

Successes for Swiss industries

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French General: You Swiss are funny, you fight for money,
We, French, fight for the honour!
Swiss General: Yes, either of us fights for what he lacks!

and again:

French General: With the money we French pay you Swiss Mercenaries, we could pave the road from Paris to Rheims with gold.

Swiss General: Yes, and with the blood we Swiss spill in the service of France, we could fill a ditch from Paris to Rheims and so on.

Those were the days of the Mercenary and they were bad days for Switzerland, in spite of much money flowing back to the country. Money earned quickly and spent recklessly, money which brought not much blessing to those at home, but a lot of misery and debauchery. Money that often was a curse. And we certainly do not wish those good old days back, do we?

SWISS MERCANTILE SOCIETY.

The above Society held its Annual General Meeting at Swiss House on Wednesday, February 25th. Mr. M. Paschoud, President, was in the chair and over forty members were present when the proceedings started.

The minutes of the previous Extraordinary General Meeting were read and confirmed. The President thereupon summarized the Society's activities during the past year, mentioning in particular the two outstanding achievements, viz. the decision to register the Society in order to give it a legal status and the appointment of a professional auditor who for the first time had drawn up the balance sheets. The Society had thus made a great step towards its goal. The number of members during the period under review has slightly decreased, which is due to the adverse economic conditions and the more rigorous restrictions on immigration. Detailed reports bearing on the work of the Evening Classes, the Education Committee and the House Committee were read by Mr. E. Hardmeier, Hon. Chef de Cours, Mr. J. J. Pfendler, Hon. Secretary, Education Committee and Mr. W. L. Krucker, Chairman House Committee, respectively.

All reports were confirmed with acclamation and will be incorporated in the Annual Report for 1930, which will be issued shortly. The professional auditor, Mr. Percy H. Green, F.C.A., whose presence was warmly welcomed by the members, put before the Meeting the question of Income Tax. An application to the Commissioners of Inland Revenue for exemption as a charity within the meaning of the act had been rejected for the second time. Mr. Green cited a similar case which had been brought before the High Court and the judgment passed clearly indicated that in our case we do not stand a chance, as our activities only benefit our members and a distinct class of the community who must furthermore be of Swiss Nationality. Our Society is therefore not a charity within the meaning of the act and so liable to Income Tax.

The Balance Sheets, of which a copy had been sent to all members for perusal, were confirmed. The accounts do not show a profit on account of the heavy but justified expenditure in connection with the Education Department and its re-organisation which necessitated the engagement of additional staff. However on the whole the Society's finances must be considered as sound. We should also here express our best thanks to the Federal Government, the Central Secretariat and contributing firms and donors for their valuable help both financially and otherwise. In order not to make undue calls on our reserve funds and to materialize our aim, namely more adequate and more suitable accommodation for our educational activities, we are more than ever dependent on their help.

Mr. A. C. Stahelin, Chairman of the Education Committee, who chiefly occupied himself with the question of registration, was unfortunately prevented from being present. In a full report, which was read by the President, he proposed that in view of the vital changes in the income tax question and for other reasons we should withdraw our application made to the Board of Trade for a Licence to omit the word "Limited." It will be remembered that at the last Extraordinary General Meeting it was decided to register the Society and the College as one Company and the Club as another Company. It may be added that our solicitors had received an intimation that this licence would be granted as soon as the two companies had been registered. Mr. Stahelin, however, did not consider it worth while under the circumstances to tie up all our funds. A motion to this effect as incorporated in the circular convening the meeting, was passed unanimously. This required a further resolution, namely to authorize the General Committee to register the Society as a Company limited by guarantee and not having a share capital. This motion was adopted with only one dissident and brought to a successful issue the work begun

two years ago, when a Select Committee was appointed to study ways and means of registering the Society. Mr. A. C. Stahelin, Chairman of the said Committee has solved his tremendous task to the best interest of the Society and thus once more earned the society's gratitude for his unselfish services.

In view of the forthcoming registration, which, it is hoped, will be effected shortly, the present members of the various committees were authorized to continue in office until after registration when the statutory meeting will be held to appoint the Council. The first Council will consist of the signatories of the Memorandum of Association who had been appointed at a previous meeting. This terminated the General Meeting at about 10.30 p.m., which was followed, after a short interval, by the Ordinary Monthly Meeting to deal with matters of routine.

One minor election took place before the end of the meeting. Mr. W. Burren, Asst. Secy. was appointed as Delegate to the Swiss Sports Committee. Mr. W. L. Krucker, Chairman of the Entertainment Committee, announced that the last Cinderella Dance of the season will be held at the Midland Grand Hotel on Saturday, March 7th, and asked the members to give it their full support. This ended the meeting at 11.10 p.m.

SWISS BENEVOLENT SOCIETY.

The Annual General Meeting of the Committee of the above Society was held on the 23rd February 1931 at 34, Fitzroy Square, W.1, with the Swiss Minister in the Chair.

The Minutes of the last Meeting and the quarterly and annual accounts were read and duly passed. The Report of the official Auditors of the Society was also accepted.

The Secretary announced the loss which the Committee had sustained through the death of Mr. A. P. Rosselet-Droux. As a mark of respect to his memory the Members stood up in silence.

Mr. M. Golay, Manager of the Swiss Bank Corporation, reported respecting the Special Appeal made in favour of the Fonds Dimier. A report thereon will be published next month. The reporter and his colleagues were very heartily thanked for their great and successful efforts made on behalf of this Appeal.

The Treasurer, Mr. F. M. Gamper, made a statement regarding the investments of the Society. As the majority of these are gilt-edged, the position is satisfactory. A special Commission for the administration of the Securities of the Society was appointed, consisting of Messrs. F. M. Gamper, M. Golay and J. Oertli.

