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SWISS MERCANTILE SOCIETY.

A large number of members and friends were present at the Monthly Meeting, held at Swiss House on Wednesday, December 12th.

The President, Mr. J. J. Boos, who had just returned from a visit to Switzerland, was in the Chair.

One new member, Miss L. R. Vogel, was duly elected and her admission was particularly welcomed by the Ladies' Group who, apart from looking after the catering side, are taking an increasing interest in the Society's educational and social activities.

The main item on the Agenda was the President's Report on his mission to Switzerland, where he contacted both the Central Authorities of the Association in Zurich and the Government Department dealing with Education and Employment in Berne.

After an interval of several years, the London Section is again in a position to resume its collaboration with the "Zentralverein" in all fields of activity and to renew its co-operation with the numerous sister sections at home and abroad. The President's visit was heartily welcomed in Zurich, as was evinced by a dinner in his honour at which all the leading personalities of the S.K.V. were present, to whom it is a source of satisfaction that the London Section before long will again be able to play its part in the professional and linguistic education of our young compatriots. The President's wife, on this occasion, was specially honoured with the Golden Badge of the S.K.V., the first lady to receive this coveted insignia.

Mr. Boos was able to receive the fullest support of all concerned to enable the Society to re-open its College and to make such arrangements as circumstances permit. An annual grant from the Federal Authorities has been ensured and bursaries will be awarded to students able to qualify. From the numerous enquiries received, there appears little doubt that applications will for a long time exceed the accommodation available at Swiss House and students will, therefore, have to be selected according to their special merits.

It was also gratifying to many present that the President was able to take up the question of sending young Anglo-Swiss to our home country for their higher education, be it to Commercial High Schools, Technical and other Professional Colleges or the Universities. Bursaries and Scholarships for this purpose are awarded by "Pro Juventute" and similar institutions, but there are still certain difficulties to be overcome and the President appeared hopeful that a beginning in this direction could be made in the not too distant future.

Last but not least, the President touched on the question of employment, probably the most difficult of all, but steps are also being taken in this direction by the appropriate authorities on a reciprocal basis, such as already exists between Switzerland and some of its neighbouring countries.

The President concluded his report by giving members his impressions of present-day conditions in Switzerland, both in the industrial and economic spheres.

The Annual General Meeting was fixed for Saturday, February 23rd, at Swiss House and members are asked kindly to note the date.

The next Monthly Meeting, to be held on Wednes-

day, January 9th, will be followed by a Jass and Whist evening, on the lines of the November meeting, which proved very successful.

Before terminating the official proceedings, the Chairman extended to all present best wishes for Christmas and the New Year.

The remainder of the evening was devoted to a Film Show. The Ministry of Information, from whose extensive library a number of excellent films had been shown on previous occasions, had kindly put three topical films at our disposal. The first two dealt with the production and manufacture of commodities, the lack of which made itself acutely felt during the war years. Under the title of "Indian Rubber," the production of rubber from tree culture to tyres was vividly portrayed and described. Equally interesting was the second film, "From Silkworm to Parachute," depicting the silk industry in India. A feature of these films was three running commentaries which were well conceived, interesting and not in the least devoid of humour. None of us who have lived here during the days of the "Blitz" will forget the attacks on the City of Coventry and we were all eager to see what a new town looks like, if only from scale models. "A City Reborn" not only showed the utter destruction of this industrious Cathedral City but provided a discussion of the problems and opportunities presented by the task of its rebuilding. The dialogue was aptly provided by people in various walks of life, all eager to see their town come to life again, rebuilt according to modern planning. If the town will look anything like the models shown in the film, the new Coventry certainly will be a fine City.

The programme would not have been complete without at least one Swiss film. By courtesy of the Swiss Federal Railways, we were able to show "Men of the Alps," a general film with views from many parts of the country and in fact the film might equally well have been styled "A travers la Suisse."

The projection was, as customary, in the efficient hands of our member, Mr. Charles Fer, who had in fact curtailed his stay in Switzerland by several days to enable the S.M.S. to hold its Film Show as arranged, for which our special thanks are due to him.

Thus came to a close a most interesting and enjoyable evening.

W.B.

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