

Swiss Benevolent Society

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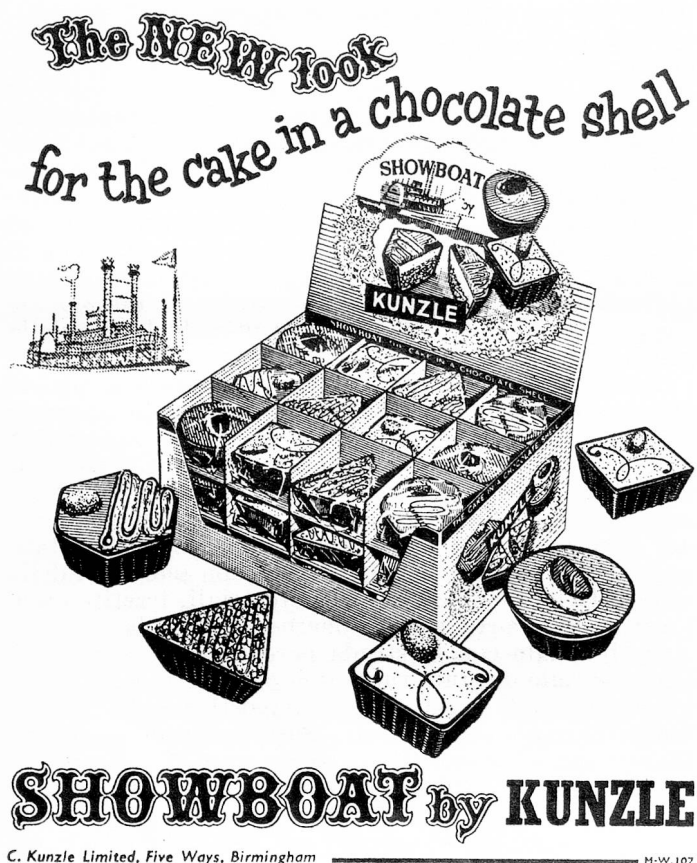
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In 1870 the Swiss Benevolent Society began its good work. On 28th March this year the President, Mr. F. G. Sommer, announced to the Annual General Meeting that in the course of its 90 years of existence the Society had distributed £175,143.13.9. This is a fortune, but even whilst appreciating its size, it is hardly possible to visualize how much this has meant in relief and help in individual cases of hardship. This could not have been achieved had it not been for the loyal support of the Colony for nearly a century, nor, indeed, without the hard work and faithful services of the Officers and Executive Committee. Time and again men and women have come forward with unselfish devotion and carried out the difficult task of looking after the poorer compatriots.

The Ambassador, Monsieur A. Daeniker, who was present at the last meeting, expressed his appreciation and gratitude to the members of the Committee, and above all to the hard-working Executive Committee, for their services. The Hon. Treasurer, Mr. M. Rothlisberger, explained that in spite of efforts to raise the income, 1959 once again showed a deficit. This was inevitable as long as subscriptions were on the decline and expenses going up. Last year the National Assistance Board had increased its grants, and the Swiss Benevolent Society felt obliged to follow suit and increase its rates to the old people in need by five shillings a week to a single person and nine shillings for a married couple. This means that an additional £250 a year will have to be found for a full year, this increase having started only at the end of the year. Over £3,600 were again spent on pensions and the number of pensioners was kept fairly steady at about 68. There were just over a hundred covenants under which the Society was able to claim income tax paid by the subscriber and which, in 1959, had brought in £434 in refunds alone. If only more subscribers, without extra cost to themselves, could see their way to sign such a covenant for seven years, the deficit would be wiped out very quickly. And how much easier would be the task of the Society, especially that of the Executive Committee, whose members had kindly accepted nomination for office once again and who were unanimously, and gratefully, re-elected at the Annual General Meeting.

The President was able to close the meeting on a note of optimism. 1959 had been an active and satisfactory year, and it was hoped that the new year was going to be equally rewarding in spite of worries about the future. Finally he announced that the former President of the Society, Colonel Bon, had left it a handsome legacy in his will. This would be a lasting reminder of Anton Bon's valuable services and wholehearted support.

Mariann.

[For particulars of the covenanted subscription scheme please apply to the Secretary, Mr. J. Zimmermann, Swiss Benevolent Society, 31 Conway Street, London W.1.]