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NEWS FROM THE COLONY

SWISS BENEVOLENT SOCIETY Annual General Meeting

It is a well-known fact that the Swiss Colony consists of an astonishing number of Societies — far too many, some people say. But when one asks which Society could be liquidated, excellent and well-founded reasons are put forward why they all have to continue. Fewer Societies would mean a saving in subscriptions and fewer Annual Meetings. But having attended them we leave every time convinced that that particular Society has still a real role to play. Nevertheless, there are some Societies whose "raison d'être" is greater in the life of the Colony than that of others, and I am certain that if a vote were taken the Swiss Benevolent Society would come right at the top. The work they are doing could not possibly be carried out so admirably by anybody else. During the 92 years of their existence they have spent £186,732 in assisting the poor and needy Swiss. In 1961 alone assistance given cost the SBS £5,957 — £325 more than in the previous year. The deficit was £856, also an increase of £122. These figures were given at the Annual Meeting of the Society on 26th March by the Hon. Treasurer, Mr. M. Rothlisberger. It stands to reason that no organisation can carry a deficit year after year without dire consequences. At the Annual Meeting it was gratifying to hear that the number of subscribers had not dropped though the Society had lost, mostly through death, six covenants, which means an annual decrease of refunds of income tax. It is my belief that if every donor who is a taxpayer at the standard rate signed a 7 years covenant the deficit could be drastically reduced if not wiped out, and all *at no extra cost to the individual*.

The President, Mr. F. G. Sommer, who was chairman of the meeting, supported the Hon. Treasurer in expressing gratitude to the many donors for their generous help. He also thanked the loyal staff and untiring committee members without whose support the work could not be carried out. The Officers, Committee and Hon. Auditors were re-elected by the meeting for another year, and the members present left with a feeling of satisfaction and certainty that the affairs of the Society were in the best possible hands, and that the funds donated by individuals and firms would be used wisely in the interests of our less fortunate compatriots.

Mariann.

A RETIREMENT AT THE SWISS EMBASSY

At the end of this month Mademoiselle J. Wasem is retiring from her post as private secretary to the Ambassador; she has occupied this post under successive Ministers and the Ambassador for the last 32 years with great efficiency.

Mademoiselle Wasem was born at Delémont and received her schooling in Bienne, and at the "Handelschule" in Berne. In 1926 she entered the service of the Confederation (BIGA) in Berne. Three years later she was transferred to the then Swiss Legation in London.

Throughout the years she has been at the Embassy and the former Legation she has won, by her discretion, tact, friendliness and charm, the admiration of all who came in contact with her, either through business or privately, and her departure from 18 Montagu Place will be much regretted.

On Wednesday, 4th April, the Swiss Ambassador and Madame Daeniker gave a cocktail party for her at the Embassy, to which the personnel of the Embassy, and a few personal friends, were invited.

We wish Mademoiselle Wasem — who is remaining in this country — a very happy retirement, blessed with good health. May she for a long time remain amongst us.

ST.

PERSONAL

We deeply regret to announce the passing away, some time ago, of Mr. Thomas Schlaefli, whilst on holiday at Davos, at the age of 58.

The deceased came to London in 1934, and five years later founded the Tenable Screw Company Limited, of which he remained managing director until his death. He was buried in Kriegstetten (Ct. Solothurn). Mr. Schlaefli was well known in the London Swiss Colony, and was a member of the "Schweizerbund" (Swiss Club) for many years. He leaves a widow and two married children, to whom we extend our sincere sympathy in their bereavement.

* * *

It is with much regret that we announce the death of Mr. E. Meyrat, father of the late Mrs. C. Th. Hahn, and father-in-law of the Rev. C. Th. Hahn, formerly at the Swiss Church in London, at age of 86.

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