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SWISS MERCANTILE SOCIETY

The Monthly Meeting of the Society, held at Swiss House on Wednesday, 7th December, was honoured by the presence of the Swiss Ambassador, Monsieur A. Daeniker, to whom the President, Mr. O. Grob, extended a cordial welcome. Among the exceptionally large attendance were members of the Swiss Male Choir, who had accepted the Society's invitation to the meeting.

Following the customary agenda, which was speedily dealt with, Mr. F. G. Sommer, a Trustee and Honorary Member of the Society, gave a talk on his visit to Canada and the U.S.A.

Although Mr. Sommer's journey was primarily undertaken to visit — accompanied by Mrs. Sommer — his daughter and her family in Saskatoon, Canada, it soon became evident that he included in it a sight-seeing tour on a grand scale.

After having given an itinerary of his tour, Mr. Sommer went on to show a selection from his large collection of colour slides. The scenery encountered on a journey from Montreal via Ottawa, the Great Lakes, Winnipeg, the Rocky Mountains and British Columbia to Vancouver offers, of course, plenty of scope for photography, of which Mr. Sommer fully availed himself. We saw well planned cities with imposing buildings and seemingly endless traffic lanes. We also had a glimpse of family life and were impressed by the ultra-modern interior of the wooden bungalows which abound in a country rich in timber. Unsurpassed in beauty, however, was some of the scenery in the Rockies and their holiday resorts, such as Banff in Alberta, noted for sulphur springs. With keen interest we followed Mr. Sommer's trail and listened to his instructive and entertaining commentary. It brought home to us the potentialities of this vast country.

Leaving Canada, the journey took us to California, with its magnificent scenery and giant redwood trees. We saw San Francisco with its beautiful bay and the Golden Gate, crossed by an 8½-mile-long bridge.

After a visit to Chicago, the capital of the canned-meat industry, with its fine buildings and parks, we

finally reached New York. There Mr. Sommer took some splendid photographs looking down from the famous Empire State Building, not on the canyons of the Rockies, but on those canyons formed by the skyscrapers stretching out below.

Striking a more intimate note, Mr. Sommer showed us the homes of the Swiss Benevolent Society in New York and of Mr. H. Nachbur, a member of the S.M.S. whom many will remember from his London days.

Finally the journey back in a well-appointed new Dutch liner, with the comforts and amenities of a first-class hotel.

It is difficult to do justice to a talk of this nature in a few sketchy lines, but the vociferous applause which Mr. Sommer received at the end of his address could have left him in no doubt that all present thoroughly enjoyed every minute of it.

The evening was concluded with a "gemütlicher Abend", the entertainment being provided by the Swiss Male Choir, who, although not at full strength and without practice for some time, delighted the audience with a number of songs. Community singing to the strains of Mr. A. Gandon's accordion completed the musical programme, and thanks are due to all who helped to make this a memorable and most enjoyable evening.

WB.

SWISS MERCANTILE SOCIETY

We wish to direct the attention of our readers to the forthcoming Annual Dinner and Dance of the Swiss Mercantile Society, which will take place on Saturday, 28th January 1961, at the Dorchester Hotel, Park Lane, W.1. (See advertisement.)

In the past this annual festival has always been a most enjoyable affair, and we have no doubt that the coming dinner and dance will be as happy as ever. The Swiss Ambassador and Madame Daeniker have kindly promised to be present.

We warmly recommend our readers, and especially the members of the Society, to support this gathering, and by their attendance show their appreciation of the good work the Society is doing in our Colony.



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