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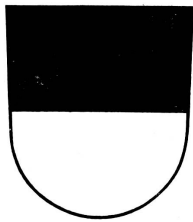
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ARMS OF FRIBOURG.



Per fess sable and argent.

From the early days after being founded by the duke of Zähringen Berthold IV, Fribourg had two distinct coats of arms attributed to its banner and to its seal.

The dull colours of the banner, black and white, are, most probably allusive to the contrast of the cultivated land of the valley with the snowy slopes of the Alps.

The seal represented an embattled tower flanked on its sinister side by an embattled wall. Those "armes parlantes" were emblematical of the fortress erected by the duke of Zähringen, and which gave the town its name: Frei-Burg. Hence two escutcheons; one military, representing Fribourg, sovereign town and member of the Helvetic body, the other civil, representing Fribourg's community. This last escutcheon bears three towers, the dexter one being the highest, that on the sinister the lowest. In the 17th century, both these coats of arms were marshalled quarterly into one single escutcheon, the military arms occupying the first and fourth quarters, the civil arms the second and third.

The quartered arms disappeared during the troublous end of the 18th century, only to be taken again in 1803, but this time separately, the black and white escutcheon being attributed to the canton and the three towers to the town, as they exist to-day.

P.S.

DAS ELEKTRIZITAETSWERK BISISTAL

Wer in der letzten Nummer des "Observer" die Mitteilung gelesen von der "Eröffnung der neuen Kraftanlage im Bisistal, im Beisein des Herrn Bundesrates M. Obrecht und verschiedener Kantonalbehörden" hat sich wohl gewundert, dass er noch nie etwas von diesem Werke gehört hat sich wohl eingebildet, dass es sich hier um eine weitere, jener imposanten, Millionen verschlingenden Anlagen mit Stausse, Kraftcentrale und gewaltigen Masten zur Kraftübertragung etc., handle. Dies ist nun durchaus nicht der Fall. Im Gegenteil, es handelt sich hier um ein Werk, das nicht nur in seiner Kleinheit und Einfachheit bemerkenswert ist, sondern auch in verschiedener Hinsicht als einzig bezeichnet werden muss.

Wer von Schwyz durch das Tal der Muota wandert, und nach Muotatal gelangt, findet, dass beim Ausgang des Dorfes sich das Tal gabelt. Links geht es über den Prigel nach Glarus, rechts aber zieht ein schmales, langes Tal ab, das Bisistal. Zuhinterst, in einem weltverlassenen Winkel liegt das Dörfchen, das den gleichen Namen trägt. Ein idyllisches, typisches Schweizer Bergdörfchen, eine Kapelle, zwei Wirtschaftshäuser, ein Schiessstand und ein bis zwei Dutzend Wohnstätten, weitaus auseinander zerstreut an der Berglehne rechts und links.

Die Bewohner sind arme Bergbauern, die sich mit Viehzucht und Alpwirtschaft durchzubringen versuchen, die aber trotz hartem Existenzkampf stolz und zäh an der heimatlichen Scholle hängen, obwohl sie ihnen wenig bietet. Der Sommer ist ja erträglich, speziell die paar Monate, wenn sie "z'Alp" sind und muss sie entschädigen für den langen Winter der dort 6 Monate dauert. Dann sind sie oft wochenlang eingeschneit, von der Aussenwelt vollständig abgeschlossen, und ganz auf sich selbst angewiesen. Kaum für eine Stunde oder zwei findet die Sonne ihren Weg in das tief eingeschnittene Tal, dann ist es Nacht. Lange, dunkle Winternacht, spärlich "erhellt" durch die flackernde, russige Öllampe. Wie mögen diese Leute sich nach dem Lichte sehnen. Und heute? Was diesen Armen als unerfüllbarer Wunsch erschien, ist zur Tatsache geworden. Hell erstrahlen Haus und Stall und freundlich funkeln die erleuchteten Fenster hinüber übers stille Tal zum Nachbarhaus. An einem der letzten Sonntage wurde der dankbar geführten Gemeinde feierlich ein Elektrizitätswerk übergeben fix und fertig mit Wassersammler, Druckleitung, Maschinenhaus, Verteilungsnetz (8 Kilometer Leitung) und Lichtanschluss in alle Häuser als ein Geschenk, unentgeltlich und schuldenlos.

