

Swiss Mercantile Society

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NEWS FROM THE COLONY

SWISS MERCANTILE SOCIETY

The Monthly Meeting of the Society was held at Swiss House on Wednesday, 13th October.

With deep regret, the Chairman, Mr. A. Jaccard, announced the death at Lausanne of Mr. William Beckmann, who had been a member of the London Section since 1920, and of Mr. Maurice Bornand, a corresponding member. The members present paid a silent tribute to their memory.

Reporting on the activities of the College, the Chairman stated that 280 students were at present in attendance, compared with 253 at the same time last year, and that this constituted a record for the Autumn Term.

This was also reflected in the entry of 230 candidates from the College for the Cambridge examinations in December, a figure well in excess of any previous entry.

The Chairman further added that future enrolments were also considerably up and augured well for the coming year.

Recalling an earlier announcement that three members of the London Section, Mr. Jacques Oertli, the late Mr. Alfred Stauffer and Mr. Ernest Werner, had been awarded the "Wappenscheibe" for fifty years' membership of the S.K.V. at the Veterans' Meeting at Brugg on 29th May, the Chairman stated that as none of the recipients had been able to attend, these mementoes had now been brought over and that he had been asked to present them on behalf of the Central Society.

With a brief but impressive address in which he stressed their long and faithful support of the Society's activities, Mr. Jaccard then handed the "Wappenscheibe" to Mr. Oertli and to Mrs. Stauffer, who had accepted an invitation to be present to receive the award.

Unfortunately, Mr. Werner was unable to be present owing to a family bereavement. Mr. Jaccard stated that he had sent a letter of sympathy on behalf of the Society and added that Mr. Werner would be presented with his "Wappenscheibe" at a later date.

Following the meeting, two excellent colour sound films, their latest produced, were shown by courtesy of British Transport. The first "Fifth Report of Modernisation", gave an insight into the work which goes on behind the scenes by way of research and development. It was fascinating to see the technical advances to ensure the safety and comfort of passengers and the speeding up of goods trains by all the latest devices.

The second film, "Southampton Docks", showed the turn-round of the "Windsor Castle" on arrival from South Africa, with its multifarious cargo. Although Southampton has earned world-wide fame as a passenger-port it is being increasingly used, as could be seen from the film, for every type of cargo, which in turn has attracted many well-known firms into the vicinity. The facilities of the port, with some of the latest automated equipment, were also vividly illustrated and explained in detail in this attractive film.

W.B.

OUR NEXT ISSUE

The "Swiss Observer" is published every second and fourth Friday of the month. Our next issue will appear on 26th November. We shall be glad to receive reports and articles not later than Wednesday, 17th November. Short news items only can be accepted later.

THE SWISS AMBASSADOR IN MANCHESTER AND OXFORD

On Thursday, 14th October 1965, the Clayton Aniline Co. Ltd., Manchester, a firm of which Ciba Basle is a major shareholder and in which Geigy and Sandoz, also of Basle, have a small interest, held a ceremony to mark the completion of their 1957-1965 modernisation and re-building programme. Lord Watkinson unveiled the commemorative plaque. The Swiss Ambassador also attended the ceremony.

The German Society of Oxford University invited the Swiss Ambassador to give a lecture, on 15th October 1965, on Switzerland's multi-lingual character and cultural policies.

COMMITTEE OF SWISS CATHOLICS IN LONDON

Encouraged by the result of our last year's Christmas Draw, the Committee has decided to hold one again this year instead of having a bazaar. The drawing of the prizes will take place on Friday, 17th December 1965. The object of the Draw is to give added financial support to our Chaplain, the Reverend Father Joseph Scherer, in his efforts to look after the several thousand young Swiss temporarily in this country for studies, training or domestic work.

The committee, with the help of their Chaplain, are doing their utmost in looking after the moral well-being of their compatriots and helping them to pass their leisure hours by running the Swiss Catholic Youth Club. This Club holds socials every Sunday evening at the Westminster Ball Room, 30 Strutton Ground, S.W.1, with a varied programme such as dances, films, colour slide shows and talks. These functions are regularly attended by an average of 150 to 225 young compatriots, at the First of August Celebration we even had an attendance of 320. During the summer months, the Club organised excursions to Cambridge and Ely (120 people), Salisbury and Stonehenge (80), Isle of Wight (164), river trip to Greenwich (90). Further visits were made to the Tower of London, Westminster Abbey and to the Houses of Parliament in session, etc.

The Committee is still making strenuous efforts to rent and furnish a room in the West End of London, where our Swiss Youth can meet and spend their free time in a little corner away from our beloved Switzerland.

The permanent members of the Swiss Catholic community are unable to carry on, as well as they would wish, this valuable work which is growing from year to year and is so very important to the good reputation of our young Swiss compatriots in Great Britain, without calling upon the generosity of all our friends.

May I therefore ask you kindly to consider helping our work by sending either a donation or a gift in kind for our Christmas Draw.

Your generosity will be greatly appreciated.

Yours sincerely,

O. GROB, *Chairman.*

Donation to Mr. O. Grob, 60 Seafeld Road, London N.11. Gifts in kind (latest date 14.12.65) to:

Mr. E. Bonvin, Montana Hotel, 67 Gloucester Road, London S.W.7.