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# UNION HELVETIA. ANNUAL BANQUET AND BALL.

Festivities in the Swiss Colony are following each other in quick succession; only a few weeks ago we witnessed the splendid gathering of the Swiss Choral Society and within less than a fortnight the brilliant festival of the City Swiss Club took place at the May Fair Hotel.

The Union Helvetia invited their members, guests and friends to the Annual Banquet and Ball at their headquarters, 1, Gerrard Place, W.1, on Monday, December 1st.

A very numerous company sat down to a most sumptuous dinner, and the spontaneous praise bestowed on the stewards, Mr. and Mrs. Rossier, for their culinary achievements, was well merited.

The company present included, apart from the members and many friends of the Society and their ladies, Monsieur C. R. Paravicini, the Swiss Minister, who took the Chair for the evening; The Rev. R. Hoffmann-de Visme; Pastor C. Th. Hahn and Mrs. Hahn; *Fonds de Secours Mutuels*: Mr. and Mrs. C. Campart; *Swiss Benevolent Society*: Mr. and Mrs. A. Dupraz; *City Swiss Club*: Mr. and Mrs. Ch. Chapuis; *Swiss Mercantile Society*: Mr. and Mrs. Krucker; *Swiss Club "Schweizerbund"*: Messrs. J. Christen and H. Humbel; *Unione Ticinese*: Messrs. E. Binchi and R. Orelli; *Nouvelle Société Helvétique*: Mr. and Mrs. W. Beckmann; *Swiss Y.M.C.A.*: Mr. J. Scheuermeier; *Swiss Choral Society*: Mr. and Mrs. F. Conrad; *Swiss Rifle Association*: Messrs. H. Senn and P. Hilliker; *Swiss Orchestral Society*: Mr. and Mrs. W. Wagner; *Swiss Observer*: Mr. and Mrs. A. Stauffer; *Pulteney Institute*: Mr. and Mrs. W. Lenégre; *Swiss Gymnastic Society*: Mr. Wallis.

The banquet hall brought back to your reporter many memories; it was here that, over twelve years ago, he had the pleasure of presiding over one of the Swiss societies which then had their headquarters at 1, Gerrard Place, and it was there also, where he said valed to his bachelor days, when a gathering of old friends tried to "cheer him up" a few days before he made the plunge into the great unknown.

Many things have happened since, both the society as well as your humble reporter have encountered troublesome days and worrisome weeks, but it is very gratifying to notice that by now we have both weathered the storm, none the worse for its tribulations, and that we are both still very much alive and kicking.

Can you wonder, therefore, dear reader, that I felt at home amongst our friends from the Union Helvetia?—but these feelings of being chez soi were by no means confined to me alone, everybody shared this feeling; everyone was happy and carefree, which made this gathering just the success it proved to be.

After the customary toasts to the King and La Patrie, by Monsieur C. R. Paravicini, the Swiss Minister, Mr. A. Indermaur, President of the Territorial Administration England, rose and addressed the company as follows:

Monsieur le Ministre, Ladies & Gentlemen,

The ominous clouds which a short while ago had gathered over No. 1, Gerrard Place, having, fortunately, dispersed without serious ill-effect, we regard the presence in our midst to-night of the head of our London Swiss Colony as a welcome ray of sunshine on our darkened horizon and a happy augury for brighter days to come. May I be permitted to extend to you, Monsieur le Ministre, in my own name as well as on behalf of the Territorial Administration of the Union Helvetia, a particularly hearty welcome, coupled with the expression of our sincere gratitude for the never failing courtesy and support our Society receives at your hands.

You will be interested to learn that, through the help of the Board of Education, and especially through our friend, Mr. Walter Lenégre, Head of the Pulteney Institute L.C.C. School, who is present here this evening, we have been able to re-organize our School. The L.C.C. is providing teachers, and besides giving English lessons to our students, we give also French lessons three afternoons during the week to British boys, on the termination of which, we exchange them with Switzerland. With this arrangement, we are able to educate British boys, and also help our Swiss compatriots. We have also instituted new courses for hotel accountancy which are given by a chartered accountant.