Wer hat dies vollbracht? Die Stifter und die Erbauer sind die gleichen. Die "Schweizer Radio Kameraden," eine Gruppe junger, unternehmungslustiger, menschenfreundlicher Wohltäter unter der werktätigen Initiative des Herrn Vetter Hans aus Bern. Das "Arbeitslager

Bisistal," Idealisten, Philantropen, Arbeitslose, haben das Geld gesammelt und die Arbeit getan, unterstützt von Fachleuten und Schweizer Fabriken, vom gleichen Geiste beseelt.

Gewiss ein seltenes Geschenk, ein Elektrizitätswerk, das nichts kostet und dazu auch sozusagen keine Bedienung erheischt, denn es ist "automatisch" und ein leuchtendes Beispiel werktätiger gemeindegenössischer Bruderliebe.

A. Schedler.

NEWS FROM THE COLONY.

SWISS MERCANTILE SOCIETY LTD.

The Swiss Mercantile Society held its Monthly Meeting on Wednesday, October 9th. Mr. A. Steinmann, President, was in the Chair. When the Chairman opened the proceedings there were nearly 50 members present. Mr. C. Chapuis, Delegate of the Swiss Mercantile Society on the Advisory Board of the Employment Department, reported that after several years of depression the Employment Department had turned the corner in 1934 with 658 placements as against 544 in the previous year. Mr. Chapuis assured the Meeting that the Advisory Board is thankful to Mr. Pfändler for the way he is carrying on and for the excellent results attained.

Mr. W. Meier, Chairman of the Education Committee, reported on the activities of his Department.

The Chairman thereupon closed the business part of the agenda and proceeded to the last item, the "Surprise Item." He made it clear that it was not the happy arrival of a Prince which coincided with the day of the Meeting and did not claim any such uncanny foresight. He announced that the Society was going to celebrate a far more intimate "happy event," the twentyfifth anniversary of Mr. J. Pfändler's managementship of the Employment Department. The President said it behoved the Society to commemorate the occasion even if in very simple form. He briefly recalled the outstanding merits of Mr. Pfändler in his manifold activities and the high esteem he enjoys both here and with the authorities at home. The "loving-cup" was then passed round and all drank to the future prosperity and happiness of Mr. Pfändler, coupling with it the name of Mrs. Pfändler who was also present and who by her forbearance had greatly assisted Mr. Pfändler in his arduous and often difficult duties. Mr. W. Deutsch followed with some more personal remarks, enlightening the Meeting with incidents of an almost lifelong friendship which took root in Switzerland and which thrived still further during the past 25 years in London. Mr. Deutsch, whose bent on poetry we all have learnt to appreciate through the columns of this paper, then dedicated the following Jubilee Sonnet to Mr. Pfändler on his 25 years at Queen Victoria Street:

This Silver-Jubilee of yours, dear friend,
We really cannot let it pass unheeded,
Although you are of those who will contend
That neither words of praise nor thanks be
needed.

Yet you have been prepared to work and fend
Largely for others, whose good case you
pleaded,
Thus helping many round an awkward bend,
While sponser'ing countless more, who have
succeeded.

Your work goes on — a stream of changing
faces —
Mayhap, at times, an old acquaintance, too;
You know what strings to pull to get them
places,
Have not they found, in hundreds, "Jobs"
through you?

To each of them you've proved a friend in
need,
But — to your intimates — a friend indeed!

The following speakers also added testimony to Mr. Pfändler; Mr. A. Stauffer, under whose Presidency and on whose recommendation Mr. Pfändler was elected an Honorary Member of the Swiss Mercantile Society as far back as 1918 on the occasion of the 30 years Jubilee of the S.M.S.; Mr. C. Chapuis who 24 years ago performed the somewhat more intimate duties of a Best Man; Mr. A. C. Stahelin with whom Mr. Pfändler for many years collaborated on various Committees and last but not least Mr. J. J. Booes who started off with "For he's a jolly good Fellow" in which the meeting joined with much gusto and which culminated in three hearty cheers. Mr. Pfändler, deeply moved, briefly responded in suitable terms.

