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NOUVELLE SOCIÉTÉ HELVÉTIQUE

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

The Annual General Meeting and Annual Dinner of the London Group of the Nouvelle Société Helvétique took place at the Swiss Hostel for Girls on Thursday, 17th April. The Swiss Ambassador, who is Honorary President of the Society, was represented by Monsieur J. Iselin, his *Chargé d'affaires*. The President, Dr. H. W. Egli, was in the chair.

The Annual Report for 1968 was presented and accepted. Once again it makes impressive reading. Apart from social functions, the N.S.H. organised five lectures and highly interesting talks by distinguished visitors from Great Britain and Switzerland. The subjects of lectures held at the Swiss Hostel for Girls included "the Total Revision of the Swiss Federal Constitution", "A Swiss Hero of the Second World War", "With Ice Axe and Pen in Switzerland", "The Fascinating People and Country of the Sudan", and "Switzerland and the European Integration". The Society's Annual Film Show was held on 30th January, when selections from Swiss newsreels of 1968 and three new films from the Swiss National Tourist Office were presented.

The President's report on behalf of the Council included the following items:

"We lament the death of three members in the course of the year: Mr. C. Baerlocher, Mr. L. Jaeggi and Mr. W. R. Schweizer. Regrettably we have also lost 13 members, mostly due to departure from this country, while gaining only six new members. As every reduction in numbers affects the size of our meetings, all members are again urged to make a real effort to attend as often as they can and to recruit new members from their circle of friends, either as full members (all Swiss of either sex above 21), as junior members (above 16) or as associate members (former Swiss). The recruitment of new members has also some bearing on our finances as shown by the accounts revealing an excess of expenditure of over £50. But for the

donations, it would have amounted to £95. We are much indebted to those members who made these extra contributions and hope that others may feel impelled to do likewise."

The Meeting approved the increase of the annual subscription from 25/- to 30/-. Thanks were expressed to the Hon. Auditors, Messrs. D. E. Bonnet and M. A. Rothlisberger, who were re-elected. The Council was chosen by secret ballot.

The Meeting heard and accepted a report by the delegate for Great Britain South to the Commission of the Swiss Abroad, Mrs. Mariann Meier.

J.S.

Annual Dinner

Business concluded, members and friends sat down to dinner, an informal and very happy affair. The Hostel management and kitchen staff excelled as usual. It was inevitable that the two speeches, too, were in a very happy and light vein. The President welcomed Monsieur and Madame J. Iselin, representing the Ambassador and Madame Keller who were in Ireland. Though newly arrived, they were no strangers, as Monsieur Iselin had already been introduced a few weeks previously, giving an interesting talk on Switzerland and European Integration. His speech was full of Basle wit and humour. He brought greetings from the Ambassador and stressed the value of the N.S.H. He also pointed out Dr. Egli's great merits in the promotion of the Swiss Cultural Centre, the "Forum" of Switzerland.

Dr. Egli a few years ago, already had introduced a novelty at the Swiss Colony's Annual Dinners — every year, he gives particular mention to just one or two of the invited guests. This year, he mentioned Monsieur and Madame Adams who, he said, had passed the test of their first year in London. He welcomed Mr. and Mrs. W. Pellet, a member since 1916 when the N.S.H. London Group was founded. He also singled out Mrs. R. Weist and Mrs. L. Chapuis, both faithful old members

and wives of well-remembered personalities of by-gone years.

Another tradition was adhered to by the distribution of a gift to the ladies by an anonymous donor — this year a doll in a knitted crinoline hiding — of all things — a toilet roll! It created much amusement, but it all fitted the light-hearted mood of the occasion. This, I think, is the success of the Society, the combination of excellent cultural activities and work well worth-while in the interest of the Swiss community in this country as well as of the homeland, with the fostering of friendly and happy personal relationships amongst the members. Carry on, N.S.H. — you are doing fine!

MM

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