

London Gossip

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THE FOYER SUISSE.

The Annual Meeting of the Foyer Suisse was held on Friday the 26th May, 1933, at No. 15, Upper Bedford Place, W.C.1., the Swiss Minister, Monsieur C. R. Paravicini, Hon. President of Trust being in the chair.

The agenda consisted of the ordinary statutory business:

Annual report
Financial report
Election of Council of Management for 1933/34 and Auditors.

The accounts were presented by Mr. R. J. Dixon, F.C.J.S., F.L.A.A., F.C.W.A., and accepted.

The following gentlemen were elected to form the Council of Management:

Rev. R. Hoffmann-de Visme, *President*;
Mr. F. G. Sommer, *Vice-President*;
Mr. H. Barth, *Treasurer*;
with Messrs C. Bertschinger, T. Bessire,
C. T. Hahn, H. Joss, A. Müller, and
J. Weber.

The annual report prepared by the Secretary as usual, and printed below was read discussed and fully approved.

The proceedings terminated with a vote of thanks to the chairman.

Mr. Chairman and Gentlemen,

The economic war which has swept over the world for more than 2 years has not yet abated its fury. The shrinkage of trade all over the world, the fall of commodity prices, the monetary confusion, coupled with a continuation of general political unrest marks the past year as the most difficult on record.

Such adverse conditions are bound to affect our Trust on its business side, and I think members will not be altogether surprised to find that the year's operations close up with a small deficit.

Anyone with insight will fully agree with the statement that maintaining its position as the Foyer has done, requires far greater efforts than surpluses of earlier and more prosperous years.

Your Council of Management has met 5 times during the year to receive the reports of the House Committee and the Secretary, and to manage the affairs in general.

The trust has lost one member by removal to Switzerland, Mr. Pradervand, who has accepted the Pastorate of Ressudens Claude Vand. Another member and founder of the Constitution of the Foyer Suisse, the late Mr. J. Baer, has, we regret to say, died in Switzerland during this year.

Our guests for the 12 months number 1,002, the lowest figure on record. Of this total 514 were of Swiss nationality, also the smallest percentage for the last 10 years. While in 1931-32 it was

difficult to have a full house all the year round, this past year has been even worse; our foreign visitors fell off still more, and our commercial people stayed for even shorter periods. Most of our new guests came through personal recommendations.

The thanks of the Trust are herewith expressed to Mr. W. Meyer manager, Mr. F. Kölliker and Mrs. Kölliker, housekeeper and their staff, as well as to Mr. R. J. Dixon the accountant.

Our charity donations amount to £226 2s. 3d. this does not include our social secretary expenditure of £133 17s. 3d.

1st Legacy received by the Foyer Suisse.

For the first time in our history we have been mentioned in a Will. Our late friend, Alfred Muller left us £50 free of Estate Duty and his own clock, which is now in use in this hall. May his initiative and example find many a follower.

It is a strange thing and nowadays an almost forgotten truth that if it were not for the fact of the Eglise Suisse having collected a fonds perdu the sum of £4,700 in cash in 1912-1913 our institution could not render all the services it does.

This brings me to the

Social Service Section of our report. It is now 20 years since the fund referred to was started. These 20 years are divided into 4 different distinct periods, everyone a sort of separate 5 years plan.

The first 5 years were dedicated to the husbanding of capital and the study of the legal form of the Trust.

The second 5 years were devoted to the setting up of the Trust.

The third 5 years were spent in rebuilding and the adaptation of premises.

The last 5 years have witnessed the gradual evolution of the social machinery in the Hall and Hostel for the reception and accommodation in London of young men and women, mainly of Swiss Nationality, without distinction of language or religion, where they may obtain assistance and advice, according to our Memorandum and Articles of Association.

Besides continuous domiciliary services to young people of both sexes, the young men have benefited by the Swiss Y.M.C.A. since 1923, and the French-speaking Y.M.C.A. since 1925.

The young Women's work has consisted of Réunion des Jeunes filles weekly since 1923, Schwozerkränzli weekly since 1924, Girls Sunday meeting since 1928.

Girls permanent Social secretary appointed by unanimous decision of the Council of Management in November, 1931.

The first provisional appointment has since been definitely confirmed by your Council on the 31st March last.

This last step was mentioned in our last report, and is the biggest piece of social service

ever undertaken by the Trust. As compared with the young men who had the benefit of the long-established Y.M.C.A.'s and a standing secretary at their disposal, it was high time that the young women should have their due, considering the fact that for one young man, who usually comes here for study, four to five girls arrive in England, mostly for service. The permanent appointment of a fully trained woman became therefore necessary in order to fulfil the essential demands of our statutes.

It must ever be born in mind that the main object of the establishment of the Foyer Suisse is to benefit a certain class of people, namely, "young men and women mainly of Swiss nationality," and that the benefit these people are to receive is "assistance and advice." The method of contact with them to this end is to be by means "of a Hall and Hostel centre of union."

For these purposes the funds and income of the Foyer Suisse must first and foremost be applied, and any diversion of the funds by way of donations or otherwise must not be detrimental to this main end. The appointment of a Girls Social Secretary was a right and proper step for the achievement of the main object for which the Foyer Suisse exists, especially having regard to the peculiar needs of young women and the lack in our Colony of institutions such as are available to the young men.

The Foyer has been very fortunate in the choice of Mlle G. de Vargas. This lady has the Diploma of the Ministère Feminiens de Genève, and 3 reports of her work have been put before your Council which were of a highly interesting nature and were accepted.

