

**Zeitschrift:** The Swiss observer : the journal of the Federation of Swiss Societies in the UK  
**Herausgeber:** Federation of Swiss Societies in the United Kingdom  
**Band:** - (1933)  
**Heft:** 604  
  
**Artikel:** How Mr. Greville conquered the St. Gothard [to be continued]  
**Autor:** [s.n.]  
**DOI:** <https://doi.org/10.5169/seals-691832>

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## NEWS FROM THE COLONY.

# **SWISS CHORAL AND ORCHESTRAL SOCIETIES. ANNUAL CONCERT.**

Our two musical organisations, the Swiss Choral Society and the Swiss Orchestral Society, have done well to join forces for this year's Annual Concert, which was held in Conway Hall on Friday evening May 12th. It is strongly to be hoped that this admirable combination will be adhered to in the future, as it has many important advantages over separate concerts of the two societies. The most important of them, both for the audience and the performers, is the fact that fewer items have to be played by each society to fill the evening, and that therefore more time and care can be devoted for each item. Such a concentration of effort is particularly desirable for amateur musicians who by prolonged and careful study and practice alone can attain to an artistic level of performance worth having. The temptation incontinently to rush through one piece or song after another must be resisted by the good conductor. Far better even to give the same item in consecutive concerts with ever greater perfection than inflict hastily learned items on a defenceless audience. There are other obvious advantages of a joint concert, such as the more numerous audience and the lessening of costs, but the artistic one must count most.

It is a pleasure to state that the fruits of this combination of forces were clearly observable in the high standard of performance on Friday night, and they were obviously much to the liking of the audience which numbered about 250 at least. Both the Choir and the Orchestra have in the course of the last few years steadily and markedly improved their standard, but this year the advance seemed even more striking. For this the two well tried conductors, Mr. E. A. Seymour and Mr. E. P. Dick, may probably claim a full share of the credit, but they could not have so well succeeded without the earnest devotion of the members to their art. With the assistance of Miss Nellie Palliser, our charming compatriote, who has gained considerable success in London musical life, an eminently satisfactory programme was presented in a very delectable manner.

The first song of Miss Palliser's, "Chère nuit" by A. Bachelet did not seem to suit the occasion, and her special qualities as well as might be wished. The same might possibly be said of Wolf's "Gärtner" — judging as severely as is appropriate to an artist of standing. "Liebesfeier" by Weingartner and "Wiegenlied" by Brahms were sung with more ease and natural feeling, while two Strauss songs revealed Miss Palliser's talents and splendid voice triumphantly. The audience was obviously delighted and re-

warded the singer with richly deserved applause. She is perhaps best at home in gay and lively moods where the striking freshness of her voice has full play.

The Choral Society began very successfully with Robert Schumann's "Frühlingsgruss" which was sung briskly with firm full voices. "Abendglocken" by Franz Abt and "Das Glöcklein im Thal" by Ph. Ort pleased the audience well with their simple appeal. De Groote's "Morgenwanderung" was sung with much artistry although it made great demands on the singers. The lyrical passages in this as well as in other songs might possibly have been rendered with advantage a little less slowly. The one English song given, "Rolling down to Rio" by Edward German, was rendered with obvious enjoyment and gusto to which the audience responded with lively acknowledgement. Personally, I think that the Choral Society would do well to take up more English songs, particularly of that virile category of which "Rolling down to Rio" is such a good example.

The Orchestral Society surprised the audience with a spirited and exceedingly competent rendering of Mozart's Figaro Overture, preceded by Bidgood's "Vimy Ridge" March. A selection from the Opera "La Gran Via" by Chueca Valverde proved very popular, as did the "1001 Nights" Valse by Joh. Strauss, both of which were played with assurance and perfect unison. The delicate Overture to Suppé's "Poet and Peasant" was handled very beautifully. It may be said, without exaggeration, that the audience, including myself, enjoyed every item presented by the orchestra, which has attained as high a standard of competence as I have ever witnessed at an amateur concert. Altogether it was a most enjoyable evening. *Dr. E.*

## **SCHWEIZERBUND (Swiss Club)**

The 54th Annual Dinner of the "Schweizerbund" took place last Friday (May 12th) at 74, Charlotte Street, W.1. Though for reasons of economy no complimentary tickets had been sent out, the number of participants was in no way affected; most of the other societies in the Colony were unofficially represented.