Our Office of Placement has suffered immensely from the trade depression, which the following figures plainly show:—In 1929, we placed 2,906 people whereas this year we have only been able to place 1,802. It must be mentioned here also of the opening of a new Labour Exchange for Hotel Employees which has an Advisory Committee of all the existing societies in the hotel industry and we are glad to say that we have also been invited to join this Committee. Owing to the bad times we are passing through remuneration for our people has reached an alarmingly low level,

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which reminds me of the old slogan: Pas d'argent, pas de Suisses.

In 1929, we paid out £275 in Sick Relief and £55 in death benefit. This year, up to the present, we have paid out £199 in Sick Relief and £35 in death benefit.

In conclusion I would make an earnest appeal to all my countrymen in Great Britain who are in one way or another connected with the hotel and catering trades, to rally round our flag, for the trend of things in general makes it daily more apparent that we Swiss on foreign soil should not only take closer contact with one another, but also support one another in our profession or calling, whatever it may be.

We owe this unity to the country of our birth, whose glorious traditions it is our duty to uphold. Is there any better walk of life for us Swiss abroad than the hotel industry to furnish striking evidence of the meaning and value of the name of Swiss? Let us live up to what is rightly expected of us and in doing so we shall repay, in a measure, the good-will which Mr. Paravicini, our esteemed Minister, bestows on our Union.

This speech was heartily cheered by the whole company.

Mr. J. Sermier, President of the London section then greeted the guests by saying how much the Union Helvetia appreciated not only the presence of the Minister, but also of so many representatives of sister societies and friends, pointing out that relations amongst the various Swiss institutions have never been more cordial than at present and expressed the wish that it might remain so in the future. In finishing his oration he remarked that the programme contained a slight error, as Mr. H. Senn would propose the toast to the Ladies.

Whereupon Mr. Senn exalted the ladies by saying that it is difficult indeed to coin new expressions of admiration to suit the progress made by the ladies in the present century. They have, he continued, plunged into every sphere of human activity. They excel in all kind of sports and have beaten us in most games including that of spending money, but they have not yet beaten us in the art of making it. They have been admitted to the typist's stool and the window cleaner's ladder, to the saddle of the motorcycle and the benches of the House of Commons, to the joystick of the aeroplane and the trigger of the rifle.

This toast was drunk with much gusto by all the members of the masculine sex.

At this interval I noticed quite an animated conversation at the top table, where programmes were hurriedly inspected and my curiosity almost reached its culminating point, when Monsieur C. R. Paravicini, Swiss Minister, rose amongst general applause. He started his extempore oration by saying, that Mr. Sermier alluded to an omission on the programme which, however, seemed not to be the only one, as, after very careful perusal of the toast list, he found that no one was delegated to respond to the toast "The Union Helvetia" by Mr. Indermaur, and he would, therefore, take upon himself the pleasant duty to respond to this toast. He expressed to the committee and members of the Union Helvetia his appreciation for having invited him to preside over this representative gathering. "We are all aware," he said, "of the never failing support the U. H. gives to everything which is worthy of our good Swiss name."

The Minister then gave a witty account of how cordially and hospitably he was received on arriving that night, and referred to the President's speech in which he quoted the often heard saying: "Pas d'argent, pas des Suisses," a quotation which was no great recommendation to his country now, it struck him that a more appropriate saying in these times would be: "Beaucoup des Suisses, mais pas d'argent." The speaker also referred to another of Napoleon's classical phrases, namely: "Pour bien faire, il faut bien manger," and in terminating his oration, he said, we have dined well and I will now finish your ordeal by presenting the medals to the veterans of this Society for 25 years' faithful membership. Of the seven recipients, whose names were read out by Monsieur Paravicini, only one, namely Mr. Enrico Ronzi answered the "roll call" and amongst much hilarity the speaker declared, when decorating him with the



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much coveted gold medal, that he had saved if not the honour of the other six, at least the situation, and that he could now sit down with a quiet conscience. At that moment a telegram arrived from one of the chosen ones (Mr. Oscar Wyss) excusing his absence and Mr. J. Egloff also notified his being unable to be present, but what about the other four veterans, does not even glittering gold tempt them?

