

Swiss Choral Society

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SWISS CHORAL SOCIETY.

On October 28th last the Swiss Choral Society held its Annual General Meeting at the Swiss Club, 74 Charlotte Street, W. 1. The meeting was preceded by a Lunch at the Swiss Club which was enjoyed by thirty-two members, so much so that the Meeting started somewhat late.

The President, Mr. F. G. Sommer, opened the meeting at 3.30 p.m. and gave a cordial welcome to twenty-eight active members and five passive members present.

The Minutes of the last meeting were read by the Hon. Secretary, followed by the report of the Hon. Treasurer on the finances of the Society for the past season ending with September 30th, 1944. The Treasurer remembered that some criticism was passed a year ago as to the future of the Choir's finances and on the optimistic view he then took. He was very glad, however, to be able to produce a balance sheet showing a handsome credit balance, thanks to the regular payments of member's contributions and the steady increase of passive members who so gallantly put the Society on a sound financial footing. Both reports were received with prolonged acclamation and accepted unanimously, with a vote of thanks both to the Secretary and the Treasurer.

President Sommer then rose to present the annual review in the following terms: "Thanks to Hitler I need not weary you with a lengthy report. When we met here a year ago the War situation was such as to allow us to look forward into the future with more confidence, so much so that we decided upon regular rehearsals every fortnight instead of once a month as hitherto. It was anticipated that the Society would be called upon to perform on at least three occasions during this past year, namely in January at the Annual General Meeting of the N.S.H., in June at the Fête Suisse and at the First of August Celebration. Of these three occasions two had to be cancelled owing to unforeseen circumstances. Actually, therefore, the Society only gave one performance, namely on January 15th last, at the Dorchester Hotel. This was attended by twenty-six active members and the performance was very much appreciated and can be termed a success. During the past year the Society rehearsed on twenty occasions and in these rehearsals freshened up a number of old songs. War conditions unfortunately have not allowed us to obtain new music, but we look forward to the time when a selection of modern music will be obtainable from Switzerland and I sincerely hope that the time is not far distant when this will be possible. The average attendance at rehearsals was twenty-six members. This represents a very slight improvement on the previous year which is noted with satisfaction, but you will agree that there is room for a further rise in the above figure so as to attain an average attendance of at least thirty to thirty-five members. During the past year we have unfortunately lost three active members through transfer to passive membership, but there is every hope that these gentlemen will revert to active singing again once more normal times prevail. The present number of active members is forty-one and passive members twenty-three, and I should like to take this opportunity of expressing the Society's sincere thanks to all those who were instrumental in introducing this goodly number

of passive members. My expression of gratefulness goes in the first instance to our old friend and Honorary Vice-President J. Manzoni, who introduced not less than fifteen new passive members. I should also like to express our gratitude to our passive members for their financial support during the past year and in particular to those who so very kindly doubled their contribution. With regard to the future of the Swiss Choral Society I venture to express the firm conviction that the War in Europe cannot possibly last many more months and that our activities as a result may well be carried on very soon under much more normal circumstances. In fact, I feel that we should make every endeavour to be ready when the time comes with a selection of well prepared songs, for the calls on the Society will be numerous. With this end in view may I encourage all members to attend rehearsals as regularly as possible during the coming months. I express the fervent wish that the Swiss Choral Society may go from strength to strength and enhance their reputation for their own good as well as that of the Swiss Colony in London". President Sommer was loudly cheered and his report accepted unanimously with thanks.

President Sommer then informed the meeting that he and his Committee had done their work to the best of their ability and would now stand down to allow the election for 1944-45 to take place. However, our President had no time to appoint a President pro tem as the proposal rang out, duly seconded, that he and his Committee be re-elected en bloc for another year. There were no discussions, no questions, no grumbles—the above proposal was carried unanimously with enthusiastic cheers, upon which President Sommer thanked the members for their confidence. The Auditors and the Music Commission were equally quickly re-elected. A few points arose under "Any other business": Mr. Walter Thurnheer, Honorary President of the Society, was made an Honorary Vice-President on account of having left London. The question of compulsory rehearsals was left in abeyance until after the War. Honorary membership was not to be extended to Founder Members except in cases of special merit. Rehearsals were to start as soon as possible. This point will be reviewed by the Committee as soon as circumstances permit. A proposal to subscribe two guineas to the Jubilee Fund of the Swiss Benevolent Society was carried unanimously, an offer which was eloquently and gratefully accepted by Mr. Oertli. After a few other points had been discussed President Sommer thanked the S.M.S. for their kind and continued hospitality extended to us at Swiss House, as also its Superintendent, Mr. Bossert, who looks so well after us. He also thanked Mr. Breneck of the Schweizerbund for the good lunch he had prepared for us prior to the meeting. As there were no further questions forthcoming President Sommer closed the meeting at 5.30 p.m. Everybody was extremely pleased with the speedy way our President had gone through the agenda; it was a happy meeting which found its conclusion in the rendering of two songs by the Choir; it reminded me of a well-managed, well-performed programme on the concert platform!

EPD.

OUR NEXT ISSUE

We hope to go to Press again on December 22nd.