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SWISS MERCANTILE SOCIETY

The Society held its last Monthly Meeting before the summer recess on Wednesday, 10th June. The Chairman, Mr. A. Jaccard, welcomed the members present who had turned up in good numbers on a lovely evening, which he considered a tribute to our guest speakers.

The Chairman gave an interesting and informative account of the Delegates' Meeting of the S.K.V. at Lucerne on 9th and 10th May, which he had attended as representative of the London Section, together with Messrs. J. J. Boos and L. W. Krucker, both Hon. Members of the Central Society, Mrs. M. Meier and Mr. H. Andrea.

The proceedings, under the able Chairmanship of Mr. Hch. Troendle, President of the Lucerne Section, had been conducted expeditiously and with a minimum of controversy, a fact deplored by some of the older guard who attributed this to a lack of militancy on the part of some of the younger generation.

As a measure of economy it had been decided to hold the delegates' meeting every two years only after 1965, and a revision of the rules, enabling the annual meeting of Presidents to approve the accounts every other year when no delegates' meeting would be held, was being prepared by the Central Committee.

Among resolutions passed, the main ones had touched on the revision of conditions of employment of commercial employees and the accelerated construction of dwellings, there being a growing shortage of flats at prices which commercial employees could afford, particularly in the larger towns.

The Federal Council was presenting to the Chambers next autumn a bill for the erection of dwellings and the resolution adopted at the Delegates' meeting urged upon the Authorities the necessity for the provision of flats at reasonable rentals, asking that the necessary capital be made available for that purpose.

Apart from a visit to Headquarters in Zurich, the Chairman also briefly reported on the official opening ceremony of the National Exhibition at Lausanne, to which he had been fortunate enough to obtain an invitation as representative of the S.M.S., and which he had found an unforgettable experience.

The Federal Council in corpore, the Federal Chambers and delegates of all the Cantons had been present as well as personalities in all walks of life, too numerous to mention here. He had been most impressed by the religious ceremony at the lake-side, which solemnised the opening of the exhibition, and enjoyed the official banquet which was attended by about three thousand persons.

In conclusion the Chairman stated that in his view the exhibition was a masterpiece which everyone, who could, should visit.

In accordance with the usual custom, it was decided that no meetings be held during July and August. The next meeting will, therefore, be held on Wednesday, 9th September when members will be afforded an opportunity of relating their holiday reminiscences and showing slides, films, photos, etc.

A family outing was also decided upon for Sunday, 27th September, the venue being Hever Castle at Edenbridge, Kent. Fuller details will be announced at the next meeting.

Following the meeting, a most interesting address on "Local Government" was given by Mr. N. B. Mitchell, M.A., LL.B.(Cantab.), LL.B.(London), Deputy Town Clerk and Solicitor, Borough of Malden and Coombe, which was supplemented by a talk on "Local Finance and

Housing" by Mr. R. M. Church, a Councillor of the same Borough.

Tracing the history of Local Government from William the Conqueror to the present day, Mr. Mitchell gave a fascinating survey of the changes in administration from the Parish to the Rural and Urban District Councils, as well as their present day organisation and function. The lecturer described the procedure at the elections and the composition and administrative powers of Borough and County Councils.

Drawing on his vast and long experience, Councillor Church explained the intricacies of local financing in a manner which a layman could grasp and he dealt at length with the thorny problem of housing in the post-war period, which he claimed was being solved on a most equitable basis by his Council, who had devised a system of merit on a points award.

Both speakers answered questions put to them by an eager audience, who had followed their talks with keen attention and who were able to form a clearer picture of much that interested them from both a general and personal point of view.

Finally the Chairman expressed thanks on behalf of all present.

WB.

OUR NEXT ISSUE, AN APOLOGY AND AN APPEAL

Our next issue will be published on Friday, 14th August. We shall be glad to receive reports and articles not later than Wednesday, 5th August. Short items only can be accepted later.

We apologise to readers for the delay of the last issue and possibly of the present one. This is due to the postmen's strike and ban on overtime.

We have completely run out of the issue 1441 of 11th October last. As we always receive requests for back numbers many months after publication, we should be most grateful if any reader could spare that particular copy. Many thanks.

FIRST OF AUGUST CELEBRATION IN LONDON

For many years now the Swiss Community in and around London have been celebrating the Swiss National Day at the Wimbledon Town Hall. The organisers have succeeded in finding something new in a zither recital by two young artists, Miss Marlene and Miss Melanie Schmid, daughters of Mr. and Mrs. A. Schmid of Norfolk Court Hotel, W.2. Miss Marlene was the winner of last year's national string contest of Great Britain, and Miss Melanie was runner-up.

The second part of the evening (8-12 p.m.) will be given over to dancing to Harry Vardon's Band.

Mention should be made of the fact that the Swiss Ambassador, Monsieur Beat de Fischer, who is at present on holiday in Switzerland will fly to London specially to take part in the celebration.

For details please consult the advertisement.

CITY SWISS CLUB

Will Members please note that

NO MONTHLY MEETINGS

will be held until 8th September