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LONDON SWISS PHILATELIC SOCIETY.

Following the official business of the Meeting held at Swiss House, on Saturday, 26th February, 1944, the 26 members present had the pleasure of seeing a small exhibition of stamps which had previously been neatly laid out on stands in a separate room. The following exhibits were displayed :—

The Swiss Minister, Monsieur W. Thurnheer, had very kindly loaned the Society a copy of the Geneva Postal Centenary Brochure issued by the Postal Authorities. This booklet contained a mint and used copy of the miniature sheet, the latter being cancelled with the special red postmark.

Mr. Hausermann had delved into his large specialized collection of Great Britain extracting some 40 sheets which made up a display of the Line Engraved and Embossed issues which was a real treat. The condition throughout was very fine with several coloured Maltese Cross postmarks on the 1d. Blacks. Amongst the line engraved issues there were some very fine examples of "Ivory Heads" which were commented on by several members. Similar remarks were passed about the 6d., 10d. and 1/- embossed stamps of 1847/54 which were represented in singles and pairs.

Mr. E. A. Gotz contributed three most interesting and unusual sheets on which were mounted the Swiss "Kocher" stamps. The fact that Mr. Gotz gave members a short talk on these stamps added very much to the displayed interest. Mr. Gotz informed us that his

Brother-in-law, Mr. A. Kocher, owner of the Drapery Stores, A. Kocher et Fils, of La Chaux-de-Fonds and Vevey had the idea of using adhesive labels to advertise his wares, but instead of sticking the postage stamps on the labels and the latter on postal matter, he had in mind labels imprinted with the postage stamps themselves. For this purpose he obtained special permission from the Postal Authorities and in June 1909 the Official stamp printers overprinted in all 16,000 labels with the three denominations, 2, 5 and 10 centimes. This form of advertising proved to be a great success but when a further 60,000 labels were ordered from the printers with the intention of having these imprinted with postage stamps, the Postal Authorities withdrew their consent. It is assumed that the post offices were continually asked by philatelists for these stamps, which they, of course, could not supply. The 16,000 which were imprinted with stamps were made up as follows :—

2 centimes 2,000; 5 centimes 12,000; 10 centimes 2,000. The frames of the "Kocher" stamps were issued in four colours, red, blue, green and mauve and of the three denominations the 2 centimes is the rarest, particularly the stamp with the mauve frame. Mr. Gotz remarked that when his brother-in-law wanted one of these (2 cts.) stamps at the end of the last war, he had to pay 100 Sw.Frs. (gold) for it. It is understood that these "Kocher" stamps have never been demonetized and were certainly used in 1939 thirty years after for postage purposes without raising any objection by the Postal Authorities.

Mr. J. J. Schneider in exhibiting his four sheets of Prussia made a nice display of shade varieties consisting of the 1850/56; 1858/60; 1861/65 issues. These were attractively laid out and neatly written up. Of special interest were his copies of the 10sgr. rose and 30sgr. blue from the 1866 issue on gold-beater's skin. These two stamps were not sold to the public, but were affixed in the Post Office to heavy packets requiring them.

Two further items were displayed from the Philippine Islands. One being an air-mail cover franked with various denominations of the "Commonwealth" commemorative series of 1935 and the other item consisted of stamps from the 1932 series overprinted with a sea-plane and the inscription "Round-The-World-Flight/VON GRONAU/1932".

J.B.

CITY SWISS CLUB.

Well over 200 members and guests attended the Thé Dansant, 19th February, at the Dorchester Hotel, in London.

And the afternoon was really devoted to Dancing as the Dorchester Hotel Band struck up for the first round shortly after 4 o'clock and the immediate filling of the splendid dance floor proved again how everybody had been waiting for this signal. The Comité must be congratulated on their arrangements as everything ran smoothly, with no speeches, no hitch or interruptions, and all taking part could enjoy themselves in an informal and easy way until 6 p.m. when the last dance ended and with it a very pleasant afternoon.

P.A.M.



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