The last toast on the programme was the response to the toast to the Ladies and Mr. A. Dupraz, the popular President of the Swiss Benevolent Society was entrusted with it, and how successfully he accomplished his task can be judged by our readers for whose benefit we print this witty and clever speech in extenso:

You have all heard the story of the stranger who stopped a man in Cambridge Circus to ask where No. 1, Gerrard Place was, and found that he had approached a hopeless stutterer. After finally obtaining the information required, he had gone a few steps on his way when he was called back and asked "How is it that out of 7,000,000 people in London you should pick out poor stuttering me?"

Well, how is it that out of some 20 representatives, who can express their feelings better than I, you should again pick out poor shy and blushing me? Anyhow, it's your Committee's fault. I warned them already last year, so don't blame me!

I know that I have the unanimous support of your guests when I say that we love coming to this annual function of yours where we feel so much at home. All our Swiss societies entertain the friendliest relations with the Union Helvetia and we fully appreciate the indispensable part which you play in the life of our Swiss Colony.

As President of the Swiss Benevolent Society, I am, perhaps, better placed than most of us to see the good your organisation does socially and philanthropically. We have had a tangible proof of this quite recently when you voted the sum of £100 in favour of our Fonds Dimier for a home for aged Swiss. Your society is not a wealthy one and we fully realise the most generous effort you have made.

I am very glad, therefore, of this opportunity to thank you from the bottom of my heart for your great kindness and the interest you have always shown towards our less fortunate countrymen.

I am also asked to reply to the toast to the Ladies, and though this is a most agreeable task, it puts on my shoulders a very heavy responsibility. You see, not being a lady, with the best will in the world, I cannot feel exactly as they do.

I felt rather happy at the end of Mr. Sermier's speech as I really thought that he had entirely forgotten the Ladies, which would have given me a fine opportunity for this particular speech. As Mr. Senn has taken up this toast, this chance is missed.

Speaking as a lady I must say that I do not find his remarks quite complimentary enough and we ladies do think that we deserve more than that. We are aware, however, that we could not have taken too seriously whatever he might have said, as we know what males are, especially members of the Union Helvetia, and we have experienced that the beautiful things they say on the spur of the moment, when carried away by their enthusiasm, are not always the things they say or do 24 hours later. Still, we like to hear you men in your flattering moments, it is sweet music to our ears, and that is why we ladies came to-night. We have left behind our domestic worries—except the main one who brought us here with him, and at considerable expense and personal inconvenience, not to say torture, we have had our hair waved, our cheeks made softer and our lips redder all for your benefit, and some of us have even gone to the trouble of having our eyebrows plucked to give our faces that slightly surprised look which you men like so much. This is our contribution to the success of the evening and we will try, young and old members of the Union Helvetia, to make you forget for once your long days of hard work and exhausting labour, ahem! and to enjoy to the full this golden opportunity.

We, your Guests, and we, Ladies, stand to thank you members of the Union Helvetia for your very kind hospitality to-night, and to drink to the health, happiness and prosperity of your beloved society.

In the meantime the clock pointed to 11.30 p.m. and the ladies, who showed so much forbearance with all the speakers, were clamouring for the dancing to begin; the hall was soon cleared and an orchestra suddenly appeared seemingly from nowhere and before one was aware, one was waltzing around with one of those sweet things with the slightly surprised look.

It looked as if the ladies were out to make up for lost time, and the band seemed to agree with the conspirators, as no quarter was given, the parole being, to dance or not to dance. Here and there a piercing joddl nearly brought the ceiling down, and when as the midnight hour struck,

wine bottles seemed to vanish with alarming swiftness, there was no remonstrance, only one sad long look was exchanged with the raider who carried his prey to safety. O tempi passati.

Shortly before this most enjoyable and homely evening came to an end, plates of very hot onion soup were handed around, and one lady remarked to me that she liked the gravy but that she could not get on with the "trimmings." After the soup there was no more dancing, and it was, perhaps, better so, but for some time to come participants of this festival will like to think of these all too short happy hours spent with their friends of the Union Helvetia. Sr.

