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ROULEZ TAMBOURS...

Who, amongst our compatriots, does not know that fiery and inspiring song of our French speaking compatriots, which has, long ago become the common property of our Nation. This patriotic song is celebrating its 75th birthday anniversary, and it is well worth remembering, when, and under what circumstances this martial tune first saw the light of day.

"Roulez Tambours".... originated during the Neuchâtel dispute in 1856-57, which not only created a great stir in Switzerland, but throughout Europe. — In contrast to the other 21 cantons, which constituted the Swiss Confederation, and which were without exception of a purely republic character, the canton of Neuchâtel, which entered the Confederation in 1815, was still a principality under foreign jurisdiction. The King of Prussia was in fact called amongst his other titles, Prince of Neuchâtel and Count of Vallangin. When a hundred years ago the regeneration movement swept away all reactionary governments in most of the cantons, the republicans in the canton of Neuchâtel revolted against its rulers, but the revolution was put down by force. The small but active republican party did not lose heart; the discontent with the representatives of the royal dynasty grew rapidly, and many adherents were won over in various parts of the Jura.

During the great and far reaching political events of 1847 and 1848 a new and vigorous revolution broke out, and the Government was promptly chased over the boundary. A new constitution was proclaimed, which was more in keeping with the one of the Swiss Confederation. Prussia, which at the time, had its own troubles, seemed to take but little notice of the happenings, treating the matter very contemptuously; but nine years after this event, the royalist party, under the leadership of Colonel de Pourtalès, tried to re-instate the old régime. In the night of the 2nd to the 3rd of September, his troops stormed the Castle and took possession of the town of Neuchâtel. The republican Government was arrested, and put under lock and key; but already the following day, the republican forces under the command of Colonel Denzler, re-captured the Castle. Eight royalists were killed, 26 wounded and 480 made prisoners. The King of Prussia at once demanded that all prisoners should be set free, and made other demands, asserting his rights over the principality of Neuchâtel. His demands were couched in such language that no self-respecting country could enter even into preliminary negotiations and war seemed to be inevitable.

On January 2nd, the Prussian Army received marching orders, the South German States having granted free passage to the King's forces. A wave of war enthusiasm swept over the whole of Switzerland, the whole population stood like one man behind the Federal Council, volunteers flocked to the colours from all parts of the country. On December 30th Parliament unanimously elected General Dufour commander in chief of the Federal forces. He assembled at once an army of 30,000 men and threw them on the threatened frontier. Extensive fortifications were erected, all the Rhein bridges were fortified, Schaffhausen and Eglisau were transformed into fortresses and the steamers on the lake of Constance were armed with guns. The entourage of Klein Basel was fortified and manned with heavy artillery, 78 pieces in all. General Dufour's plan was, to be on the defence at Basle, whilst his forces were to attack the Prussians at Schaffhausen. It was in these days of national enthusiasm, that Amiel's song:

Roulez tambours, pour couvrir la frontière,
Aux bords du Rhin, guidez nous au combat.
was first sung by our French speaking compatriots.

Diplomatic relations between Prussia and the Confederation were broken off, when some of the other Powers made it known that they disapproved of a settlement of the dispute by armed force. France intimated, that, should Prussia cross the frontier, they would at once occupy the cantons of Neuchâtel and Geneva, and Austria would do the same with the cantons of Ticino and Grison. In order to avert these dangers, negotiations were started, after Switzerland had agreed to release the royalist prisoners, on condition that they left the country until the dispute was settled. On March the 5th, 1857, the plenipotentiaries of France, Austria, England and Russia assembled in Paris and agreed on terms which were put before the two belligerents. The Swiss Parliament accepted these terms on the 11th and 12th of June, and the King of Prussia made his acceptance of the conditions known on the 19th of the same month. The latter, however, only agreed to the terms after Napoleon and the Government of Great Britain had put some considerable pressure on him. Switzerland had every reason to be satisfied with the settlement. The King of Prussia renounced all rights over the Principality of Neuchâtel and the canton of Neuchâtel was declared an independent canton

of the Swiss Confederation. Switzerland had to bear the costs of the September events, and agreed not to prosecute any of the participants who had taken part in the rising. The only souvenir Switzerland inherited from this "bloodless war" was that striking song: "Roulez Tambour."

NEWS FROM THE COLONY.

NOUVELLE SOCIÉTÉ HELVÉTIQUE.

SWISS INSTITUTE ORCHESTRAL SOCIETY.

An interesting event has been arranged for the evening of February 17th. prox. at Conway Hall, Red Lion Square, W.C.1, when a first attempt will be made to happily blend literature and music in one performance.

As far as the literary portion of the performance is concerned, it will consist of a recital by M. Jean Bard, dramatic author and Professor of Elocution at the Conservatoire at Geneva.

Monsieur Jean Bard is too well-known an artist and authority to have to be introduced specially to our colony, but it is of interest to know that in the spring of 1931, at the instance of the Société des Suisses à l'Etranger, he visited all the Swiss colonies in the South of France and Upper Italy in order to amuse and instruct them with his literary recitals. The Press notices on this subject are exceedingly enthusiastic and speak of the incomparable charm of Monsieur Jean Bard's recitals.

