

Swiss church

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The following day started with a drive through the lovely countryside to Linlithgow with a rather youthful and daring climb to the top of Linlithgow Palace, and after a further cruise to Glasgow, to take up the invitation of Lord Provost Mr. Wm. Gray, his wife and some senior Officials. Mr. Gray, in his drive to present a proper and fair image of his city succeeded so well, that the Ambassador sincerely felt, that Swiss Industrialists would do well to consider establishing branches in the area. Also, a holiday exchange scheme of Swiss and Glaswegian children was discussed which could be a living monument to this official visit by the Ambassador. Although (partly for security reasons) there was no press announcement of the tour at the time, the Ambassador made a long-lasting contribution by planting a whitebeam tree in Kelvingrove Park as a gesture of friendship and in the spirit of "Plant a Tree in '73".

Under the knowledgeable and enthusiastic guidance of Mr. Auld, the Party were shown the art treasures and models of the industrial achievements of this great city at the Glasgow Museum in Kelvinhall, where recently an exhibition of Swiss Graphics was held.

The West of Scotland Swiss Club, which was rejuvenated a few years ago from the Swiss Club Balloch, showed the close contact among our many compatriots. Their involvement in each others problems, hospitality and concern for the welfare of their compatriots is particularly recommendable. The Club welcomed the Ambassador and his party at a reception given at Mr. and Mrs. Fritz Huber, who excelled themselves in the presentation of a splendid buffet. President Fausto Ferrari, a member of the famous Ticinese family in Glasgow, summed up the evening by thanking the Ambassador for taking the time to visit his colony, which runs smoothly and without undue demands on the offices of the Embassy or Consulates, but which does feel part of a greater Federation of the Swiss abroad. Also it gave members a

chance to ask Consul General Born questions concerning nationality and Swiss Old Age Pension.

A special thanks to all those Scottish Officials and the University Staff, and to the members of our Community who so admirably rally either to give a helping hand to a Swiss in need, or so freely show their hospitality as on the occasion of the ambassadorial visit. The Swiss exiles are a great bunch of people, each an ambassador in his own right.

As important business urged Dr. Weitnauer to return, only too soon, he now has a taste of Scotland and will surely be back. Also Mr. and Mrs. Born could hardly bring a departure upon themselves and it took the help of a police escort to beat the traffic in time of their train's departure.

ANNUAL CHURCH ASSEMBLY

The Annual Church Assembly brought together the French and German-speaking Swiss parishes on Sunday, 9th June. For the second time, the meeting was held immediately after Service and consequently over in record time. In previous year these Annual assemblies were held after lunch and were protracted late into the afternoon.

Few questions were raised following the survey of the past year and reading of the minutes of the last Assembly. It was recalled that the two French-speaking ministers, Pastors Alexandre Nicod and Denis Muller, would be leaving by August. A Farewell Service uniting both parishes will be celebrated for the two ministers on 29th July. The question of the Church's new seating was also raised. The go-ahead has now been given for transforming the floor of the church and changing its creaking pews by displaceable seats. The church will also have a new floor. These works will be undertaken with the funds of the former Youth Club held in trust since the war by the Embassy and the Nouvelle Société Helvétique. The decision

to spend these monies in this way had been ratified at the last AGM of the Nouvelle Société Helvétique.

Reviewing the life of the German-Swiss parish, Mr. G. Gyssler recorded a discouraging fall in church attendance. While 40 to 50 compatriots attended Sunday services on average in 1962, the figure had dropped by half ten years ago. A record made for the first quarter of this year indicated that average attendance had decreased yet further and hovered around fifteen.

The Church Assembly was followed by a lively "Agape" with many members of both parishes enjoying a large plateful of rice salad prepared by volunteers.

A week later, forty elderly persons from the London area took part in the Annual "Sortie des Doyens" and were driven by coach to Claydon House, near Aylesbury, Nottinghamshire. Despite the long ride, the many octogenarians taking part in the outing enjoyed it tremendously and were blessed by the weather.

NEW MINISTER AT SWISS CHURCH

A new French-speaking minister will take office at the Swiss church at the beginning of August. He is Pastor Michel Languillat, from Paris. The Rev. Languillat, 40, studied theology at Paris, Montpellier and Rome. In the latter city, he studied at the Protestant faculty of the Vaudois churches of northern Italy. With a degree in hand, the Rev. Languillat was minister for over ten years in North Africa, working mainly in Tunisia and Algeria. He remained for several years at Oran. The Swiss Parish heard him deliver a remarkable sermon on Sunday, 17th June, when the Rev. Languillat had come from Toulon to visit London and get acquainted with his future work for three days. The Rev. Languillat, who is unmarried, showed great interest in this work, particularly among the young. His appointment came as a surprise to all as the Parish Council had come to the conclusion that the church required a Swiss minister. But the Consistoire, faced with a very disappointing response from the adverts that had been published in several Protestant journals in Switzerland and France, felt that the Rev. Languillat's application was the only way of keeping the parish going now that the Rev. A.

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