Apart from those already mentioned the following were present:

Mr. Bartholdi; Mr. Bridges and party; Mr. Bisinger; Mr. Bardet; Mr. Berney; Mr. Buchi and party; Mr. Bhend; Mr. Block; Mr. Bruschweiler and party; Mr. Boog; Mr. Crausaz; Mrs. Delfosse; Mrs. Dale; Mr. Delaloye; Mr. Filliez and party; Mr. Finger; Mr. Glauser; Mr. Indermaur; Mr. Juriens; Mr. Kummer; Mrs. Linder; Mr. Marfurt; Mr. Mermond; Mr. Meier; Mr. Michlig; Mr. Martin; Mr. Nanzer; Miss Naef; Mr. Oggier; Mr. Oberhansli; Mr. Pierre; Mr. Ronzi and party; Mr. Rey and party; Mr. Rapp and party; Mr. Stutz and party; Mr. Staines and party; Mrs. Scharer; Mr. Strubin; Mr. and Miss Sermier; Mrs. Vaisse; Mr. Winkelmann and party; Mr. Wetter and party; Mr. Wyss and Mr. Wulschleger.

#### CITY SWISS CLUB.

##### NEW YEAR'S EVE PARTY.

Une table sera réservée pour les membres du City Swiss Club et leurs amis au Restaurant Pagani le soir de la veille de l'an. Prix du souper et danse £1 1s. 0d.

Les places étant limitées, on prie les intéressés de s'inscrire jusqu'au 20 décembre au plus tard auprès du Président, M. Charles Chapuis, qui s'occupe personnellement des arrangements. (Téléphone: Clerkenwell 7888).

LE SECRÉTAIRE.

#### SWISS MERCANTILE SOCIETY.

In connection with the scholastic programme the following lectures were given by the students during last week:—

Mr. A. Isotta, Lugano: "Niccolò Macchiavelli and Marlowe's 'Jew of Malta.'" Mr. E. Hug, Soleure: "Rheims and its Neighbourhood." Mr. W. Luterbacher, Soleure: "Is War Inevitable?" Mr. A. Gandon, St. Imier: "Unemployment." Mr. A. Schmuëcke, St. Gallen: "Sport concerning Men and Women." Mr. M. Breuninger, Aarau: "Ambition and Strength of Mind." Miss G. Pfeiffer, Vevey: "The Castle of Champient." Miss V. Steger, Lichtensteig: "The Second Paris." Mr. F. Laedermann, Geneva: "Pevensey Castle." Mr. A. Kuenzli, Neuchâtel: "The last Days of the Rhineland Occupation." Miss V. Steger, Lichtensteig: "The Talking Films." Messrs. Kuenzli, Keller and the Misses Gafaffier and Honegger on "Influence of Geography on Character."

The debating classes dealt with the following subject:—

"Is War Inevitable?" Proposer: Mr. A. Kilcher, Opposer: Dr. M. Brunner.

A full house assembled to hear Mr. Victor Evans speak on "Peace Making." Mr. Evans, who is in personal touch with the League of Nations, stated that the main difficulty in establishing World Peace is due to the difference of opinion in the French and Anglo-Saxon "Schools," and a certain lack of confidence in making a decision to disarm generally. The speaker, who is a lawyer, enlightened us on the problems of International law. He concluded his lecture by saying that the first steps to universal peace had been taken, and no doubt, as time goes on, greater progress in the common cause would be the result of the League's efforts.

After the lecture, a number of students displayed their musical talent, and, a young English lady, Miss Danes, delighted her audience with English songs.

The students were taken to the Wallace Collection on Saturday, December 6th.

#### SWISS CHORAL SOCIETY.

The members of the Choir will sit together at a little Blut- and Leberwurst Supper at the Swiss Hotel, 53, Old Compton Street, W.1, on Thursday next, 18th December, at 8 o'clock sharp. Price 2/6.

Any contributing member who wishes to join the Active Members in this little "Herrenabend" are heartily welcome, and should advise Mr. F. Conrad, 8, Paternoster Row, E.C.4, as soon as possible, of their intention to attend the supper.

THE COMMITTEE.

#### Esthétique.

Pas mal votre tableau! Mais pourquoi votre soleil n'éclaire-t-il pas davantage?

Parce que mon soleil est un camembert...

