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LA NOUVELLE SOCIÉTÉ HELVÉTIQUE GROUPE LONDONIEN.

(Communicated.)

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING.

The Sixth Annual General Meeting of the London Group of the Nouvelle Société Helvétique was held on Friday evening, 17th February, in the Stainway Hall. Although still suffering from the effects of a chill, Mr. Baer, the President, was able to take the chair and give the meeting the benefit of his most excellent leadership. The members were all the more pleased to have their President with them, as their Secretary, Dr. Paul Lang, was unable to be present, having recently had to undergo an operation for appendicitis.

One of the most important, and certainly the most inspiring, events of the evening was the reading of the President's Annual Report which was received with the enthusiasm it rightly deserved. There is no need to enter into details or further eulogies of this excellent Report, as it will speak for itself in another page.

Mr. A. F. Suter, the energetic Treasurer of the London Group, gave a most encouraging Report. Both Report and Balance Sheet, a copy of which was given to everyone attending the meeting, are eloquent testimonies of the wonderful work done by Mr. Suter and the Financial and Budget Committees. The Treasurer's Report will also be found in another column, but, unfortunately, space does not permit of the publication of the Balance Sheet as well. Mr. Suter will, however, be glad to send a copy of it to any member desirous of seeing it, if they will write to him for one to his office: 133, Fenchurch Street, E.C.3.

The proposal to have a second General Meeting in autumn of a more informal character, so as to give members an opportunity for closer fellowship and of enquiring freely into the progress of the various commissions and general activities of the Society here, at home and abroad, was unanimously accepted. This meeting will be preceded by a dinner, and, as the whole proceedings will not have the strictly official character of the Annual General Meeting, it was decided that it should be given a less formidable name.

The Annual Subscription was again fixed at 5s. minimum.

The following members were elected as Councillors for 1922:—Messrs. J. Baer, F. Beyli, C. Campart, A. L. Despond, F. M. Gamper, Rev. R. Hoffmann-de Visme, Messrs H. Joss, P. Preisig, T. Schaerer, A. Secrétan, E. F. Sommer, A. J. Strahle, A. F. Suter, and Dr. W. Weibel.

TREASURER'S REPORT.

Ladies and Gentlemen,—In presenting the statement of accounts this year, I have deemed it wise to lay before each member present a printed copy. It will save you the trouble of having to take hurried notes and give you a greater opportunity to put questions at the end of the report. I shall, therefore, with your kind permission take the statement as read and only make observations on certain items, for the purpose of elucidation.

The little statement in front of you, I think, tells you a great story; I might almost call it a romance—a romance which might easily have terminated in a tragedy.

Our legacy of 1920 was a deficit of £238; our organisation was growing at a very rapid rate. This growth was in itself a very desirable thing, being proof of our will and power to expand—but this same organisation became so alarmingly voracious and began to tax the Treasury to such an extent that we had to ask ourselves: "Where will this lead us to?" Those were anxious days for the Council, deliberating on ways and means to put a stop to expenditure which we knew full well would involve the Society in financial trouble sooner or later, very probably sooner. The result of these deliberations was a small Financial Committee and Budget Commission, with express orders to rigorously and mercilessly cut out all unnecessary and particularly all unproductive expenditure. This Committee set to work and meant to do the best it could for the Society.

The unexpected resignation of Dr. Latt in March last made it doubly necessary for the Budget Commission to start work at once in laying down a much reduced programme of activities for his successor. Let me tell you here that from that point forward we began to have new hope of stabilising our budget, and it is only simple justice to acknowledge that we also found a first-class helpmate where we least expected it: in our new Secretary, Dr. Paul Lang. He himself has all along cut down

and saved, and cut down and saved again, often to our very astonishment, with such good will and grace that our work was shorn of half its expected horrors.

Mr. Wüthrich, whose services to our Society it is impossible for me to praise sufficiently, had, as a member of the F.C., laid down the maxim: Either you cut your expenses in half, or very nearly so, or I shall not be able to undertake again the work of finding guaranteed donations in future. Here, then, was a definite task to be accomplished. I need not remind you to what extent the Society depends upon these guaranteed donations to appreciate the seriousness of the position. Gradually, towards the fall of the year, the monthly financial statements to the Council, which had for long been a nightmare to me, again began to show successive rays of hope and improvement. It was then resolved to make a separate and earnest effort to close the year without a deficit, which could not be accomplished by saving alone, and I am proud to tell you that it is due to the magnanimous support of some of our donors, who came forward for the second time in the year, that we have been able to achieve what at one time looked so utterly hopeless.

As far as the Budget for 1922 is concerned, I am in the position to assure you that the much narrower limits of these provisions will in no way interfere with or curtail the essential aims and activities of our Society. I had intended to interpose Mr. Wüthrich's report regarding guaranteed donations for the year 1922, but this work, not being completed at the moment, I cannot do so. At the same time it will be gratifying to you to hear that we have every reason to be very optimistic on this point.

