# News from the colony

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## SWISS CHORAL SOCIETY.

Have we not all looked forward to the lovely month of May, does not this month impart glad tidings of the departure of a dreary winter?

Yes golden spring—a time with all its glory, sunshine, and new born hope is knocking at the door, the trees have put on their bridal attire, crocuses and anemones are in full bloom, the little birds are singing brightly and all the London policemen have discarded their winter coats.

But alas, one could detect precious little of spring's beginning that 1st day of May, and for many of us, who longed for a ray of glittering sunshine, the day started as a sad disappointment. Down came the rain, it poured and poured, and when one was reflecting that this hospitable land is often called "God's own country" one begins to doubt whether we are justified in calling it thus.

Yet there was a silverlining in the sky, when I opened my eyes on that memorable morning I had presentiment that this day which started in such a dreary way, would have a great treat in store, and would end a day well worth remembering, and so it happened, if ever a dream came true, this one did, and what is more it exceeded even the highest expectations.

It was the day when the Swiss Choral Society invited their patrons and friends to hear their heralding in of the spring,they did it with songs and music, surely spring celebrated its entry at Conway Hall in its fullest glory. The Hall was packed to its utmost capacity, I hear that over 350 people were present, a splendid response of the colony to the appeal which was made through our columns and a striking proof of the popularity this Society, which is by the way, one of the youngest in the community, enjoys everywhere.

A most enjoyable programme had been arranged for this, their annual concert, and I am glad to state that the conductor of the choir, Mr. E. A. Seymour, F.R.O.C. had brought his forces up to a high standard.

Phrasing, attack and intonation were excellent and gave proof of careful training. Not being quite in their stride in the first two items of the programme the Choir improved in the later renderings, and they gave their best in "Galgenlied" and "Gott schütze die Reben," through the latter might have been interpreted with more fervour , as it never rose to a climax. The diction was excellent throughout, and Mr. Seymour must be congratulated on the result of his coaching. It is to be regretted that the second basses (I counted five) are numerically weak and therefore an even balance is not maintained in the ensemble, which of course, is no reflection on the conductor or the second basses individually.

Very pleasing were the contributions of the soloists. If Miss Eva Cattaneo's otherwise charming soprano voice was not up to the demands of the great Aria from "Der Freischütz," the Adagio (Leise, leise) movement of which she sang like an Andantino, she did full justice to her later items and had to acknowledge the enthusiastic applause of the audience by a charming rendering of Rossini's "La Danza" which she sang as an encore.

By the choice of her piano solos Miss Olga Carmine, A.R.A.M., showed that she is a very serious artiste. Brahms, Debussy, Chavarri, Volonnino and Chopin were the composers she interpreted.—If memory serves she curtailed the Brahms Cappriccio, but throughout her rendering was most musicianly, she avoided all sentimentality in Chopin's Nocturne, and imparted on all her pieces a touch of individuality rarely found amongst the hosts of pianists.

The well deserved applaused of the audience induced Miss Carmine to play Brahms' Waltz in A Flat as an encore. Both these artiste's were presented with beautiful bouquets.

Mr. Conrad is the fortunate possessor of a pure, lyrical tenor voice of a rare quality. Although he did not exhaust the dramatic possibilities in Schuberts "Das Meer," he was at his best in the same composer's "Ständchen," and Hildachs "Der Lenz," and responded to the persistent applause of the enthusiastic audience by singing as an encore: "I hear you calling me."

The programme ended with the singing of our National Anthem by the choir.

Amongst the numerous audience was the Swiss Minister, Monsieur C. R. Paravicini, Monsieur de Sonnenberg, Councillor of Legation, Monsieur de Bourg, 1st Secretary of Legation, Monsieur Hilfiker, Chancellor of the Legation, the Presidents of the City Swiss Club, Swiss Mercantile Society Ltd., Swiss Institute Orchestral Society, Union Helvetia, Swiss Club (Schweizerbund) and many other well-known personalities in the Swiss Colony.

The Swiss Choral Society deserves the thanks of all those who attended this most enjoyable evening, they have given us unforgettable pleasure and they may rightly register this day as a red letter day in the Annals of their Society.

## NEWS FROM THE COLONY.

**M. PASCHOUD**

President & Chairman

of the Council of the

**Swiss Mercantile Society Ltd**

On the occasion of the last meeting of the Swiss Mercantile Society and the first one of the Swiss Mercantile Society Ltd., M. M. Paschoud, whose photograph we have much pleasure in reproducing herewith, has been elected President and Chairman of the Council of the Swiss Mercantile Society Ltd.

M. Paschoud has occupied the Presidential chair as far back as 1913/1914 after having been for some time a member of the committee. In 1928 he was elected Chairman of the Education Committee and in 1929 President of the Society combining the two offices. In 1930 he relinquished the office of Chairman of the Education Committee but kept on the Presidency.

The newly elected President originates from Lutry (Vaud) and is the brother of M. Maurice Paschoud, Conseiller d'Etât and former rector of the University of Lausanne.

## CITY SWISS CLUB

**May 5th, 1931.**

I think the May Meeting is in some ways the most interesting of the year, for it is at this meeting that we see the new President at work for the first time and it is always amusing for an onlooker to compare the different methods. Somehow I think that this year the-putters-of-would-be-awkward-questions will have to watch their step and be careful. We shall see.

Among the guests was Mr. M. E. Du Bois, who was elected a member of the Club as long ago as 1887.

Fifty members and guests present. One admission. No resignations. The summer meetings. Business finished 9.10.

After the meeting had been closed, Mr. Conrad, the sympathetic President of the Swiss Choral Society, accompanied by Mr. Golay on the piano, kindly sang several songs.

