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SWISS MERCANTILE SOCIETY. EDUCATION DEPARTMENT.

The debating classes dealt with the following subject:—

Debates I: "Do you prefer the Cinema to the Theatre?" Proposer, Mr. E. Witschard. Opposer: Dr. H. Brunner.

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

C. Schaer, Langenthal: "The Polish Corridor." Mr. F. Dick, Brittnau: "Great Britain"; Mr. H. Merz, Bern: "Are strikes justifiable?" Miss A. Gaudenz, Engadine: "Is the World growing better?"; Mr. H. Furer, Lüsslinger: "Observations on Fascism in Italy"; Mr. H. Kubly, Zurich: "Are strikes justifiable?"; Mr. H. Frey, Zurich: "Poetry and Trading Class"; Miss M. Monnard, Lausanne: "Rome"; Mr. H. Keller, Basle: "Music as a pastime."

On Friday evening, the 30th January, Mr. John Cleve addressed the students of the S.M.S. on "Citizenship." Mr. Cleve is a member of the Willesden Council, a great social worker. He was thus able to speak with authority on a vitally interesting subject. His enthusiasm and practical idealism were much appreciated and he received an ovation at the conclusion of his speech. Mrs. Pinard was in the chair. Saturday morning, the 31st January, the students met at the S.M.S. and were conducted by Mrs. Pinard on a visit to the British Museum which, among other things, is showing an extremely interesting exhibition of Persian Art. This is a supplementary exhibition to the one now on at Burlington House.

The Assyrian and Egyptian Monuments were also visited and a tour was made through the Greek Galleries of reconstructed temples including the famous Elgin Marbles.

SWISS CHORAL SOCIETY.

Not where princes, dukes and millionaires meet, but at the Union Helvetia Club, 1 Gerard Place, W., the above Society held their Social Evening with Tombola, and it was a most enjoyable and truly democratic affair. The Choral Society somehow seems to have the happy knack of arranging their social functions in such a way, as to make everybody feel at home right from the beginning.

The choir, under the very able conductorship of Mr. Seymour, rendered various Swiss songs with their usual efficiency, and the almost riotous applause which greeted each item was proof enough how much the visitors appreciated their efforts.

Mr. Conrad, the sympathetic President of the S.C.S. addressed the company, which numbered well over 200 persons with a few words of greetings, introducing at the same time a little dancer, Miss Daphne de Witt, who gave us some exquisite dancing. A beautiful bunch of flowers, presented by the President together with an accolade, were well merited rewards for her remarkable performance.

A very lively dance band (I am told there were two, but honestly I saw only one, and I stuck to the same vintage the whole evening) brought all and sundry on the floor, the happy chatter of the youngest and the oldest was proof enough how much everyone was enjoying themselves. The "Yoddlings" without which no function of the Swiss Choral Society is complete, somehow did not "come off"; no doubt due to the bad cigars in which some of the visitors indulged and the objectionable pipe smokers (among which your reporter is to be included) will bear the blame for depriving the "well-behaved" of a real treat.

The result of the Tombola was announced well after midnight and I hear that arrangements have been made to let those who had departed earlier and who are amongst the lucky ones know. I was unfortunately not able to partake of the customary plate of onion soup which was served shortly before the gathering broke up, but I am told that it was much enjoyed, and no doubt greatly assisted those who came "single" to face a second concert on arriving home early in the morning.

The committee of the Swiss Choral Society and the stewards of the Union Helvetia Club, Mr. and Mrs. Rossier, deserve the thanks of all those who had the pleasure of spending a few happy hours amongst the "nightingales" of the colony.

On leaving those hospitable dwellings I remembered a little poem which one of my musical friends once sent to me, it would no doubt be a suitable motto for the Swiss Choral Society, here it is:

Sei adagio in Genüssen,
Sei allegro in Entschlüssen,
Wer forte seine Pflichten übt
Und piano sein Vergnügen liebt,
Der spielt in schönster Harmonie
Des Lebens schwerste Symphonie.
ST.

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BOY SCOUT MOVEMENT.

On Friday last the Commissioners of the British Boy Scouts Association held their annual dinner at the Russel Hotel. There were present about 250 Commissioners and also representatives of the Girl Guides Association. Lord Hampton the President, was in the Chair. Unfortunately the Chief Scout, Lord Baden-Powell is at present on a tour in the East.

The Swiss Minister in replying to the toast for the guests, gave a short account on the history of the Boy Scout Movement in Switzerland. He began by saying that he was already in London when the originator of this great idea was still defending Mafeking against the Boers, and he humorously alluded to the night of the 17th May, 1900, when he was in bed with influenza at his flat in Park Lane, and could not sleep for the tremendous noise about the relief of the gallant fortress. He said that "maffeking" ever since means making a tremendous noise in the streets, a thing which the Boy Scouts amply practice for instance when they cheer their Chief, who for the defence of Mafeking, the creation of the Boy Scout, and the creation of a new word in the English language will go down to posterity.

Speaking of the Boy Scout Movement in Switzerland, the Swiss Minister ended up by saying that hospitality is one of the virtues of the Scout, and that nowhere in the life of humanity hospitality is offered and accepted in a kindlier and more generous spirit, and nowhere hosts and guests are happier than amongst Boy Scouts and their leaders.

He assured the Commissioners that the British Rovers will be received next Summer at Kandersteg in that very spirit by the Swiss people.

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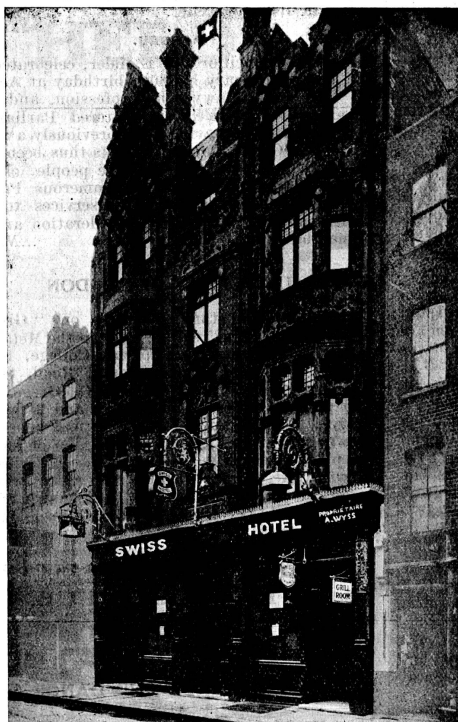
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