As you see, there is really more behind those dry figures than meets the eye at first glance, and I feel sure you will not quarrel with me for meeting you to-night in good spirits and full of hope for the future. The work which has achieved this reversal from a delicate position at the end of last year to one of comparative security to-day has been heavy and arduous but I make no secret of it: my colleagues and myself are proud of the work done, because it is accomplished for the good of the Society. Our sincerest thanks are due to the Donors, whose munificence allows us to carry on the good work, to Mr. Wüthrich, the genial money-getter, to Dr. Lang for his whole-hearted co-operation, and to all those who have given us their assistance in the course of the year, and I wish to express publicly our gratitude to them all.

MEETING OF THE COUNCIL ON FEBRUARY 22nd.

The first meeting of the new Council of the London Group took place on Wednesday evening, 22nd February, at 74, Charlotte Street, W. Two members who do not sit on this Board were present and took part in the discussions. It is hoped that many other members of the Group will follow their good example, for the Councillors are only too pleased when members come to their meetings and take part in the debates. They are only sorry so few avail themselves of the opportunity to do so.

It was unanimously agreed that the same Committee as last year should be elected for 1922. It will therefore be composed of: Mr. J. Baer, President; Mr. C. Campart, Hon. Secretary; Mr. A. F. Suter, Hon. Treasurer; and Messrs. F. Beyli and A. Secrétan.

All the members of the Sub-Committees, who had expressed themselves willing to continue their work during 1922, were also unanimously re-elected.

It was decided to dissolve the Rhine Commission, as this question has now reached a stage when direct propaganda cannot further it.

The Entertainment Committee is arranging a concert, which will be held in the Steinway Hall, W.1, on Wednesday evening, March 22nd. Invitations will be sent out to all our members and to nearly a thousand additional addresses which have been collected by the Propaganda Committee. All members will be cordially invited to bring their Swiss friends.

The endeavours to obtain another hall for the monthly meetings have proved successful, and the lectures will henceforth take place in the Central Hall, Westminster.

Lectures, discussions and other arrangements of the Group will take place on the following dates: Concert, 22nd March; Lecture, 21st April; Lecture, 26th May; Dinner 13th September; and Lectures on 27th October, 24th November, and 15th December respectively.

Meetings of the Council have been fixed for: 15th March, 26th April, 31st May, 21st June, 20th September, 18th October, 15th November, 13th December, and 17th January, 1923.

An arrangement has been come to between the "Echo

Suisse" and the Secrétariat des Suisses à l'Etranger according to which the latter will co-operate in its management and be financially interested in the enterprise. The "ECHO Suisse" is a most promising monthly and is particularly recommended to the attention of the members of the N.S.H., to whom the annual subscription will be 8 francs. It is an illustrated magazine and has articles written in the three national languages. Copies of it can be seen at the Secretary's office, 28, Red Lion Square, Holborn, W.C.1.

The S.A. des Editions "Sonor" at Geneva are going to publish simultaneously in German and French a book called "Our History," which will be lavishly enriched by 16 coloured illustrations by G. Courvoisier. The price is 10 frs. for members of the N.S.H. Three samples of the illustrations can be seen at the Secretary's office on request.

There was some discussion about the educational movement, "Bibliothèque de la Jeunesse" (Schweizerische Jugendbücherei für Naturschutz), and it was decided that, though the Group could not give financial help, everything would be done to bring the matter to the notice of its members.

The position of the N.S.H. in regard to the question of the "Lex Haeblerlin" and the Referendum shortly to be taken in its connection was raised, and the conclusion was come to that it would be well for the Secretary, Dr. Lang, to make further enquiries in Switzerland about this matter and draw up a report with a view to having a discussion on it.

It was also agreed that the N.S.H. should appoint a Committee to report on the League of Nations Union, and the following members kindly consented to act on such a commission: Messrs. F. Beyli, C. Compant, A. Despond, Miss A. Reutiner, Mr. Sterchi, and Dr. Weibel.

SWISS MERCANTILE SOCIETY.

The second meeting of the specially appointed Commission took place on Friday of last week at the Swiss Legation, with Mr. H. Martin, Councillor of Legation, in the Chair.

The report of the Sub-Committee was discussed, and after going thoroughly into the question of financing the new scheme, which will require an approximate amount of £400, it was unanimously agreed that the next monthly meeting should be declared an Extraordinary Meeting, and that the findings of the Special Commission should be brought before the Members.

Mr. Werner, President of the Swiss Mercantile Society, thanked Mr. H. Martin for the keen interest he has shown and for the valued suggestion he made. The meeting lasted over three hours. A. S.

SWISS INSTITUTE.

