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## AT THE SWISS MERCANTILE SOCIETY

The Monthly Meeting of the Society, held at Swiss House on Wednesday, 8th March, was well attended, and the Chairman, Mr. R. Chappuis, extended a cordial welcome to the new Economic Counsellor at the Swiss Embassy, Monsieur Marcel Heimo.

As a token of gratitude for long and valued services rendered, the Chairman, on behalf of the Council and the members, presented a Russian silver gilt enamelled box and also a certificate of Honorary Membership to the Society's former President, Mr. O. Grob. The Chairman also thanked Mrs. Grob for the patience and forbearance she had shown during the many evenings when her husband was attending meetings.

Expressing thanks on behalf of himself and his wife, Mr. Grob stated that they would treasure the present as a memento of three happy years during which he had had the honour of serving as President and Chairman of the Council, and mentioned how delighted he was at joining the ranks of the Honorary Members.

The Chairman informed the meeting that through the good offices of Consul E. Ribi, the Swiss Consulate in Manchester had put at our disposal a colour film, "Viens avec Nous", produced by the Swiss Federal gymnastics and sports Training Centre at Magglingen. It was decided that this film be shown at the Monthly Meeting on 12th April.

Following the meeting, Mr. Lambton Wilkinson, Publicity Officer of the National Coal Board, gave a lecture on "Britain's Coal".

Dealing with coal-mining in all its aspects, the lecturer called it the most important industry in Britain's economy. This could best be gauged from the fact that it employed about 800,000 — or one worker in every 30. Not only was coal the sole indigenous source of fuel, but as recently as last year it provided 78 per cent of all energy produced. Although the total annual output was over 200 million tons, valued at about £850 million, Britain's workable

reserves of coal would last some 400/500 years at the present rate of production.

After a graphic description of the various types of coal produced, from steam coal to high grade anthracite, and their main classes of use, the lecturer went on to give some interesting facts and figures regarding the technicalities of modern mining. Underground roadways in Britain's mines, totalling 14,000 miles — or straight through the earth to Australia and back — shafts to a depth of over 3,500 feet, and a capital of £100 million being spent each year on improving Britain's mining, were but a few of the impressive figures quoted.

Far from being a purely factual account of the industry, however, the lecture proved to be a fascinating story of the "black diamonds" as coal has so often aptly been described.

The lecturer finally answered a number of questions put to him by the audience, who had followed his address with rapt attention. It was evident from his replies that he was able to draw on his vast knowledge of, and experience in, coal-mining. He was accorded a vote of thanks for having provided a most informative and enjoyable evening.

WB.

### CITY SWISS CLUB

#### An interesting evening

On Tuesday, 7th March, the City Swiss Club took its members to the customary monthly meeting and dinner at the Dorchester Hotel, Park Lane, W.1. Nearly one hundred members attended.

For many years past, the City Swiss Club has from time to time invited prominent personalities of this country, as well as of foreign countries, to address its members on various subjects. On this occasion the guest of honour was the Rt. Hon. Lord Nathan, P.C., T.D., F.B.A., who has played a conspicuous role in the political sphere of this country, as a member of H.M. Government, a Member of the House of Commons, and subsequently as a peer of the realm.

The Chair on this occasion — with the agreement of the president, Mr. X. Speckert — was taken by H.E. the Swiss Ambassador, Monsieur Armin Daeniker, who on behalf of the members heartily welcomed the distinguished visitor.

The noble Lord gave a most interesting *exposé* of the history, the function and the importance of the House of Lords, which was listened to with the greatest of interest by his audience, and on its conclusion was greatly cheered.

Monsieur Daeniker warmly thanked Lord Nathan for his most interesting address.

*Press Reporter  
City Swiss Club.*

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