The Committee wishes me to draw the attention of members to the fact that the next meeting will be held on Tuesday, June 2nd, at the Brent Bridge Hotel, Hendon, and hopes that there will be a good attendance. Let us hope for fine weather.

*ck.*

## S.M.S. STUDENTS OUTING.

A most successful excursion was made by students of the S.M.S. College on Saturday, the 2nd May, to the well-known caves of Chislehurst, Kent. A party, numbering over 85 strong and under the leadership of Mr. Thompson entrained by the 10.36 from Charing X. Arriving shortly after 11 o'clock, the Hotel Manager of the Bickley Hotel met the party and after the usual preliminaries, the caves were entered and the guides unfolded a wonderful story of the historical facts as they conducted the visitors through the winding passages 90 feet below the surface of the ground. The 50 foot Well Druids' Altar and a fossil of prehistoric interest were subjects of intense curiosity. Light lunch was then provided at the Hotel to the accompaniment of music provided by Mr. Weidmann on his Harmonika and on the Hotel piano by other students. An impromptu dance followed. At 1.30 p.m. a walk up the hilly road brought the party to Campden House, the residence of the late Empress Eugenie, after which the memorial of Napoleon was seen. Continuing the party wended its way towards Pett's Wood which, at this time of the year, presents a beautifully fresh appearance. At the instigation of Mr. A. Scherrer, flat races were then run, the ladies coming on first with Miss Schmidt as the winner in the finalists. The men did well too and Mr. Michaud put up a remarkable performance. Several falls occurred but beyond soiled clothes and one or two dirty faces, nothing happened of a serious nature. The winner of the men's finals was Mr. Mueller. An hour after a cricket match proved a great diversion and finally, the party made its way back to the station in time for the 4.56 back to London. On the whole the day proved a great success and the weather was most delightful throughout the day—truly a wonder in the fickle climate.

## CK's CORNER.

The other day I came across a most entertaining book or at any rate a book which eventually proved to be intensely amusing. Written by an American, this book is called "the adventures of archie and mehitabel" and purports to be the work of Archie. Now archie is a cockroach and is the transmigratee, or whatever the correct term should be, of a poet addicated to blank verse. In other words during a previous existence archie had been a poet. Mehitabel is a cat, in more senses than one, and in a previous existence she is said to have been Cleopatra. The book is supposed to have been written by archie on a typewriter. It is partly in blank verse and partly in rhyme and there is no punctuation nor are there any capitals. At first sight this would appear to be an imitation of our old friend James Joyce and other modernists but in the introduction we are introduced to archie laboriously endeavouring to write his adventures by jumping from key to key, and as the poor dear can only manage one key at a time, he is, of course, unable to work the shift key in order to make use of capitals. I never quite discovered how he succeeded in working the paper release, but this is a minor matter and one must not be too critical. I must confess to a feeling of sympathy with archie. I know not if I have ever been a cockroach in a previous existence but I do sympathise with him after spending an hour or so trying to tap out on my own machine an article for the Swiss Observer with one finger.

It is a pleasure to turn to such nonsense after reading Bruno Weil's book on the "Affaire." I fail to see where the interest lies in raking up a business which does no credit to anyone, and which is still recent enough to reopen old wounds which had much better be left alone.

However, not content with a book and a play we now have a film. I went to see the film and, in my opinion, the producers must be given the credit of having handled a difficult subject in a delicate manner. No liberties have been taken with the story and there is an absence of "sob stuff" which is pleasing. The film naturally centres round the principal character, and I suppose it would be practically impossible to bring out in a film the fact that the "affaire" soon became a conflict of abstract principles, racial and political. Perhaps it is better thus. The dramatic interest is well sustained, but, unfortunately there are numerous technical errors. The characters do not always seem to be very happy when manipulating their swords. Officers are not as a rule employed in carrying messages and in the final scene of the "prise d'armes" there were several faults which might easily have been avoided. However, I suppose it is very much easier to criticise than to create.

Nevertheless, I still maintain that it would have been wiser to have left the subject alone, but this is a matter of taste.

Weil's book does not throw any new light on the subject and unless I have misread the last chapter the motive of the book is a little piece of special pleading intended to explain away certain court-martials which were held after the war.

Moreover, I do not suppose that a more careful study has ever been written or could be written than Joseph Reinach's book which appeared just before the war.

Those of us who are old enough to do so can still remember the extraordinary excitement which arose. Although I was very young at the time, I remember taking a great interest and making a collection, which I still possess, of picture post-cards dealing with the "Affaire."

If I remember right, I believe I was 'anti' chiefly I suppose because nearly everyone in this country was 'pro' and even in those days, the spirit of contradiction was strong within me.

To turn to other matters, I am still hoping to receive solutions to the devinette which I propounded in my last article. I am surprised that no one tried to win the prize which awaits the successful competitor. Surely there must be one among all the intellectual readers of the S.O. who can solve this simple little problem, It is really not very difficult and I say this because I invented it myself. Now come along, un peu de courage, s'il vous plait. In case some of you have mislaid your copy of the S. O. I will repeat the devinette.

Mon premier est une partie du corps. Mon second ne convient guère à une Sainte. Mais mon tout est très convenable pour un Saint. Perhaps some of you thought this was merely a joke on the part of ck, but ck, never makes jokes.

## SWISS RIFLE ASSOCIATION.

The Swiss Rifle Association has resumed shooting practice at the Hendon Range which will be open to members and friends every Saturday and Sunday afternoon.

The Open Shooting Contests arranged in connection with the "Swiss Sports" will be decided during the ensuing three week-ends; prizes are offered for the best performances on both the 100 yards Automatic and the 300 metres Field targets.

Eery Swiss of Military age is entitled to take part.