

The Foyer suisse

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Objektyp: **Article**

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

Band (Jahr): **- (1925)**

Heft 204

PDF erstellt am: **30.04.2024**

Persistenter Link: <https://doi.org/10.5169/seals-689406>

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THE FOYER SUISSE.

On Monday evening, the 18th inst., the Trust held its Annual General Meeting at No. 15, Upper Bedford Place, under the Chairmanship of its Hon. President, the Swiss Minister, Monsieur C. R. Paravicini. The accounts were presented by the Auditor of the Trust, Mr. R. J. Dixon, F.L.A.A. and after being subjected to full criticism, were duly approved.

The Hon. Secretary's Report, which is printed below, was read and accepted.

The following gentlemen were elected to form the Council of Management for 1925-26:—Rev. Hoffmann-de Visme, President; H. Barth, C. Bertschinger, G. Hafner, H. Joss, G. A. Matzinger, F. G. Sommer.

7th Annual Report of the Foyer Suisse. 1924-25.

It is less than two years since our Hon. President, the Swiss Minister, dedicated the premises of the Foyer Suisse to the high purposes for which the Swiss public in Switzerland and London had, in the year 1913, consecrated the sum of £5,000.

For 10 years, therefore, the Trust was marking time. True, there were the Statutes, a Committee, War Bonds and Queensland Bonds, but as far as the purposes of the Trust and all the promises given to the subscribers were concerned, the notice was: "Nothing doing"; the field was absolutely bare.

Three years ago some of us started work; we ploughed, we harrowed, and we still labour on, rising up early and sitting up late, and to-day, thanks to the blessing of God, which is manifestly with us in this undertaking, the progress of the Trust has been simply wonderful.

I beg you to note the outward frame of the Foyer Suisse: four stately houses in the very heart of this great metropolis. Note the inside accommodation, comfort and homeliness. Note the local significance and possibilities as a power for good in the Swiss Churches and in the Swiss Colony. Note the throbbing flow of life in national service. Note the financial and economic conception of the undertaking, with the highest guarantee of security and stability.

From the financial standpoint the funds are absolutely safe, in view of a 30 years' lease from the Bedford Estate.

The House Committee has been in constant, practically daily attendance, especially during the winter season; the negotiating of building contracts for dilapidations, central heating and decorations required a great deal of sacrifice besides the regular weekly supervision of accounts. The Council of Management has met six times and kept in close touch with the House Committee.

Besides the activities of the Swiss Churches, the Y.M.C.A. is still the only Swiss group taking advantage of the Foyer. It is hoped, however, that with the recent decision of the C.M. any Swiss group can use the Swiss Hall free of charge on application to the Secretary; the Swiss Colony will in future make more use of the accommodation offered, and that this hall will soon be used every day in the week.

To judge from the Accountant's figures, we have had a record season 1924-25. The amount of work put in by our manager, Mr. W. Meyer, and staff during the past year deserves our fullest appreciation. The young men of Swiss nationality who stayed at the Foyer Suisse during the twelve months number 500, mostly students, as a rule with a very short stay only, to pass on into English families. A good many revisit the Foyer from time to time; some actually return periodically just to enjoy the homely fare of our Swiss chef, Mr. F. Koelliker, for a short period. Numbers pass through the Foyer on their way to or from the provinces, Scotland, Ireland and overseas. They are mostly of the commercial class, but some also are engineers. The Foyer proves a great attraction to Swiss families travelling, or parents visiting their children. The Foyer has had the honour of accommodating some well-known Swiss people, like Dr. Egger, Editor of the "Bund"; Mr. Halperin, London Correspondent of the "N.Z.Z.", and family; Nationalrat Greulich; Dr. Schenck; Pasteur Keller, etc. Missionaries of the Mission Suisse Romande, as well as commercials of the Basle Mission, going to and returning from the Gold Coast, are regular visitors at the Foyer. While the great majority of our guests are of Swiss nationality, we are proud to render services, which are always much appreciated, to any other nationality as well.