The Dinner was timed for 8 p.m. but it was 9.30 when the President of the Club, Mr. J. Christen, paced along the crowded dining tables — to the tunes of the Swiss National anthem — and took the Chair. Following the traditional toasts after the dinner, Mr. Christen extended a hearty welcome to the numerous company especially the ladies. He added that this was the first time in the history of the Club — and also the last time, he hoped — that they had to dispense with the hospitality they were always so pleased to extend to the other clubs and institutions in the Colony. The financial position of the Club

it. If a thing once gets into an Englishman's head, there's nothing in the world will get it out. The pay is not to be sneezed at. If you don't care for the job, the landlord will soon find others who will jump at it."

"He will have to get them from Zurich, then," said one of the Göschenen men. "We've been across often enough to know jolly well it's not a bit of use attempting to drive. Besides, if the gentleman breaks his neck, we shall have to answer for it. You are talking a lot of nonsense."

"Well, you won't induce Mr. Greville to drop it, I reckon he's more stubborn than any mule; you'll only get kicked for your pains. Anyhow, there's the job, take it or leave it, as you please. There's plenty will be keen enough. Why, man, it's the chance of a lifetime!"

The discussion grew hotter and hotter, adding to the heat of the little room. But in the end they came to terms, and the four men undertook to help the Englishman in his attempt to drive his carriage over the pass in return for a lump sum down.

Mr. Greville himself had already been forced to realize that his expedition was not the simple affair he had thought it. Indeed, that was why he had sent his courier on ahead to secure the aid of four extra pairs of arms in addition to the pair he was bringing with him from Amsteg. The courier was so delighted with the success of his errand that he ordered wine and bread to be served to the men. They were still eating, when a tremendous hubbub outside announced that the Englishman was already in sight.

Half the village had turned out, and all were joking and gesticulating as they stared down the valley towards the Devil's Stone, where an extraordinary cavalcade was coming into view. Preceded by two pack-horses laden with bags and other luggage, came a smart, light equipage drawn by a mule. In it a gentleman was sitting with a parasol held up over his head to shelter him from the sun. The procession advanced slowly up the hill and soon came to a halt before the inn.

The gentleman quickly dived inside, as the crowd pressed round, curious to inspect the vehicle and volubly discussing what it all meant. Mules filed through the village every day, and

had been adversely influenced by the general depression their takings having gone down by about 40%. He had, however, no misgivings as regards the future and intended to carry on as long as he enjoyed the confidence of the members. Other speakers, notably Mr. Wetter and Mr. Dürliwanger, dwelled upon the urgent necessity of the members, especially the younger generation, taking a more liberal advantage of the amenities of the Club.

The usual dance completed a very enjoyable evening.

## **BAZAAR OF THE SWISS Y.M.C.A.**

The Bazaar of the Swiss Y.M.C.A. took place last Friday at Swiss House, 34/35, Fitzroy Square; unfortunately this function clashed with two other events in the Colony, and no doubt the attendance must have suffered through it. It is a great pity that the various Societies cannot come to some understanding about their social functions, a proper arrangement would be beneficial to all concerned.

The opening of the Bazaar took place at 4.30 p.m. by Mrs. F. G. Sommer, who was introduced by Mr. J. Scheuermeier the sympathetic President of the Swiss Y.M.C.A. Mrs. Sommer made a charming little speech acquainting the audience with the aims of the Society. She expressed the hope that all present had come to Swiss House with their purses well filled, and that this small but active Society would get the support which they so richly deserve. A sweet little maiden, presented her, on the conclusion of her address, with a beautiful bouquet of flowers, and the opening ceremony of this first Bazaar of the Swiss Y.M.C.A., came thus to a befitting end.