It is the first time that we have the chance of hearing Monsieur Jean Bard in London, and it is now for us to show him that we have no less interest in fine literature and the dramatic arts than they have on the Continent.

The Swiss Orchestra, at work throughout the year under the enthusiastic and able leadership of Mr. Dick, are eager to make the performance a great success on the musical side. Their programme has definitely been settled and the chief item therein will be the Mozart Piano Concerto No. 20 in D-minor with Orchestra, the Soloist being Miss Frida Bindschedler, L.R.A.M.

A great treat is therefore in store for us and, accordingly, we shall all make up our minds to be present at this interesting new venture at Conway Hall, on February the 17th next.

INFLATION OU DEFLATION.

(Continued).

"Il semble résulter de cette polémique, écrit dans la *Tribune de Genève*, M. Bovet-Grisel, à qui nous empruntons ces renseignements, que la Suisse se trouve aujourd'hui en présence d'un redoutable dilemme: opter entre la politique de déflation que préconise M. Musy et l'inflation que prône M. Schirmer."

Il y a là, on s'en rendra compte sans peine, un problème fort complexe, dont la solution intéresse la Suisse entière et toutes ses activités.

Léon Savary.

POTTED WISDOM.

Labour is a pure and noble thing; it is the salt of life; it is the girdle of manliness.

A single fact is worth a shipload of argument.

Some people have great faith in odd numbers — usually number one.

When you always tell the truth you don't have to remember what you said.

The one who is always wrapped up in himself makes a very small parcel.

Pray for success certainly, but don't fail to supplement your prayers by efforts to deserve it.

LITERARY & MUSICAL EVENING.

MONSIEUR JEAN BARD,
Professor of Elocution at the Conservatoire of Geneva.
and the

SWISS INSTITUTE ORCHESTRA

at
Conway Hall, Red Lion Square, W.C.1

on
Wednesday, February 17th 1932, at 8.15

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Gen. Man. Continental and Mena House Cairo.

CK. CORNER.

Last week I visited the exhibition of French art at the Royal Academy and although I had not intended to write anything about it, I was so impressed that I cannot refrain from devoting a corner to it at once.

Most definitely do I recommend everyone to visit it.

One of the most extraordinary things about this exhibition is that, although it is one of French art, in my opinion, it does not give the impression of art belonging to any particular nation, but of solely and purely art. By this, I mean, that in the case of the Flemish and Persian exhibitions, one could not get away from the national characteristics, whereas, with the exception of a few pictures representing distinctive features of French life, one is looking at pictures, books or objects which are purely things of beauty and belong to mankind as a whole.

This week I do not propose to make any comments on individual exhibits. I must see more before I venture to do so, I want to give my impressions as one who knows nothing about Art, who does not understand painting, who is completely ignorant of the rules which underlie technique, but only knows what pleases him and therefore I feel that I am more at liberty to say what I please.

Within the walls of the Royal Academy, there has been assembled this year a wonderful collection of all that is best in French art from 1200 to 1900. Personally I am glad that the modernists have been omitted. Pictures and books, reliquaries and objects d'art have come from all over the world. The museums, cathedrals and churches of France have parted with their treasures and pictures have even come from countries so far away as America.

A unique opportunity is thus afforded of seeing treasures, which might not otherwise occur for under present conditions it may be a long time before it will be possible to visit the places where they are to be found usually.

The exhibition is indeed a varied one. Canvases of huge extent such as those by Delacroix and Ingres, tiny gems of delicate beauty by Watteau, exotic pictures by Ganguin, objects reminiscent of history such as those used at the coronation of the Kings of France in days of old, reliquaries from Amiens and Rouen, treasures from Reims which were removed during the war and have been put away while the Cathedral is being restored, and those from the church of St. Foy at Conques (Aveyron) which were saved from the destruction of the Revolution, illuminated books and manuscripts; all are there. I had almost forgotten the tapestries, for there are some Gobelins which, on account of the richness of the colours, are a pure delight to the eye.

Great was my joy in discovering a statue of the Virgin of which I am particularly fond and which comes from an old church at Villeneuve-les-Avignon.

For the present, I will say no more, but in a short time I hope to return in detail to those exhibits which have filled me with admiration and whose interest is caused not only by their beauty but also from the historical associations with which they are connected.

SWISS MERCANTILE SOCIETY LTD.

The members and friends of the Society are reminded that our

Cinderella Dance

will take place on

SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 6th, 1932,

at the

Midland Grand Hotel, St. Pancras Str., N.W.

from 7.0 to 10 a.m.

As this Cinderella Dance will take the place of the Annual Dinner and Ball a large number of Members and Visitors are expected to avail themselves of this last function of the Season.

TICKETS at 8s. 6d. (incl. Supper during the interval) may be obtained at Swiss House, 34-35, Fitzroy Square, W.1 (Tel. Museum 6693) and from Employment Department, 24, Queen Victoria St., E.C.4 (Tel. City 7719).

SWISS CULINARY SOCIETY

DINNER & BALL

at the

UNION HELVETIA CLUB

1, Gerrard Place, Shaftesbury Avenue, W.1.

on Monday, 1st February, 1932.

Dinner will be served at 8.30 Swiss time.

Dancing 10.30 p.m. to 2 a.m.

Tickets 7/6 each