The meeting then adjourned into the lecture room where there was another pleasure in store. The Society was fortunate in securing for the evening no less an authority than Capt. R. B. Andrew, M.C., F.R.G.S., who was to address the assembly on "Abyssinia and Somaliland." The

students of the College were also invited to this lecture and the available accommodation was filled to its utmost capacity. Not for many a day has Swiss House had within its precincts such a large and eager gathering. Such a topical subject which form the burning question of European and even world politics at the present moment and which from a remote country in the darkest Africa has jumped into the focus of daily conversation and journalism of every country on the globe. The lecture could not have been timed more suitably for it came at a period when events were moving swiftly and the stage was set for a conflict which it is as yet too premature to gauge its consequences and repercussions. May it be said at the outset that Captain Andrew did not touch on the political aspect of the subject; yet everyone present was on tenterhooks to get more intimately acquainted with the country of which we hear so much and know so little. Captain Andrew was the chosen person for this task. By means of excellent pictures from his wide range of slides and from his very able narrative accounts were we able to form a better opinion of a country which until this day it has been hazardous to traverse without an official guide. The itinerary which took the lecturer on motor lorries from West to East of the African Continent provided many thrilling accounts which Mr. Andrew spiced with many witty allusions. He depicted by picture and by word of mouth the inhabitants from the docile pagans of the West to the savage and ferocious Danakils of the East. We had described the topography of vast tracks of land as yet unexplored and which forms the subject of strategical talk of militarists. The country though full of natural beauty is extremely inhospitable, be it for its roaring torrents during the rainy season, the parching sandstorms, the treacherous fever swamps and the unscaled rocky mountains. We had a glimpse at Addis Ababa, Adowa and Jibuti. Of particular interest were the pictures of Wall-wal which incident formed the first spark of the conflagration. The lecturer voiced his personal opinion of the assailability of the country from his own wide experience both in Abyssinia and on the Indian North-West frontier.

For nearly two hours he kept the audience spellbound. Mr. Steinmann at the close of the lecture thanked Captain Andrew for his most interesting lecture. This was endorsed wholeheartedly by the audience with a great ovation.

This ended one of the finest evenings ever held at Swiss House.

W.B.

CONCERT — LECTURE.

at Conway Hall, October the 25th.

A combined concert and lecture has been arranged for October the 25th, at Conway Hall, Red Lion Square, W.C.1, by the Swiss Orchestral Society and the London Group of the Nouvelle Société Helvétique.

The event promises to be of particular interest to two sections of our colony:— the music lovers, who may expect another treat of the same high order as we enjoyed at the last Fête Suisse, and the "Old soldiers of 1914," who will be given the pleasure of again meeting the "Schweizer-Soldatenmutter," Mrs. Else Zublin-Spiller. Her subject:—

Erinnerungen aus der Grenzbesatzungszeit with many lantern slides is sure to re-awaken the poignant memories of that great period in our lives. As a lecturer Mrs. Zublin-Spiller has a very high reputation; she is famous for her vivacity, wit and clarity of description.

The two organising bodies are of opinion that such a combination will meet a real demand in our colony, and they hope to see a large gathering to do honour and justice to the Orchestra as well as the Lecturer. Admission will be 2/- for any part of the Hall. The Orchestra will strike up sharp at 8.30.

Our Minister, Mr. C. R. Paravicini, has graciously promised to introduce the Lecturer and to address a few patriotic words to the audience.

LONDON SWISS RIFLE TEAM.

Following Swiss tradition the London Rifle Team is arranging a "Grümpelschiessen" to take place on Sunday, Nov. 3rd at the Bisley ranges. As in former years two separate competitions of ten shots each will have to be fired: one will be open and the other one on a handicap basis. Prizes, both in cash and kind, will be awarded, and apart from the cost of the "Schiesbüchli" every competitor is expected to contribute a prize in kind.

As the Bisley Camp is open to the general public the event should prove attractive to a wider circle of our Colony; the members of the team who last year returned from Fribourg "with laurels" will no doubt continue to give a good account of themselves.