The Bazaar was visited by about 200 people, which was very satisfactory considering that no special propaganda was made; a great number of the students of the S.M.S. College were amongst the purchasers. The various stalls were artistically laid out, and presented a tempting display. The Flower Stall, under the personal supervision of the President, deserves special mention, and the buttonholes supplied added greatly to the charms of the wearers, the "refreshment Department was well frequented, and one could hardly wonder at that, considering that such famous articles as "Wienerli's, Schenkeli's, Mailänderli's, Brezzeli's" and many more famous specialities of our own country were for sale.

Later on, a most attractive programme by members and friends of the Society was presented which was greatly appreciated. About 11 o'clock Mr. Niklaus, Vice-President of the Swiss Y.M.C.A., closed the Bazaar with a few appropriate words, thus a most enjoyable evening came to a successful end. We are informed that the net proceeds of the evening amounted to about £20, and we wish to congratulate this most enterprising Society on the capable way in which they had arranged this undertaking.

strangers often passed by, talking some foreign language or wearing outlandish clothes. But a carriage on wheels! Well, certainly the children had never seen anything like it before, and the oldest inhabitant could not recall having seen any vehicle so far up the valley.

News of this mad Englishman's coming spread like wildfire; and when the cavalcade moved on again an hour later, the whole village, able-bodied men and laughing children, followed in its wake till it disappeared high up in the Gorge of the Schöllenen. At first all went well. The mule track was narrow but fairly level, and Mr. Greville sat proudly in his carriage admiring the frowning precipices and the thunder of the tumbling Reuss. But, gradually, the higher they climbed the more frequent became the joltings of the wheels over the big, flat stones heaped irregularly on the path. And when the river, whose waters had eaten deeply into the rock wall, came perilously near his outer wheel, and he could see nothing but perpendicular cliffs that seemed to reach the sky on one side and on the other dropped down to the water boiling and foaming below, the good man deemed it wiser to quit his precarious seat and continue the climb on foot, hugging the wall as close as he could.

By dint of great efforts the four men pushed the carriage along, often with two wheels hanging over the edge! But just before they got to the Devil's Bridge it was obviously impossible to take the vehicle any further without imminent risk of its toppling over into the ravine. The majority wanted to give up the silly enterprise and go back. This was not by any means the worst part of the road, as they very well knew. But the bulldog of an Englishman would not give way. True, now that he was on the spot, Switzerland presented a different aspect to what it had done on the map at home. There he had made a wager to drive in a carriage all the way to the house of his uncle, Sir William Hamilton, in Naples. He was a rich man and had always found that difficulties have a way of disappearing before an open purse, so the simple natives of Uri failed to overcome his English tenacity.

(To be continued.)

## **HOW MR. GREVILLE CONQUERED THE ST. GOTHARD.**

On a hot July morning, in the year 1775, a mule driver of Göschenen, by name Jacob Zurflüh, might have been seen thoughtfully plodding along towards the "Bull." He had received instructions to be there at 12 o'clock. On his way he met a comrade, another mule driver, Melchior Imboden, evidently bent on the same errand as himself. What were they wanted for? That was the question the men could not answer, rack their brains as they might. Why should they be wanted, but not their mules?

At the inn they found two other men from their village talking away for all they were worth to a stranger, evidently a man from the lake district. This man was gesticulating violently, his face all flushed with excitement. On the arrival of the new comers, he rushed up to them and poured forth such a torrent of words as completely to bamboozle the two rustics. They could just catch a phrase now and then, — "a chance to earn a tidy bit... what's the odds if the man is a bit daft, all Englishmen are mad... why, it'll be something to boast of... a real record."

Taking seats alongside their mates, they sat down and asked in bewilderment: "What in the name of fortune, is the man talking about?" Someone answered: "He says, there's an Englishman wants to drive in his carriage over the Gothard!"

This statement was greeted with a shout of derision, and all the four men went off into a fit of laughter. Now, this made the stranger more excited than ever. He was, he said, a courier from Zurich. Mr. Greville, who had engaged him, was determined to cross the St. Gothard in his carriage. They were wanted to help him over. There was nothing to laugh about at all.

"But you know it just can't be done!" shouted Imboden, "he can drive in a coach from Zurich to Schaffhausen, if he likes; but no one has ever been over the Gothard except on his feet or on the back of a mule."

"Then you may bet your bottom dollar, an Englishman is going to be the first to drive across