

News from the colony

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increase over the previous year amounts to 12.9 per cent; in actual value, that is to say at constant prices, it works out at 4.3 per cent as opposed to 5.8 per cent in 1972. The economic growth has fallen off accordingly. Per head of the population, the gross national product worked out last year at Fr.20,332; this corresponds to an effective growth of over 3 per cent, which reflects a corresponding improvement in the standard of living. In 1972, this rate of growth was still higher than 4 per cent.

SWITZERLAND: 81 UNEMPLOYED IN 1973

Swiss statistics for the labour market showed that in 1973 there were on an average 81 fully unemployed persons entered in the books of labour offices. Their number is therefore lower than the average for the two previous years, which amounted to 100 and 104. In other words, for every million gainfully employed persons, there are 27 without regular employment. This figure represents less than 0.003 per thousand of the total number of employed persons,

which constitutes the lowest level of unemployment not only on the national but also on the international level. Last year, many other countries experienced rates of unemployment of as much as one or several per cent.

ECONOMIC GROWTH IN SWITZERLAND AND THE WORLD

In real value, that is to say with prices kept constant, Switzerland's gross national product, which represents the total value of goods and services produced by the national economy, increased by 4.7% in 1972 compared with the figure for the previous year. This result places Switzerland in a position somewhere about the middle on the international level; according to statistics drawn up by the International Settlements Bank, Switzerland in fact comes 8th among industrialized countries under consideration. Over a longer period, i.e. from 1961 to 1970, Switzerland is only 13th, with a real annual rate of growth of the gross national product averaging 4.5%.

Children's Xmas Party loses money

The annual Christmas Party organised for the children of the Colony is a loss-making venture. For the third successive year, the cost of staging the party, hiring a film, preparing tea and buying presents for the children, finding a conjurer (£14) and letting Queen Mary Hall at the YMCA surpassed the income derived from various donations and the little 'Black Book' circulated at Christmas time among Swiss societies. Income for last February's children's "do" amounted to £127.46 while expenditure totalled £181.70. At this rate, the balance at bank and in hand, now standing at £114, will be used up by the next party. Unless more income is forthcoming, it will be difficult to continue these parties on the same lines as before.

NOUVELLE SOCIÉTÉ HELVÉTIQUE ANNUAL DINNER

About fifty members of the London Group of the Nouvelle Société Helvétique were present for the Society's Annual Dinner at the Prince of Wales Hotel on Friday, 28th March. Grace having been said by the President, Mrs. Mariann Meier, they were treated to a simple fare consisting of asparagus soup, coq au vin with creamed potatoes and peas, and a cassata. The relatively small room in which this dinner was being enjoyed no doubt enhanced the proximity of its participants to one another and hence their animated conversation and merriment.

Dr. Albert Weitnauer, our Ambassador, and Dr. Jurg Iselin and Mrs. Iselin, Plenipotentiary Minister, were among the distinguished members in attendance. But these were by no means the only persons singled out by the President in her post-prandial welcome to the guests. It is customary for the NSH President to make a fairly complete introduction of the guests at Annual Dinners. But this time she made an exceptionally thorough job of it, since she singled *everyone* by name starting from the person to her right — the Ambassador — and moving further to the right until all the tables had been scanned in an anti-clockwise direction.

Mrs. Meier asked each person to stand up when his or her turn for introduction had come so as to allow everyone a chance to be known.

Each of these persons was gratified by an individual introduction and a clatter of applause. Laughter was produced when many members were described as *Baslers* because the Rhine port and its neighbourhood, homeland of the President, Dr. Weitnauer and Dr. Iselin and countless other guests, had really sent a high-powered delegation to the Dinner. This presentation was done proficiently because it was carried out fast enough not to become tedious (and to deprive those at the end of the list of a clap) but slow enough for everyone to get a word of introduction. It took exactly eighteen minutes for Mrs. Meier to dwell

NEWS FROM THE COLONY

wished to thank again our Consul-General, Mr. R. Born, for all he has done for us and to wish him and his wife the best of luck. He thanked also Messrs. Ciba-Geigy Ltd. for the use of the room and Messrs. Clayton Aniline Co., Ltd., for the free printing of our accounts.

The previous Committee having been re-elected, the meeting was declared closed and we could now retire to what was to be a most excellent buffet, looking forward to the second part of the evening, the General Meeting of the Swiss Club Manchester.

E.B.

CITY SWISS CLUB FAMILY EVENING

This year's Family Evening was a highly intimate gathering. About forty people enjoyed the warm atmosphere of the Dorchester's Park Suite, which had been partitioned in view of the relatively small attendance. For the first time in our experience of City Swiss Club functions, pop music was played on records. A "disc jockey" played modern hits and also some older ones, such as "Locomotion" by Little Eva which set the middle-aged Swiss attendance jiving and twisting merrily. A set of lamps flashing coloured light lent an appropriate discotheque atmosphere, attuned to the music, to the usually more formal climate of the Park Suite. An excellent dinner was provided for. The Embassy was represented by Dr. Jurg Iselin.

IN MEMORIAM

Robert Lehner, FHCI, FCFA
12th August, 1892–22nd April, 1967
St. Gall; Zürich; Goring-by-Sea.

Swiss Relief Society Manchester

This year's general meeting was held at the premises of Messrs. Ciba-Geigy Ltd., Simonsway, Manchester, and we are most grateful to this firm for having extended to us once again their generous hospitality and the same feelings go towards the Swiss Club Manchester who asked us to start our proceedings ahead of their own general meeting.

Well supported by the usual faithful friends the meeting was opened by our Honorary Secretary, Mr. Laurence Themans, in the absence of the President who was on the Continent. The President had sent his good wishes for a happy and successful evening and his apologies to everybody present.

The accounts, showing the usual good results and nothing controversial emerging, were read and accepted. Our chairman then appealed for an increased effort in the recruitment of new members and it is for all of us to act for the best in this direction.

In his concluding remarks he