The Foyer is in close contact with the International Students' Christian Movement in Russell Square. The recent International Y.M.C.A. Conference in Edinburgh brought more than a dozen delegates to the Foyer, coming from Italy, Germany, Austria, Hungary, Roumania and Sweden.

We are very sorry that on account of building operations in No. 15, Mr. Hoffmann-de Visme has found it advisable to transfer a part of his activities to Endell Street since last December; up till then the Eglise Suisse held its Réunion de Jeunes Filles every Thursday; the Sunday School Working Party and the Ladies' Sewing Meeting, however, were held regularly throughout the year.

The Sale of Work in December was a great success, 250 people being present. Besides the Hall and Church Room, the Restaurant and three

other Rooms were put at the disposal of the Sunday School for the occasion.

The Schweizerkirche has held a Girls' Meeting every Wednesday, Bible Class every Sunday evening, Ladies' Sewing Meeting every month, Saturday Socials every month. The Swiss Hall has further been used for fortnightly lectures and socials by the Swiss Y.M.C.A.

The Trust has lost two of its members during the current year, viz., the late Mr. E. Buser, who was a very zealous and patriotic friend of the Foyer, and Mr. R. Gaillard, who left London for South Africa.

Special thanks are due to Mr. F. Ineichen for faithful service in the office after business hours; Mr. R. J. Dixon, our accountant; Mr. F. Goodman, our solicitor; and Mr. C. Doll, our architect.

To conclude the summary of our activities, I may be permitted to remind you what an English writer of eminence on social reform says in a recent article:—"Wholesome recreation so urgently needed to offset the monotony of life is not within the reach of all, but that it is penetrating through our consciousness that human fellowship is required for normal living—the heart needs its warmth and the head its stimulus."

Gentlemen, allow me to add that in that direction lies the future pathway of progress for this institution likewise. The social facilities and benefits made possible through the wonderful generosity of the Swiss people twelve years ago, ought to be brought within the reach of all compatriots, without distinction of tongue or religion, and if all its members will only remember the sacredness of the Trust and help us to diminish the gap that still exists between the standard of performance and the ideal, when we come to the end of our journey, we shall all of us have the satisfaction of having done our share in leaving the Swiss Colony in London a better and happier place.

C. BERTSCHINGER, Hon. Secretary.

NOUVELLE SOCIÉTÉ HELVÉTIQUE.

The May Council Meeting of the London Group of the Nouvelle Société Helvétique was held on Wednesday, the 20th inst.

The Treasurer announced one admission and four resignations, and gave a brief survey of the financial situation of the Group. There are still several subscriptions outstanding for 1924, but it is hoped that at least the majority of these may yet be secured.

The President brought one or two letters to the notice of the meeting, such as the appeal for the distressed Swiss of Sicily and Bosco, and a letter of thanks from the Schweizer Unterstützungs-Verband in reply to a letter of congratulation which we had sent them. It was, however, a letter from Dr. A. Lätt which aroused the most interest, and led to a lengthy and animated discussion.

In his letter Dr. Lätt suggested that, to keep our Group in closer contact with the Central Committee, he would be glad, should the Council be in agreement, to write, or get a friend of his to do so, a monthly letter to us on some subject of interest, so that it might be discussed at our Council Meetings, after which discussion one of the Councillors might be good enough to write him a letter in reply, giving the details of the debate. To make an immediate start in this direction, Dr. Lätt enclosed an article which had just appeared in the *Neue Zürcher Zeitung* with regard to the Swiss Abroad. Dr. Lätt's suggestion was very favourably received by all the Councillors present, and it was agreed that we should write and accept his kind offer, at the same time thanking him most gratefully for having put his valuable services at our disposal.

The discussion with regard to the article on the Swiss Abroad was very animated, most of the Councillors being desirous of giving vent to their opinions in this connection, particularly in so far as the education of Swiss children abroad was concerned.