Our Social Secretary's Club Parlour is the answer to a real need, Mlle de Vargas has shown herself to be an enthusiastic and conscientious worker who understands our girls, and knows how to befriend them. The Foyer has thus created the ever open door of the Home away from Home.

Three Sunday afternoon programmes have been published during the year. During the Summer we arranged excursions, and during the Winter a series of lectures and concerts. The thanks of the Trust are due to the many Swiss and English friends who assisted us in making these afternoons pleasant and educational.

The Old Folks Christmas Luncheon was held in December with our Honorary President, Mons. Paravicini in the chair. It was attended by some 50 of our veterans of the Swiss Colony in London, and enjoyed to the fullest extent by all. By the suggestion of our Minister, this year's silver medal with due inscription of name and date of birth of the doyen of our old folks was given to Mlle. Gilbertine Weber de Genève born 21.11.1843. This compatriot was so overjoyed with the receipt of this memento that she sent a long letter inviting the members of the Foyer Suisse to come and

LONDON GOSSIP.

— DERBY WEEK. —

We have been swimming the other day when everybody was talking about a heat wavelet, which, as you know, means 75°F. in the shade of the Monica Bar. — To put that more clearly, this is the bar with the side entrance from Shaftesbury Avenue, and incidentally well-known to many a business man from "Ennenda." — Oh yes, all drinks are served by females behind the counter. —

In the swimming pool in Paddington, we just had to turn our eyes towards a lady of about 16 stones, whose locomotion seemed to be extremely difficult on dry land; but she moved in the water as gracefully as a goldfish. — No wonder the old family members of Dinosaursia got so self-conscious when they had to go on land for a picnic or something, and finally decided to die in disgust, when the waters definitely withdrew. —

Maybe here is our way to relieve the London traffic and other congestions, by building suitable waterways where the "well-proportioned" just could "slip" from shop to shop, or from restaurant to restaurant. — But, how on earth shall we get all human "inflatons" to swim, and where should we get all the water from — in London.

But there is still some other hope to look forward to: the wax bath is the latest method of reducing. The "patient" gets into a basket lined with oiled paper and is covered with warm medicated wax. One hour in this soft mould is supposed to take off several pounds. — Whoever thinks of going to try this out on Saturday night, better keep it secret from the family and other friends — not only because of the mess — but there is a patent on this treatment! —

Talking about reducing and so forth — why not "work" for a while with Tramun? It certainly must be exhilarating to drop 17,250 ft. with a stop watch in one hand and a string of a parachute in the other, figuring out the drop in miles

per hour. Tramun says that it is quite simple, as long as one does not start revolving which, of course, would necessitate a further calculation: ft. per Min. x 12 divided by dia. in inch x 3.14 = Revolutions per minute. This is undoubtedly asking for trouble! And we unhesitatingly agree that this extra work would considerably reduce the comfortability of the ordinary "falling down." — After all, one is supposed to pull the string for opening the parachute sooner or later. Tramun pulled it when he began to see the earth in a distance of 3,750 ft.

In a case like this it must be tough luck to step on the "gas" instead of stepping on the brakes. — as that lady-driver did the other day, when she was backing the car into the garage. — But, of course, she always could blame the other cars for not being at their proper places.

Some time ago, somebody in America struck again a great idea, called it "Technocracy," and sold it to the tired world as something to think about. Technocracy was, in a way, an accusation — but then who cares to be accused — and so this great idea faded away. And now Prof. I. M. Passano found out that "thinking" wouldn't do the trick, but realized that nearly everybody believes his doctor, if he gives a latin name to an imaginary pain. And so he discovered a disease, called "Macrocephalism." He says that this disease has for some time been prevalent in big business circles. — The most interesting and remarkable symptoms of macrocephalism is that it causes the patient to know — or to think he knows — everything. The patient will undertake the solution of every problem of science, economics, politics or finance. All of which would be very comforting to mankind were it not that all the solutions are infused with the vagueness, the vacuity, of a mind working under the influence of disease. — It is said that efforts all over the world to treat the disease have met with little success.

The New York Herald Tribune shows a picture in the Rotogravure section: a close snap of a table in a Wurttemberg café, with a dining cover,

a cup of coffee, bread, etc., and a placard in the midst of it, stating "I am Swiss." The purpose is to protect the customers, so that Nazis would not disturb the diner, though he be a Jew. — Are we to take this as a compliment, or as an insult? says William Tell.

And then we had another argument with a Reverend who just did not want to believe that each and everybody sees a different rainbow, no matter how close we all stand together looking at it!

That Culbertson is coming to England should be cheerful news to many of us. — We do not suggest, of course, that he might improve our individual tricks to a great extent, but then Culbertson was the man who said, after the fight was over: that the word "luck" should be kicked out of the bridge vocabulary, since chances are even in the long run. — Yes, but now what about the old excuse: that was just bad luck, darling?!

We hear again that our famous complain to be in a rather bad way, and that even Prof. Laur cannot give heaven to them for always. — So far as that goes, we sympathise with the old man who said: There is a lot of pity wasted on animals. There are many contented cows, but who ever heard of a contented farmer?

Well, it is absolutely your own fault, if you missed to bring something home from Epsom downs. After all, Naylor told everybody just what horse was going to win, — and it does not pay to be highbrow where the stars and the "Sunday Express" are involved! But there is another Derby next year, and maybe, even another Irish sweep; and all horses running then will again be 3 years old, and you can buy, blushing all over, another secret tip for a shilling.

In the meantime, we would suggest for a rainy Sunday, to read again Arnold Bennett's "Imperial Palace," or Stephen Graham's latest, "Twice around the clock."

Mops.