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NEWS FROM THE COLONY

SWISS PARLIAMENTARIANS VISIT LONDON

The financial commissions of the National Council and the Council of State are two bodies responsible for surveying the way the funds voted by Parliament are spent. They send regular delegations to foreign capitals to see how federal monies are used abroad. One such delegation came to London for two days. It was led by Mr. H. Schmitt, National Councillor from Geneva. Other Parliamentarians to accompany him were Messrs. E. Wuthrich, L. Danioth, A. Borei and M. Lampert. Mr. Käser, Secretary of the two financial commissions and Ambassador A. Janner, head of the division for Administrative Affairs at the Political Department were also in the party.

Not surprisingly, the delegation was very interested to see how the new Embassy building was progressing. They were also briefed in the working of the Swiss Embassy in London and visited a few offices. For one or two members of the Embassy's staff it was a hectic two days and they had little time left for their ordinary tasks. Naturally, the delegation was shown the site of the future, but hypothetical, Swiss Forum. It covers most of the third floor of the Swiss Centre (directly above the Swissair and Swiss Fair offices) and is entirely empty. The Parliamentarians were orientated into how this desolate expanse of concrete could one day house the activities of the Swiss Colony and eventual cultural events.

Representatives from the Swiss National Tourist Office, Swissair, Swiss Fair, the Swiss Bank Corporation and other interested companies were present and stated their own position. The delegation had already been briefed in Berne on the problems of the Forum and their visit could hardly have changed their ideas on the Swiss Forum. They also met in London the Anglo-Swiss Parliamentary Group. They lunched with representatives from this group of 40 members from the Commons and the Lords and assisted at the Commons debates. The Anglo-Swiss Parliamentary Group has among its most prominent members Lord Hunt, Lord Balniel and Winston Churchill.

THE CITY SWISS CLUB'S MARCH MEETING

The March monthly meeting of the City Swiss Club was to enjoy the Rt. Hon. The Earl of Westmoreland, Deputy Chairman of Sotheby's, as the after-dinner speaker. As he was unable to come, he sent one of his officers instead and some forty City Swiss Club members heard a most lively and humourous exposé by the manager of Sotheby's "silverside", Mr. R. Came.

He described the long history of this prestigious firm of auctioneers, of its rising fortune with its dealings in family libraries, of its competition with Christie's and of its bright prospects. The turnover of the firm was now 26 million pounds. It had settled down in many parts of the world, in particular in New York and California. It planned to imitate Christie's, whose new Swiss operations have been highly successful and settle in Switzerland.

Mr. Came had brought with him a pair of glittering silver sconces made by the Dutch silversmith Adam Van Viaen in 1622. They were due for auction on June 17th and Mr. Came expects them to fetch in the region of £30,000. They were passed from hand to hand around the table and the attendance marvelled at this fine example of Utrecht workmanship. Mr. Came flavoured his generally fluent and amusing exposé with a few jokes from the antiquarian trade. The many questions that followed expressed the interest of Mr. Came's audience in the subject of his refreshing exposé.

(PMB)

PERSONAL

The following subscribers will be celebrating their birthday or other important anniversaries in the next few weeks. Mr. F. Delaloye will be 84 on 27th April and Mr. W. Zuber, 73 on the 29th of the same month. Mrs. Uden will have her birthday on 6th May, and on the same day Mr. and Mrs. R. Marchand in Bienné will be celebrating their 56th wedding anniversary. Mr. A. C. Boller will be 73 on 8th May and Mrs. Lienhardt, the oldest Swiss in Dunfermline, will be 91 on 11th May. Mrs. A. Sommer will have her birthday on 15th May and on the 16th, Mr. and Mrs. W. Florey will have been married for 35 years. Best wishes and happy returns to all!

* * *

We have great pleasure in announcing the birth of Mrs. Nina Pfaendler's first great grandson. His mother is the daughter of the late Milton Pfaendler, a personality who, like his father J. J. Pfaendler, was very well known in the Swiss Colony. We are also happy to report that a second baby daughter has been born to Mr. and Mrs. M. Schneiter on 3rd March. Mr. Schneiter has taken over from Mr. Franz Bischof as Honorary Secretary of the Nouvelle Société Helvétique.

* * *

We have learnt that Mr. Maurice Jaccard, head of the section concerned with the Swiss Abroad at the Political Department in Berne, has been appointed *Wissenschaftsrat*. Mr. Jaccard is particularly interested in the life of the Swiss of Great Britain and paid a visit to London a few months ago to survey, among other things, the prospects of the Swiss Forum. We should like to extend to him our respectful congratulations.

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