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SWISS MERCANTILE SOCIETY.

The monthly meeting was held at Swiss House on 14th June, under the Chairmanship of our President, Mr. W. Meier. Among the members excused as absent was Mr. A. Steinmann, a former President, who was reported to be cruising in the Mediterranean on his honeymoon.

The meeting accepted four new members, but had regretfully to lapse four, owing to unpaid subscriptions.

Mr. Meier told us that the 1st August badges were available for sale at the official price of 1/8. The Swiss Legation was agreeable, however, to our selling them at 1/6 in the hope that many would be prepared to pay 2/- for this worthy cause. The Swiss National Celebrations would be held on Sunday, 30th July next, at the Stoll Theatre, Kingsway.

Attention was also drawn to a talk by Dr. Arnold Saxer, Director of the Bundesamt für Sozialversicherung, Berne, on the implications of the voluntary Old Age and Dependents Insurance (A.H.V.) for the Swiss Abroad, which was given at Swiss House on 21st June.

Mention was made of a book entitled "The Young Traveller in Switzerland", by Mrs. Mariann Meier, published by Phoenix House London at 7/6, which will be on sale on 29th June. This book will be particularly suitable for children from 11 to 15 years, and introduces them by easy stages to Switzerland and its institutions.

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Mr. J. J. Boos then gave a report on the Delegate Meeting held at Basle on 6/7th May. It was attended by 377 delegates and guests, representing 131 sections, comprising 51,450 members, of whom 12,000 are women. The society has, in addition, some 6,000 junior members (apprentices). The most important resolutions passed at Basle dealt with:

The rejection by the S.M.S. of the Federal Finance Reform which favoured the working classes and the well-to-do at the expense of the middle class.

The determined stand in favour of salary maintenance and full employment in commercial occupations which constituted the hard-won gains since the war. It was noted with regret that no adequate provision had been made by the competent authorities to provide employment in commercial pursuits in the event of severe trade recession as was the case for manual workers at the behest of the trade unions.

The proposition that cost of living additions be now added to basic salaries in a manner which takes account of the reduced purchasing power of money.

We were pleased to learn that our very able and highly respected Central President, Mr. Karl Strickler, was re-elected for a further term of office. It was also interesting to hear that the questionnaire we received from Zurich regarding the effect of devaluation had been answered by 83 members in 26 different countries, and that the information thus obtained proved of great value to our Central Secretary, Mr. Ph. Schmid-Ruedin.

In accordance with our usual practice it was decided not to hold any meetings during the holiday months of July and August.

At this point we were shown the long awaited film, "100 years of Swiss Constitution". Those who expected to profit from the occasion to brush up their knowledge of recent Swiss history must have been somewhat disappointed. It showed some interesting shots of the battle of ideas 100 years ago, the transition from Cantonal currency, postage stamps, customs and toll duties, army uniforms to federal standards and organisation. After this it dealt in an interesting manner with the impetus given by the Federal Constitution of 1848, as amended in 1874, to industry, commerce, education, etc., without destroying the individuality of the separate parts of the Bundesstaat.

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As an extra we saw a film on the treatment and cure of tuberculosis at Leysin, which was very interesting and full of beautiful vistas of the country of that neighbourhood.

E.H.S.

"BERNER YODLERKLUB" IN LONDON.

A limited number of members of the Swiss Colony in London, had the good fortune to spend a few enjoyable hours in the company of the "Berner Jodlerklub", on Friday, June 30th, at the "Schweizerbund", 74, Charlotte Stree, W.1.

These well-known "Yodlers" from Berne, had arranged an informal little dinner, previous to their departure to Llangollen where they were attending the Welsh Eisteddfodd.

Amongst the visitors, bidden to their table were several members of the Swiss Legation and the "Schweizerbund." An excellently prepared dinner, served with some of the best vintage wines, created a very happy and carefree atmosphere, little speeches in "Bärndütsch" and "Baslerdütsch" were made and compliments exchanged.

The choir sang a number of songs from their large repertoire in excellent style, and a "Ländlerkapelle" supplied lively dance-music. The Yodelling and singing lasted until midnight whilst in between young and old waltzed to their hearts content.

There was even a "Schnitzelbank" composed on the spot, by the brother of Mr. Siegrist, a former President of the "Schweizerbund", who came over from Basle.

As a token of gratitude for having been able to spend an exceedingly happy evening amidst their countrymen in London the President of the "Yodlerklub" presented to the President of the "Schweizerbund" a beautifully carved "Bärnermutz", this unexpected and generous present was accepted with hearty thanks.

Before the evening came to a close, many wishes for success at the Eisteddfodd were expressed, and everyone left 74, Charlotte Street, with the happy feeling of having had a really good time.

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