The attendance on Friday of last week, when the Rev. Ernest Bury, M.A., delivered his lecture on "Napoleon I," was again very good. The subject was, of course, very attractive, and it was rendered all the more interesting by the lecturer describing Napoleon in a light which was no doubt unfamiliar to many of us. It was apparent, as a matter of fact, that his severe criticism of Napoleon's character came somewhat as a surprise to part of the audience, who had evidently expected to hear all about the greatness of Napoleon's achievements. The lecturer made it clear, however, right from the beginning, that his object was to deal exclusively and without any prejudice whatever with the personal character of Napoleon, but some speakers in the lively discussion that followed, no doubt under the hypnotic influence of the history of the French Emperor's striking military and political successes, had evidently some difficulty in keeping this important fact in mind. The lecturer described Napoleon as being utterly unscrupulous, for which no doubt the influence of his early childhood in Corsica was mainly responsible, through his having been brought up in the spirit of intrigue prevailing there at the time. In the eyes of the lecturer there were certain occurrences in Napoleon's career which tend to show him as having been cruel, though not for the sake of cruelty. He was affectionate to the members of his family, but ruthless towards any of them who dared oppose his will. The ruthlessness with which he waged war all over Europe, to a great extent to satisfy his personal ambitions, was to cost him his throne, for, as the lecturer mentioned had Napoleon put an end to war after the battle of Smolensk, setting up a neutral Poland which would have been friendly to him, he could have created a stable empire and become omnipotent in Europe.

SWISS BANK FOOTBALL CLUB.

LONDON JOINT CITY & MIDLAND 4th XI versus SWISS BANK 1st XI

(in London Banks' Football League, Junior "A" Division).

Play at first was mostly in City Bank's field, with Swiss forwards pressing hard. The game was very fast throughout, and in the first half the visitors (Swiss) would have probably scored had it not been for rough surface of ground near the City's goal. Later the City team seemed to be having the better of the game, but towards the end the Swiss were once more on the offensive. Play resulted in a draw, no goals being scored by either side.

Swiss Bank team: Zuercher; Herzog, Rasch; Bornand, Way, Castle; Tobler, Goubach, Dr. Rufer, Holton, G. Weber.

GRINDLAY'S BANK 1st XI versus SWISS BANK 2nd XI (in London Banks' Football League, Junior "B" Division).

This was the return match on Private Banks' ground at Catford Bridge, which finished by sharing the points. The Swiss captain was lucky in winning the toss and took, therefore, the advantage of the strong wind and the sun. Right at the beginning the referee decided a penalty against Grindlay's for handling the ball in goal area, but same did not materialise. The Swiss forwards, in spite of wind and sun being in their favour, were not smart enough to beat the Grindlay's defence, which was a very sound one. The second half was no less exciting, each team trying very hard to take the lead, which, therefore, made the game very lively. The ball was netted on each side once, but the whistle blew just in time to give off-side and to cancel the point. The game was a most enjoyable one and resulted in a goalless draw.

Swiss Bank team: Floyd; Schwendener, Kronauer; Schranz, Steiner, Zurlinden; Quaife, Gautschi, Kurz, Smith, Picard.

SWISS BANK 3rd XI versus COX & CO. 4th XI.

Cox's had the advantage of the toss and soon got busy, but the Bank's defence was safe. Play was very even for the first half hour. Then a sudden change occurred, Cox's scoring four times in quick succession. After half-time the Bank improved considerably, Howell and Rueff reducing the lead. Cox's got through twice more before the end.

The Bank were very weak at half back, the attempts at passing being very poor. Still, Cox's deserved to win, but not by such a big score.

SWISS MERCANTILE SOCIETY FOOTBALL CLUB.

GERHARD & HEY, LTD., v. S.M.S. 2nd XI.—3—2.

This return match took place last Saturday in ideal football weather. Unfortunately the ground on which this game was played proved to be most unsuitable for football. Although the Swiss did most of the attacking in the first half, only on one occasion were their efforts successful. Combination had to suffer through an excess of eagerness to score displayed by certain forwards, and many good chances were thrown away by "off-side" mistakes. Half-time: 1—1.

After changing over the picture was somewhat reversed. The Mercantile's opponents doing the greater part of the attacking. With a strong determination to win, G. & H.'s XI pressed the visitors' defence at times very hard, with the result that the Swiss lost the match by the odd goal in five.

CITY SWISS CLUB.

Messieurs les membres sont informés que la prochaine assemblée mensuelle aura lieu le

Mardi 7 Mars

au restaurant Gatti, et sera précédée d'un souper familial à 6 heures 30 (sh. 5/6 par couvert).

Cet avis, en raison des décisions prises lors de la dernière assemblée remplace les circulaires de convocation, et tous ceux désirant participer à cette réunion sont invités à s'annoncer en temps utile au Trésorier, M. G. Dimier, 46, Cannon Street, E.C.4 (Téléphone: Central 1321).

Ordre du Jour.

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|----------------|-------------|
| Procès-verbal. | Démissions. |
| Admissions. | Divers. |

CINDERELLA DANCE, Samedi, Mars 25.