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SWISS MERCANTILE SOCIETY.

The Annual General Meeting of the Society was held at Swiss House on Wednesday, 17th February.

The Chairman, Mr. O. Grob, in opening the proceedings, expressed his pleasure at seeing so many members present, among whom were several Trustees and past Presidents. He extended a cordial welcome to Dr. R. Faessler, Commercial Counsellor, and Mr. W. Rieser, Attaché, at the Swiss Embassy.

In reviewing the accounts for 1959, which had been circulated among the members, the Chairman stated that the Society could look back on a year's satisfactory progress. After various allocations to reserves for renewals, repairs and decorations at Swiss House, as well as to the Lease Contingencies Reserve Account, the final deficit was within the range of subsidy to be received from the Swiss Government in respect of approved items in the expenditure of the College.

The accounts as submitted were unanimously adopted and the auditor, Mr. Robert P. Huxley, F.C.A., was reappointed.

Reporting on the Society's 71st year of activities, the Chairman gave details of the lectures and film shows in connection with the monthly meetings. The programme had been attractive and varied and had given members an opportunity of discussing topics and problems of general interest. A family outing in

summer and a visit to a newspaper in the autumn had enriched the programme. The membership had been maintained, despite the regrettable loss through death of several members of long standing.

At the end of the year, the records showed:—

25 Honorary Members	...	...	(1958 — 27)
221 Active Members	...	...	(1958 — 220)
14 Corresponding Members	...	...	(1958 — 15)
47 Contributing Members	...	...	(1958 — 55)

The Chairman expressed thanks to all who had contributed towards making the year a successful one, mentioning in particular the support received from the Swiss Embassy in London, the Central Secretariat in Zurich and the Federal Authorities (BIGA) in Berne, as well as from the many active and subscribing members and contributing firms.

The report of the College was presented by the Chairman, Mr. A. Jaccard. For the second year in succession the attendance had shown an increase, 446 students having been admitted as against 414 in 1958. Of these, 273 had sat for the diploma examination, 242, or 89%, having been successful, as compared with 91% in the previous year. The high standard required of the students had been fully maintained and the number of successful candidates testified to the excellence of the teaching. The College had a staff of 12 well qualified teachers, all of whom had specialised knowledge and experience in their particular subjects. The report also gave details of



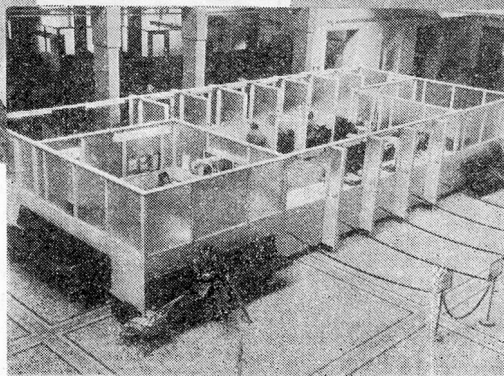
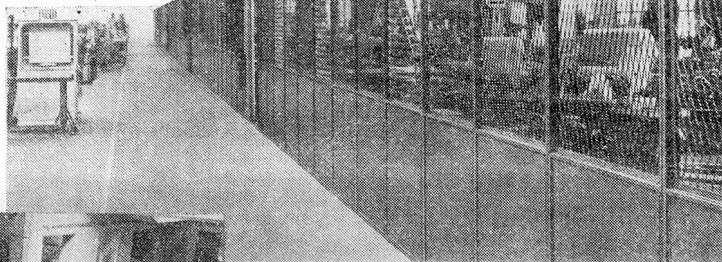
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excursions, visits to factories and commercial concerns as well as to various Exchanges and undertakings. Special lectures, socials and sport, also figured in the programme and the College Football team had had some notable successes.

The evening classes also had maintained their upward trend, the total attendance having been 893 students (344 male and 549 female) in 48 classes, compared with 850 in 43 classes during the previous year.

Particularly gratifying were the results obtained at external examinations. Out of 39 students who had sat for the examination for the Certificate of Proficiency in English of Cambridge University, 30, or 77%, were successful, which compared very favourably with an overall 36% for the whole country.

A record number of 144 candidates had sat for the Lower Certificate in English under the same auspices and of these 79, or 55%, were successful, a slightly higher percentage than that for the whole country.

Finally, the Chairman of the Education Committee was pleased to report that in the past year the British authorities had granted labour permits for commercial employment to a number of our students and other young compatriots, some with the assistance of our secretarial staff.

Mr. R. Chappuis, Chairman of the House Committee, gave a brief account of repairs and alterations carried out at Swiss House and the amenities offered to members and students. He also gave details of the accommodation provided for external examinations, as well as to other Swiss societies and institutions.

The reports, as presented, were unanimously adopted, thanks being expressed for the comprehensive and able manner in which they had been compiled.

Proceeding with the election, the meeting elected Mr. A. C. Stahelin, Hon. Member of the Central Society and the London Section, as Chairman pro tem. He was pleased to announce that, with one exception, all the outgoing members of the Council and the Committees had offered themselves for re-election. On behalf of the meeting, he expressed thanks to them all for the services they had rendered to the Society during their term of office, singling out for special mention the President, who had so ably conducted the affairs of the Society. The candidates, as nominated, were duly elected and the final composition of the Council and the Committees was as follows:—

Council: Chairman: Mr. O. Grob; Trustees: Messrs. J. J. Boos, H. Knoll, L. W. Krucker, F. G. Sommer, C. Voegeli; Members: Messrs. J. W. Bonjour, R. Chappuis, A. Faes, A. Jaccard, W. Meier, J. E. Schneider, R. Senn, F. Streit.

General Purposes Committee: President: Mr. O. Grob; Vice-Presidents: Messrs. R. Chappuis and A. Jaccard; Hon. Secretary: Mr. J. E. Schneider; Hon. Treasurer: Mr. R. Senn; Members: Messrs. H. Andrea, H. Mock, E. P. Siegfried, E. Zwicky.

Education Committee: Chairman: Mr. A. Jaccard; Vice-Chairman: Mr. A. Faes; Members: Messrs. J. W. Bonjour, F. Burri, G. Hediger, O. Luterbacher.

House Committee: Chairman: Mr. R. Chappuis; Vice-Chairman: Mr. H. J. Keller; Members: Mrs. W. Meier and Mr. W. Schedler.

On resuming the Chair, Mr. Grob thanked Mr. Stahelin for the expeditious manner in which he had dealt with the election and submitted the following resolution proposed by the Council:—

“That the active members’ annual subscription be increased from £1.0.0. to £1.2.0. as from 1st January, 1960.”

The difference was intended to cover the increase in the central subscription of members abroad.

The resolution was adopted unanimously and the proceedings then terminated.

W.B.

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