After the present Executive Committee had resigned, a new one for the current year was elected, and consists of Mr. R. Dupraz, President; Messrs. A. C. Baume, O. Gambazzi and F. Gamper, Vice-Presidents; Mr. J. Oertli, Treasurer; Mr. H. Schmid, Vice-Treasurer; and Mr. Th. Ritter, Secretary.

Messrs. Dupraz, Ritter and Oertli were asked to prepare the Annual Report for 1930. Messrs. P. Hiliker and A. Finger were appointed Auditors for the current year.

The question of writing the report in English came up for discussion and was declined, chiefly in order to facilitate its perusal by the numerous Swiss Authorities.

Three new pensioners were elected, aged 69, 70 and 74 respectively.

SUCCESES FOR SWISS INDUSTRIES.

Amongst the new buildings erected by the Society of Nations there is the station for wireless telegraphy at Prangins. Four large firms, German, English, Belgian and French, all of them specialists in wireless telegraphy have been entrusted with the installation of this station. These firms have placed an order with the S. A. des Ateliers de Sécheron at Geneva for three groups of converters with high tension dynamos (10,000 volts) for feeding the transmitting tubes, as well as two alternators for the reserve groups of the transmitting and receiving stations.

The Lake of Constance-Toggenburg Railway Company whose lines unite Romanshorn with the Ricken line via St. Gall, Herisau and Wattwil, has decided to electrify its various lines. The company has entrusted the Ateliers de Sécheron at Geneva with the installations for the electric driving of its new motor vehicles. The latter consist of 6 engines with 4 driving axles with 1800 HP hourly rating, and two motor coaches with 2 driving axles with 900 HP hourly rating. These eight vehicles will all have identical motors between them, fixed in the under-frame. This is the first time that motor coach bogies for normal railroads will be built without motors of the tramway type. The technical solution of the problem was rendered possible by adopting the Sécheron system of individually acting axles which are being used with full success on the Loetschberg railway and in Austria.

THE GREAT ST. BERNARD.

This winter is exceptionally severe up in the mountains. Seldom such masses of snow have fallen, nearly every day avalanches come down and do a lot of damage, crushing huts and cottages, already a good many people were buried by them.

On the Great St. Bernard the snow has reached a height of eight meters. The well-known cloister famous for its hospitality is nearly covered by snow. This cloister is one of the highest meteorological stations on the Alps and has an altitude of 2472 meters.

It is a favourite place for tourists for they are fed and lodged over night nothing is charged, but voluntary contributions are accepted and appreciated. The buildings were constructed in the 16th century, they are vast and comfortable, and can accommodate about a hundred people. The house contains a fine library, a welcome recreation especially during long winter days for the twenty monks and seven brothers, who live in the cloister. They are highly cultured ecclesiastics and selected from men used to the alps and northern countries.

By request of a missionary society in India two monks from that cloister have been sent, some time ago, to India to the Tibet, to arrange on a high mountain pass in the Tibet a cloister, or a so-called hostelry after the model of the one on the Great St. Bernard.

The faithful companions of the monks are the famous St. Bernard dogs, a breed heavily built with long brown and white hair, these dogs are trained to guide tourists, find them in the snow when collapsed from fatigue, or buried by avalanches. Each dog carries round his neck a flask of brandy or some other strong drink. Their most famous dog was Barry, which during his lifetime has saved the life of 70 persons.

The cloister has records about these dogs which run back 350 years. The monks accompanied by dogs maintain a continual patrol up and down the pass especially during winter time.

Berne, MISS E. DACHSEL.

Information Swiss National Tourist Office.

Reduced fares for the Motor Show at Geneva from March 6th to 15th will be granted to those visiting the above mentioned exhibition. Single fare tickets to Geneva are good for the return journey, provided they are stamped on the back side at the exhibition. This reduction includes single fare tickets bought on March 4th and 5th on the understanding that these may not be used for the return journey before March 6th.

The tickets are valid for 6 days, with the exception however, that those tickets bought on March 13th, 14th and 15th are only good until March 17th, 1931.

CONFERENCE AERONAUTIQUE.

Au cours de cette semaine a eu lieu à Londres une conférence Aéronautique Internationale.

Les séances se sont tenues au Ministère de l'Air et au Foreign Office. La délégation était composée de:

M. Robert Gsell, Ingénieur, 1er Chef de section de l'Office Aérien Fédéral à Berne. Monsieur de Bourg, 1er Secrétaire de notre Légation, M. Berger, de la station centrale Suisse de Météorologie à Zurich.

OBITUARY.

We regret to announce the death of Mr. Adolf Gloor from Zerwyl (Ct. Aargau) which took place on February the 17th after a long and patient born illness.

The interment took place at the St. Pancras Cemetery, Finchley. Mr. Gloor, who was born in 1879, was for over 20 years in this country and was a member of the Union Helvetia. He leaves a widow to whom we wish to express our sincere sympathy.

PERSONAL.

Monsieur C. R. Paravicini, Swiss Minister, was the guest of honour of the French-Speaking Group of the Forum Club at a musical evening last Thursday. Madame Lily Zaehner sang groups of French and German songs and Madame Ruff contributed recitations. Over 120 members and guests were present.

* * *

Monsieur Th. de Sonnenberg, Conseiller de Légation est de retour à Londres.

CONCERT—NEWS.

Mr. Arnold Dolmetsch announces a series of Three Concerts of Chamber Music, to be given in the Hall of the Art Workers' Guild at No. 6 Queen Square, Bloomsbury, W.C., on Wednesday evenings, March 11th, 18th, and 25th, at 8 o'clock.