The majority of the Councillors endorsed the opinion of the Rev. Hoffmann-de Visme to the effect that the article in question really seemed more applicable to the Swiss in Switzerland than to the Swiss Abroad, Swiss who were educated on proper lines at home never failing to show the result of that education when they were abroad; that, as to the national flag, it was little wonder, perhaps, that it did lose some of its value when it was used so much for advertising purposes, and that it was up to the authorities in Switzerland to improve matters in this direction. It was also agreed by the meeting that, particularly in England, the difficulties of keeping the children of Swiss fathers Swiss were considerable and perhaps could only be understood rightly by those who lived over here. At the same time, it was generally felt that the idea of publishing a good history of Switzerland for Swiss children abroad was a very excellent one and deserved every possible encouragement. These books, it was thought, should be in a small form, concisely and interestingly written and nicely illustrated, something after the style of "Little Arthur's History of England." Mr. Suter kindly agreed to write Dr. Lätt, giving him the views expressed with regard to his letter and the article he had forwarded.

Secretariat of the London Group.

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CITY SWISS CLUB.

Messieurs les membres sont avisés que la prochaine

Assemblée Mensuelle

aura lieu le MARDI 9 JUIN au Brent Bridge Hotel, Hendon. Cette assemblée sera précédée d'un souper familial à 7 h. précises (6/6 par couvert) et suivi d'une danse.

Pour faciliter les arrangements, le Comité recommande aux participants de s'annoncer au plus tôt à M. P. F. Boehringer, 21, Garlick Hill, E.C.4. (Téléphone: City 4603).

Ordre du Jour :

Procès-verbal. Admissions. Démonstrations. Divers.

Divine Services.

EGLISE SUISSE (1762), 79, Endell St., W.C.2 (Langue française.)

Dimanche, 31 Mai, 11h.—Pentecôte. M. R. Hoffmann-de Visme.

6.30.—Service liturgique et musical, suivi de Ste. Cène.

Lundi, 1er Juin.—Promenade à Ashted (billet 1/9). Thé 1/4. Rendez-vous: Waterloo Station platform 2, 10 a.m. Départ 10.30. Invitation cordiale à chacun.

Pour tous renseignements concernant actes pastoraux, etc., prière de s'adresser à M. R. Hoffmann-de Visme, 102, Hornsey Lane, N.6. (Téléphone: Mountview 1798.) Heure de réception à l'Eglise: Mercredi 10.30 à 12h.

SCHWEIZERKIRCHE

(Deutschschweizerische Gemeinde)

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

Pfingstsonntag, 31. Mai, 11 Uhr vorm.—Predigt. Solo: Arie aus der Pfingstcantate von Joh. Seb. Bach: "Also hat Gott..." Näherverein am 16. Juni im 'Foyer Suisse.'

Süs-Bosco.

Die Erträge und Sammelisten für diese beiden Gemeinden sind an die früher angegebenen Sammelstellen erbeten.

Sprechstunden: Dienstag, 12—1 Uhr, 9, Gresham Street, E.C.2 (St. Anne's Church); Mittwoch, 12—2 Uhr, 12, Upper Bedford Place, W.C.1. Pfr. C. Th. Hahn.

FORTHCOMING EVENTS.

Tuesday, June 9th, at 7 p.m.—CITY SWISS CLUB: Monthly Meeting, preceded by a Supper, at the Brent Bridge Hotel, Hendon. (See Advt.) Thursday, June 25th, from 6 to 10.30 p.m.—"FETE SUISSE" at Caxton Hall. SWISS GYMNASIUM SOCIETY.—Exercise Evenings: Wednesdays at 74, Charlotte Street, W.1. Fridays at 1, Gerrard Place, W.1.

Printed and Published for the Proprietor, P. F. BOEHRINGER, by THE REDBRIK PRINTING CO. LTD., at 21, GARLICK HILL, LONDON, E.C.4