq., "English Wit and Humour," at 28, Red Lion Square, W.C.1, at 8.30 p.m.

Saturday, Febr. 11th.—CITY SWISS CLUB: Cinderella Dance at Gatti's.

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

Dimanche. 5 Fév., 11h.—Mr. R. Hoffmann-de Visme.
6.30.—Pfarrer Wildbolz.