

Zeitschrift: The Swiss observer : the journal of the Federation of Swiss Societies in the UK
Herausgeber: Federation of Swiss Societies in the United Kingdom
Band: - (1955)
Heft: 1247

Rubrik: Swiss Club Manchester

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SWISS CLUB MANCHESTER.

Lecture by Mr. W. R. Renfer on "Indian Cotton — from Grower to Spinner" on Thursday, March 10th, 1955.

In the Chair: Mr. H. Monney, President.

Two years ago we initiated a series of talks by our members on the subject of "My Job". This is the third of the series. As for the previous two lectures, the first by our Consul, Mr. O. Schneider on "The Consular Service" and the second by Mr. E. Berner on "The Manufacture of Velvets", Mr. Renfer has succeeded in making of his subject a really enjoyable evening. The audience is unanimous in proclaiming it a great success.

The ultimate impression is that the speaker knows his subject in its most intricate details and could convey it to his audience in a fluent and expressive language, pleasing to the ear and easy to understand, all this in an impeccable English.

After a few comments on the Cotton plant and its cultivation and varieties, followed by an inkling of statistics, he took us through the Cotton fields of India and Pakistan and we could visualize the picking of the cotton, mostly by girls of 7 to 8 years of age. Child labour is illegal but the Indian is an adept at dodging the Government Inspectors by an effective method of signalling.

We were told of the ginning (cleaning), the packing and the means of transport, of the sensitivity of the Cotton plant to varieties of soil and variations in the weather and of its effects on quality. Mention was made of the plans elaborated by the Indian and Pakistan Governments for the improvement of the

growth and of the staple of the fibre. We heard amusing incidents of Indian merchants with their inveterate speculating failings and their belief in astrologers, etc. Then, of course, we were initiated in the secrets of the merchandising of Cotton and the immensity of the job, with cables and telephone calls at all hours of the day and the night, and of the methods elaborated for the settlement of claims for variations in quality, a procedure based on trade customs and agreed to automatically.

The interest of the audience can be gathered by the number of questions and comments after the talk, all very sensible and showing that the subject had been understood and appreciated.

A vote of thanks was proposed by Mr. M. Lichtensteiger and seconded by Mr. A. Bébié.

H.M.



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