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SWISS MERCANTILE SOCIETY.

Visit of National-Councillor Schmid-Ruedin, Central President S.K.V.

The Monthly Meeting of the Swiss Mercantile Society, which took place on Wednesday, September 11th, at 35 Fitzroy Square, W.1, was poorly attended, no doubt, due to the fact that a good many of the members were still away on holiday.

The President, Mr. W. Meier, opened the meeting at 6.30 p.m., and once again had the sad duty of informing the members of the passing away of a number of active and contributory members, namely Messrs. Charles Gysin, E. A. Gotz and L. Schmidlin (active members), and Messrs. W. E. Gattiker and Paul Walser (contributing members). The usual tribute was paid to the departed.

There were three resignations and three admissions.

Mr. Meier informed the meeting that particulars concerning the revision of the Military Tax and the "Invaliden Versicherung" had been received but had not yet been studied. Consequently they would come up for discussion at a later date. He also mentioned that the new by-laws of the S.K.V. had come to hand which primarily concerned the sections at home and were, therefore, of secondary interest to the London section. Mr. A. C. Stähelin, a former President of the S.M.S. and Honorary Member of the S.K.V., referred shortly to some of the alterations which have been embodied in the new regulations.

The President informed the company that the Council of the S.M.S. had appointed Mr. W. Burren as permanent secretary to the Society and to the College in succession to Mr. J. Hauser, who had relinquished his post owing to an appointment with a business concern. He reiterated that the new secretary was eminently fitted for this position, having had previous experience as assistant to Mr. J. Schneider, and as Chairman, for a number of years, of the Education Department. It was also mentioned that until Mr. Burren was available Mr. R. Chappuis would act as secretary *pro tem*. The announcement of Mr. Burren's election was greeted with applause.

Mr. C. Slade, Principal of the College of the Swiss Mercantile Society, gave some particulars regarding the working of the College.

Mr. Meier then referred to the circular sent out to the members informing them that National-Councillor Schmid-Ruedin, Central President of the S.K.V., who, on the occasion of attending the Inter-Parliamentary Conference in London, would address the meeting on some of the recent and more important decisions and questions to be taken and studied by the Federal Chambers.

Owing to the late arrival of the plane conveying Mr. Schmid-Ruedin to London he was unable to appear at the time fixed, and when he eventually arrived very little time was available for him to address the meeting, as previous arrangements had been made for a dinner in his honour.

The President warmly greeted the *conferencier* expressing his, and the members', pleasure at having him once again in their midst.

Mr. Schmid-Ruedin, replying to the President's introductory remarks, expressed his satisfaction at being able to meet again the members of the London section. He referred briefly to some of the principal questions which at present occupy the Federal Chambers, such as the 4th revision of the A.H.V., the eventual reduction of foreign labour in Switzerland, and the scarcity of available capital after the boom years in the capital market.

The speaker said that one of the most pressing and important tasks before Parliament was the coming "Finanzreform" of the Confederation. New proposals which have been carefully studied by a commission consisting of members of both Houses will be put on the agenda for the next session. He expressed the hope that a satisfactory solution of this intricate business would be found, but mentioned that the ultimate verdict would remain with the Swiss people themselves.

As to the "Kriegsschäden" question concerning the Swiss abroad, he mentioned that generous allocations would be made.

Mr. Schmid-Ruedin, in reply to questions by Messrs J. J. Boos and Mr. Meier concerning the A.H.V., said that the recent revision might not be the last one, and that undoubtedly ways and means will be found for admitting those who in the past were barred from joining.

The speaker in conclusion referred to the general conditions prevailing in Switzerland, especially in regard to wages, which he declared to be satisfactory.

The president warmly thanked Mr. Schmid-Ruedin for his *exposé*, expressing his regrets that not more time had been available for a discussion.

* * *

The meeting was followed by an informal and excellent dinner at Kettner's Restaurant, Romilly Street, Soho, W.1, at which a number of former Presidents and Honorary Members both of the S.M.S. and the S.K.V. with their ladies were present. Mr. A. Stauffer and Mrs. A. Stauffer, a former President and Hon. Member of the S.M.S., were the guests of the Society on this occasion.

This happy gathering was a most pleasant affair, and has still further cemented the intimate and cordial relations which exist between the mother Society in Switzerland and the London section.

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