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of office, singling out for special mention the untiring efforts of the President, Mr. A. F. Suter, the Hon. Secretary, Mr. C. Campart, and last but by no means least the splendid services rendered to the Society by Mr. Gottfried Keller, whose outstanding qualities as a lecturer had come to be appreciated by an ever increasing number of members.

The election of the Council then took place by poll, Messrs. Dick and Favre acting as scrutineers. The Council for the financial year 1943 was constituted as follows:—

Messrs. E. J. Bachofen, Wm. Beckmann, C. Campart, W. Gamper, Gottfried J. Keller, F. Kibiger, Wm. Renz, Theo. Ritter, M. Rothlisberger, Pierre Savoie, Wm. B. Sigerist, A. Fred. Suter, J. Weber, Miss Germaine Zingg.

The auditors, Messrs. J. Weber and F. Zimmermann were duly re-elected and the subscription for 1943 fixed at 10/-.

Before the conclusion of the official part of the meeting, Mr. Louis Chapuis, President of the City Swiss Club, expressed thanks on behalf of the guests for a thoroughly enjoyable afternoon. He greatly amused the gathering with some humorous asides and finally wished the Society continued success and prosperity. Mr. Chapuis' words were cordially applauded.

The proceedings then terminated and the meeting adjourned to a welcome tea.

There were as yet some pleasant surprises in store. Mlle. N. Meyrat, who is no stranger in the Swiss Colony, delighted the audience with "Elsa's Dream" from "Lohengrin," and "Zueignung" by Strauss. Her superb rendering of these songs earned her a tremendous applause from a very appreciative audience.

The Swiss Choral Society, under the able leadership of Mr. E. P. Dick, then took the stage. They sang "Emmental Grüss Gott" and "Nos Montagnes." The almost tumultuous applause was the best proof that everybody present thoroughly enjoyed these songs.

After a brief interlude, Mlle. Meyrat once more entertained the audience. She sang "Waltz of My Heart" by Ivor Novello, which was followed by "'s Schwyzerhüsli," with which song she, to use an old expression, almost brought the house down. Finally Mlle. Meyrat sang "Der Gärtner" by Hugo Wolf. The audience left her in no doubt that her charming voice and exquisite singing were greatly appreciated by all pleasant.

The Swiss Choral Society then followed with "Sonntag ist's" and "Mein Schweizerland, wach auf!". Both the conductor and the choir are to be complimented on their excellent performance and it is to be hoped that we shall have the pleasure of hearing them on many more such functions in the Colony. Mr. Dick, who has long earned himself a reputation as a versatile conductor and musician, wound up the musical programme with a piano solo by playing a variation of "'s Vreneli ab-em Guggisberg."

Mr. Suter, on behalf of the N.S.H., thanked all the artistes for their fine contributions to a most successful afternoon. As a special tit-bit, he then presented the Swiss Minister with a bottle of wine distilled from grapes from a vine grown in his own garden and originally brought over from Burgundy.

The meeting ended with a hearty vote of thanks to the President and thus came to a close a most successful and enjoyable function.

WB.

SWISS MERCANTILE SOCIETY.

Annual General Meeting.

The Society held its Annual General Meeting at Pimm's Restaurant, Old Bailey, on Saturday, February 13th.

The Meeting was preceded by a luncheon, which innovation proved very popular as evinced by the attendance of nearly 70 members.

After the customary loyal toasts, the Chairman, Mr. J. J. Boos, before opening the formal proceedings, addressed the assembly. He said that it was not the first time that the Society had met in the shadow of St. Paul's. Some of the older members could remember the meetings at the Wool Exchange and in Milk Street and, not so long ago, the the office in Queen Victoria Street.

The President then extended a hearty welcome to the representative of the Swiss Legation, Mr. Roy Hunziker, Attaché, who conveyed the Swiss Minister's greetings to the meeting.

It was indeed a very representative gathering, including many of the veteran members to whose staunch and loyal support the President paid a special tribute, particularly to Mr. P. F. Boehringer, the oldest member present and a "pensioner" who in a jocular vein replied to the President's crack. The younger generation, including many members who had joined the Society but recently, was also much in evidence.

After a brief interval the Secretary, Mr. J. J. Schmeider, read the notice convening the meeting and the report of the auditor.

The accounts for the period under review as submitted were elucidated by Mr. Percy H. Green, F.C.A., the auditor, who said that the Society's finances were in a healthy and liquid state. It was hardly surprising that the year was closed with an adverse balance, but taking all circumstances into account the final result could be considered satisfactory.

A motion to adopt the accounts as presented was passed unanimously.

The Chairman then reported on the activities of the Society during the past year, the 54th since its inception in 1888. The following is a résumé of the report:

Introduction. The President briefly alluded to the world situation and the far-reaching effects on all mankind of the globular struggle we are now witnessing. He said how grateful we Swiss could be that our country had so far been spared the horrors of actual warfare and that our Government and people were united in their efforts to maintain the country's independence, to provide food and work for all its citizens and to do whatever lay within their powers to mitigate the sufferings of all belligerents.

In the year under review, the S.M.S. carried on its work on similar lines as in the previous year. All educational activities remained suspended, but a number of instructive lectures were again arranged whilst the social side was not neglected. However, all functions were in keeping with the difficult times through which we are passing.

Membership. The Society to-day is composed of:

25 Honorary Members,

45 Contributing Members,

40 Contributing Firms and Donors,

245 Active Members (including 12 Lady Members).

Admissions: 37.

Resignations: 3.