#### LES SUISSES A L'ETRANGER.

Le nombre d'étrangers vivant en Suisse est très élevé, il dépasse le 10% des 4,000,000 d'habitants que compte ce pays. D'autre part le nombre des Suisses établis à l'étranger est également important. Il y en a environ 350,000 inscrits auprès des consulats de Suisse. Plus des deux tiers de ceux-ci—exactement 253,000—vivent en Europe, dont plus de la moitié en France (144,000). L'Allemagne donne asile à 50,000 Suisses, l'Angleterre à 18,000, l'Italie à 1,000, la Belgique à 5,700, l'Autriche à 4,900, l'Espagne à 3,200. La Russie, la Roumanie et la Hollande abritent chacune plus de mille ressortissants helvétiques; enfin l'Albanie vient en fin de liste (4 Suisses seulement résident à demeure dans ce pays). Des pays d'outre-mer, ce sont les deux Amériques qui comptent le plus de Suisses, avec 83,000, dont 49,000 aux Etats Unis, 15,000 en Argentine, 8,000 au Canada et 4,000 au Brésil. Le nombre des Suisses établis en Afrique est évalué à 7,000 dont 3,000 en Algérie et presque 2,000 au Maroc français. Les Suisses d'Asie sont au nombre de 2,400 dont 1/3 établis aux Indes Néerlandaises. Enfin l'Australie donne asile à 1,400 citoyens helvétiques.

#### RECITAL BY

##### MILLICENT AND RUDOLPH DOLMETSCH.

That brilliant harpsichordist, Mr. Rudolph Dolmetsch, gave a recital on Saturday, Nov. 29th, at the Rudolf Steiner Hall. His wife played the viola da gamba, using an old instrument, the only one, we are informed, which Carlo Bergonzi, famous for his violins, is known to have owned. The *Sunday Times* writes about this concert as follows:

At the Rudolf Steiner Hall, old music for harpsichord and viola da gamba was played with sensitive definition and keen appreciation of styles by Millicent and Rudolph Dolmetsch.

Bach's Sonata, No. 2 in D, for the two instruments, assured us that Mr. and Mrs. Dolmetsch were singularly happy in thinking alike about the subject in hand. The performance brought out the structural characteristics upon a perception of which half one's enjoyment of Bach's music must depend. The tone of the viola, though necessarily thin, was remarkably firm and true.

When the two were next associated, in the delightful Suite, in A. major, by De Caix d'Hervelois, it was perceived that they instinctively adopted a different interpretative standpoint—fuller of sheer grace, more yielding.

Between, Mr. Dolmetsch had played the fine Purcell Suite, for harpsichord, in G minor, with that feeling for form and basic rhythm that he has taught us to expect from him. But was it altogether imagination that both here and in a Scarlatti sonata he was inclined to make the actual barring a shade elastic?

#### THE EDITOR'S POST-BAG.

The Editor is not responsible for the opinions expressed by Correspondents and cannot publish anonymous articles, unless accompanied by the writer's name and address, as evidence of good faith.

To the Editor of the *Swiss Observer*.

Dear Sir,—If you think the following lines worth printing, please find them a little corner in your paper.

The *Swiss Observer* is a very good friend to us, as it must be to many.

For some reason it's always sent to my husband's office and I have to search his pockets for it. Often I get accused of being "nosey," but since one has to wait a whole week for it a little impatience surely is excusable. If I don't get it on Saturday my temper is anything but pleasant over the week-end, therefore I am glad to say it appears more regularly in the house.

We read every word of it and it makes us thoroughly homesick. So we start planning: a nice little house on one of the lovely lakes, where the mountains look down on us, and in winter a little holiday at Locarno or Lugano and so on.

We have it all nicely fixed when the question of assets has to be gone into and all ends in smoke. We know that all the planning is useless for quite some time to come but the moment the next number of the "Observer" appears, we start it all over again and thoroughly enjoy it. The little Swiss paper is a good friend indeed: it never fails to bring visions of our lovely country, fresh hopes and new plans.

The "Home News" column is of very special interest and "Kyburg" is right. The little bits of news can be read in other papers, but in the *Swiss Observer* they appear like a little intimate gossip. On November 29th there was a note of personal interest; on the site of our old home, where we passed our earliest years, a dance hall will be erected. It affected me strangely; a heart-ache, memories and a tear for the years gone by. We have to thank the founder for creating a very good little pal—the *Swiss Observer*. N.L.

To the Editor of the *Swiss Observer*.

Sir,—Ament the news published in your last issue under Home News—"Increase of Duties"—the following, relating to Aluminium, may be of interest to your readers:—