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SHORTHAND IN ABYSSINIA

A Swiss creation

Under a scheme of assistance by the International Labour Office, two Swiss, Gottfried Weilenmann and Werner Sidler, have evolved a shorthand system for the Amharic language based on the Stolze-Schrey method. In order to achieve this, extensive frequency counts were necessary. The hieroglyphs are extremely complicated and it is obvious that shorthand will be most useful. In Amharic consonants and vowels are not expressed by individual letters, but every consonant and the subsequent vowel form a syllable which cannot be "dissected". The Abyssinian of Amhara speaks and writes in syllables and each of the 250 syllables has a symbol. Our two compatriots were therefore faced with considerable difficulties when evolving this shorthand system. But they have achieved brilliant results, not only in working out the actual signs, but also in finding abbreviations for a very large number of prefixes and suffixes.

In the August 1962 issue the "Mitteilungen" of the Association of Former Students of the Zurich Cantonal School of Commerce (Mr. Weilenmann is a former student himself) gave a sample illustrating the new shorthand and it is immediately clear when comparing the involved Amharic writing with the much simplified shorthand what tremendous saving will be effected.

Mariann.

COMPTOIR SUISSE

The 43rd National Fair was held in Lausanne from 8th to 23rd September. The Comptoir is a general trade fair largely representative of Switzerland's manufactured products and as such a traditional autumn meeting for producers and consumers. Some 2,400 exhibitors took part, amongst them the American Office for Aeronautics and Space Research (NASA). Every year a foreign country is invited to participate as guest of honour. This year Yugoslavia had its special pavilion.

An exhibition, "Visage du Nord Vaudois", showed the beauties of the less well-known northern parts of the Canton. The Union Bank of Switzerland showed a unique exhibition of coins the value of which amounted to several million francs. The exhibits included ancient Greek gold and silver coins, relics of the old Roman Empire, Byzantine valuables and precious treasures of the Bank of Venice.

A total of 875,000 visitors attended the fair.

Mariann.
(Based mainly on
ATS reports.)

ODD COINCIDENCE

On 13th August a woman in Zurich gave birth to twin boys. As that very day is both the birthday of father and mother as well, the whole family will be able to wish one another "many happy returns" of the same birthday.

CITY SWISS CLUB**97th Annual Banquet and Ball with Cabaret**

in conjunction with

SWISS ECONOMIC COUNCIL**FRIDAY, 16th NOVEMBER 1962**

at the

DORCHESTER HOTEL, PARK LANE, LONDON, W.I.**RECEPTION 7.30 p.m. · DINNER at 8 p.m. · DANCING until 1 a.m.****Orchestra: ARTHUR SALISBURY and his Ten-Piece Band****BLACK TIE****TICKETS £2 2s. (including gratuities) obtainable from**

Mr. A. Stauffer, 48a Putney Hill, London, S.W.15, or

Mr. L. F. Jobin, Messrs. Marchand & Jobin Ltd., 100 Hatton Garden, London, E.C.1

Tables for parties of 8 to 12 can be arranged in due course