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SWISS MERCANTILE SOCIETY.

Monthly Meeting held on 13th June, 1951.

Mr. W. Meier, our President, opened the meeting by referring to the sudden death of our member, Mr. George Wahl, who was well-known and loved in the Colony and in our Society. The meeting paid him the usual tribute by standing in silence.

After the routine business was disposed of, Mr. Meier informed us that 44 S.K.V. members would arrive at Victoria Station on 23rd June, at 4.05 p.m. on a conducted tour. It was decided to authorise the Committee to spend £20 on entertaining the party at the Empress Hall ballet and ice show. 7/6 tickets would be available at 5/6. About two dozen members expressed their readiness to join the party.

The President then gave his report on the Delegate Conference which he and Mr. Krucker had attended in Lausanne in May. He dealt at some length with the two principal resolutions before the conference:

1. concerning the rise in the cost of living, and instructing the Federal Council to watch the position and, if necessary, to re-introduce price control.
2. Requesting the Federal Authorities to devise ways and means of finding steady employment for employees over 40, who are in danger of losing their jobs or have already lost them. They find it difficult to obtain employment because pension schemes cater for people with a ceiling of 35 to 40 years. A pension scheme is suggested which allows mobility in employment.

The subject of Mr. Schmid-Ruedin's address was the tendency in modern employment to over-specialisation. He advocated that the S.K.V. should counteract the disadvantages of this tendency by widening the theoretical knowledge of its members.

Mr. Krucker spoke briefly but comprehensively about the social arrangements at Lausanne.

Mr. Meier then reported on the special Committee appointed by the Federal Council in 1945, to study the problems of the Swiss abroad. Their findings are now in the hands of the Federal Council. They make proposals many of which originated with the Swiss abroad, such as:

Abolition of military tax for Swiss permanently living abroad.

Creation of a bank which can grant loans to Swiss abroad for special purposes.

Transferability of savings of Swiss abroad to Switzerland, while still working abroad and when retiring.

Provision for Swiss abroad to take out new life insurance policies.

Abolition of double taxation.

To encourage Swiss abroad, trade, industry and finance must make concessions in favour of the Swiss abroad, Swiss trade and diplomatic delegations must bear this in mind when negotiating agreements in other countries.

The lively discussion which concluded the meeting at 9.30 p.m. evidenced the interest aroused by the President's report.

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