The net result is therefore an increase of 34 Active members, a very gratifying result.

Meetings. The meetings of the Society, the Council and the Committee were held regularly. The Monthly Meetings were generally well attended, showing maintained interest in the Society's activities by the members although black-out, travelling restrictions and obligations for Civil Defence duties made attendance for many difficult, if not impossible.

Lectures, Socials, etc. The following functions were held during the year :

January — "Trades, Lands and Peoples around the Mediterranean," Lecture and Film Show by Mr. A. Kern, European Manager of the famous firm of Standard Brands of America.

February — Annual General Meeting.

March — Social Meeting.

April — Social Meeting.

May — "The Foreign Press in War-Time England," Lecture by Mr. G. Keller, President of the Foreign Press Association.

June — Social Meeting.

September — "World Outlook," Lecture by Dr. G. P. Gooch, Companion of Honour.

October — "Democratic Justice," Lecture by Major the Hon. L. H. Cripps, C.B.E., preceded by a luncheon to commemorate the 54th anniversary of the London Section.

November — Social Meeting.

December — Film Show featuring the latest M.O.I. films as well as two Swiss films, "Off the Beaten Track" and a talkie "s Appenzellerland."

Employment Department. The difficulties of the Employment Department were considerably increased during 1942. Mr. Pfändler was able to place 211 out of 268 applicants; the number of vacancies reported was 331.

The President appealed to all members and friends to assist Mr. Pfändler whenever possible by naming places open or services free.

Swiss House. The lease of Swiss House, 34/35, Fitzroy Square, was terminated in March 1942. After lengthy deliberations, a new short tenancy agreement for the retention of 35, Fitzroy Square, was signed in July 1942. A satisfactory settlement was also reached with the Landlord regarding claims for dilapidations, repairs, etc., under the old lease.

Finance. The Chairman expressed the Society's appreciation of the valuable support received from the Swiss Government, with the assistance of National Councilor Ph. Schmid-Ruedin, General Secretary of the S.K.V., in the form of a subsidy towards the upkeep of Swiss House. He also referred to the contributions received from the many donors and subscribing firms both here and in Switzerland, to whom the Society was greatly indebted for their continued support.

Affiliations. Close collaboration with the sister societies in London was maintained. Of these the Nouvelle Société Helvétique, the Swiss Choral Society and the newly formed London Swiss Philatelic Society hold their meetings regularly at Swiss House.

Conclusion. In conclusion, the Chairman thanked all the members and friends of the Society who had helped to carry on the good work during a difficult period and expressed the hope that the time would not be too distant when the Society could resume its full activities, particularly in the educational sphere.

A motion that the report be adopted, printed and circulated to the members, was received with prolonged acclamation.

After Mr. Percy H. Green, F.C.A., had been re-elected auditor for the financial year 1943, the meeting proceeded with the election of the Council and the General Purposes Committee.

Mr. A. Stauffer, Hon. Member and past President of the S.M.S., acted as Chairman pro tem. He paid a well deserved tribute to the President, Mr. J. J. Boos, who during the past four years had so ably guided the destinies of the Society. He also thanked the members of the Council and the General Purposes Committee for their loyal support and collaboration.

Mr. Boos was thereupon unanimously re-elected President amidst prolonged cheers. The retiring members of the Council and Committee, who had offered themselves for re-election, were duly declared elected as follows :

COUNCIL :

Chairman, Mr. J. J. Boos; *Vice-Chairman*, Mr. W. Meier; *Members*, Messrs. Ch. Chapuis, R. Chappuis, G. E. De Brunner (Trustee), O. Grob, E. Hardmeier, M. Heilinger, G. Jenne, L. W. Krucker, J. J. Pfändler, A. C. Stahelin, A. Steinmann.

GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE :

President, Mr. J. J. Boos; *Vice-Presidents*, Messrs. W. Meier and L. W. Krucker; *Hon. Secretary*, Mr. R. Chappuis; *Hon. Treasurer*, Mr. M. Heilinger; *Members*, Messrs. W. Burren, W. Fuchs, R. Senn, F. Streit.

AUDITOR :

Mr. Percy H. Green, F.C.A.

Secretary : Mr. J. J. Schneider, F.I.A.C.

Press Reporter : Mr. W. Burren.

Delegate to the Advisory Board of the Employment Department : Mr. Ch. Chapuis.

Delegate to the N.S.H. : Mr. F. Streit.

This terminated the proceedings of the Annual General Meeting, which was immediately followed by the Ordinary Monthly Meeting. The following were elected members : Messrs. K. E. Ammann, J. Hausermann, W. Landauer, R. Mathez, A. Muller, B. A. Tuscher.

This was indeed a happy augury for the new year and it is to be hoped that this most welcome influx of new members will be maintained.

The Chairman then informed the meeting that a commission had been formed in the Swiss Colony to study a scheme drawn up by Mr. A. Renou, dealing with post-war planning from educational, cultural and economic aspects.

A very interesting discussion ensued in which quite a number of members took part. All stressed the need for planning on practical lines and numerous suggestions were made to guide those responsible for elaborating the scheme. It was pointed out that the work should not be confined to any one Society, but should embrace all Swiss resident in this country. It was decided to discuss the matter more fully at one of the next meetings, when it is hoped that detailed proposals can be submitted.

The next Monthly Meeting will be held at Swiss House on Saturday, March 13th, when Mr. Gottfried Keller, President of the Foreign Press Association, will address the members and friends of the Society on "Topical Events."

W.B.