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SWISS MERCANTILE SOCIETY

70th Anniversary Celebration

at the

CRITERION RESTAURANT, PICCADDILLY

on

SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 13th, 1958

In the Chair: O. GROB, President



O. GROB
President, S.M.S.

The month of September 1958 presents an eventful period in the history of the Swiss Mercantile Society. Seventy years ago (September 26th 1888) the Society, which is a section of the "Schweiz. Kaufmännischen Verein" was founded with a membership of thirteen.

Superstitious people will have it that the number thirteen is an unlucky number and will bode no good; well in this case, at least, they have proved to be wrong, because the Society after many ups and downs, especially during the first thirty-five years of its existence, is to-day still very much alive, in fact is more prosperous and active than at any time before.

When twenty years ago, on the occasion of the Golden Jubilee — which was celebrated from the 14th to 16th October 1938 — I recorded this happy event in the "Swiss Observer" I did not anticipate, that two decades later the same task would come my way again.

Anniversaries in the Colony of seventy years and over are not an every day occurrence, and few Societies have attained and survived the span of three score years and ten which is allotted to human beings.

Amongst former "Jubilanten", — as far as Societies are concerned — comes easily first the "Société de Secours Mutuels des Suisses à Londres" which in 1954 had celebrated its 250th anniversary, having been founded in 1703. Amongst the centenarians are the Swiss Club Manchester (1950), and the City Swiss Club London (1956). The Unione Ticinese reached 75 years of existence in 1949, and the "Schweizerbund (Swiss Club) can look back on 79 years.

Although not coming under the heading of "Societies" it might be recorded here, that the "Eglise Suisse" was founded in 1762, and the "Fonds de Secours" (Swiss Benevolent Society) in 1870.

Such mile stones — not only as far as Societies are concerned — but also in every day life call usually, and rightly so, for celebration. The Swiss Mercantile Society, therefore, decided that their 70th birthday anniversary should not pass unnoticed. It was resolved that this celebration should primarily be an occasion of honouring its "veterans" of twenty-five, forty and fifty years of membership, who have so faithfully and consistently shown their allegiance over a considerable number of years.

In the days of my youth, whenever one spoke of "veterans" I pictured a group of white bearded men bent by old age, and not anymore too sure on their legs. How wrong my imagination proved to be, when the old guard mustered on that memorable evening at the Criterion Restaurant to be honoured by their fellow members of more tender age. How young and sprightly they all looked, even those who now celebrated forty, fifty and more years of membership. True enough the "locks" of some of them have turned to silver and their gait has become somewhat more measured, but all in all they still looked a very presentable body of men with negligible "wear and tear". Having now myself joined this "Veterans Corps", I am indeed proud to belong to this illustrious body of "young men".

* * *

The festivities started on Friday September 12th with an intimate dinner — attended by members of the Council and the

Committee of the Swiss Mercantile Society — at the Montana Hotel, 67, Gloucester Road, where our friend Mr. E. Bonvin, who generously offered the *apéritif* was "Mine Host". The purpose was to make contact with the members of the official delegation from Switzerland representing the Mother Society. No speeches were made, but the President of the S.M.S., Mr. O. Grob, briefly introduced the Swiss visitors. He voiced his regrets that for unavoidable reasons, two members of the delegation at the last moment were unable to make the journey, namely National Councillor Ph. Schmid-Ruedin (Central President of the S.K.V.), and Mr. A. Galliker (Central Secretary of the S.K.V.) and editor of the "Zentralblatt".

He then introduced to the company Mr. A. Meier-Ragg (General Secretary of the S.K.V.) and Mrs. Meier-Ragg, Mr. H. Tröndle ("Finanzdelegierter" of the S.K.V.) and Mrs. Tröndle, Mr. E. Losey (Secrétaire romand of the S.K.V.) and Mrs. Losey, and Mr. A. Isliker ("Verwaltungschef" of the S.K.V.), and Mrs. Isliker. During and after dinner many happy reminiscences of former visits to the Society in London, by some members of the delegation were recalled, after which we departed looking forward with pleasant anticipation to the next day's official celebration.

A bright and sunny day heralded in the 70th birthday of the Swiss Mercantile Society, which was in itself a good omen for the evening's celebration. The ante-room to the Banqueting Hall at the Criterion in Piccadilly Circus was reserved for the reception and cocktails. Long before the company adjourned for dinner, the room became tightly packed. There one had the pleasure of meeting amongst the hundred and fifty visitors many old familiar faces one had not seen for many a long day, and many an old friendship was re-newed with a cordial handshake.

At 7.30 p.m. precisely, Mr. R. Chappuis, who throughout the evening acted very efficiently as M.C., announced that "dinner was served", and the company entered the Banqueting Hall where they awaited the arrival of the Chairman and the principal guests, who on their arrival received a genial reception. After Grace was said, an excellent dinner, consisting of four courses, was served and incidentally much enjoyed. Towards the end, Mr. O. Grob, proposed the Toasts to H.M. the Queen and Switzerland.

Then came the speeches. At a celebration of this kind speech-making can hardly be dispensed with. The orations were prolific and of rather generous dimensions, but as all were interesting the patience of the listeners was not unduly tested. Space, however, does not allow me to publish all of the speeches *in extenso*, as this would necessitate at least an issue double the usual size of the paper, and what would the Publishers say? I shall, therefore, only refer in abbreviated terms to the addresses given, with apologies to the respective speakers.

The first speaker of the evening was the President of the Swiss Mercantile Society, Mr. O. Grob, who on rising from his *Fauteuil Présidentiel* received a hearty reception. This was, so to say, his maiden speech since his election to the presidency, and I am sure everyone will agree that he made "a good job of it".

Mr. Grob extended a hearty welcome to all present saying: "It is the intention of the committee *not* to celebrate this anniversary with great formalities; we shall reserve that for our 75th jubilee,

but to make this evening a day for our Veterans, giving them the opportunity of renewing many old bonds of friendship, and the chance of meeting our younger members".

He particularly welcomed Monsieur J. J. de Tribolet, Chargé d'Affaires, who represented the Swiss Ambassador and Madame Daeniker, at present on holiday in Switzerland. He also greeted Monsieur F. Ansermoz, Attaché Social, and Monsieur H. Müller, Attaché of the Swiss Embassy. Mr. Grob voiced his sincere regrets at the absence of Madame de Tribolet, National Councillor Ph. Schmid-Ruedin (Central President of the S.K.V.), and Mr. A. Galliker (Central Secretary of the S.K.V. and editor of the "Zentral Blatt"). He then heartily greeted the members of the Swiss Delegation, Mr. A. Meier-Ragg (General Secretary of the S.K.V.) and Mrs. Meier, Grand Councillor H. Tröndle ("Finanzdelegierter") and Mrs. Tröndle M. E. Losey, (Secrétaire romand of the S.K.V.) and Mme. Losey, and Mr. A. Isliker, ("Verwaltungs-chef" of the S.K.V.) and Mrs. Isliker. He also welcomed Mr. A. Stauffer, editor of the "Swiss Observer", President of the Swiss Mercantile Society in 1916/17, Honorary Member, and Mrs. Stauffer, as well as a number of Honorary Members and Trustees.

"And last, but not least", he said, "I welcome most heartily the Veteran Members, and I trust I may be permitted to single out the three oldest members here tonight, Mr. Louis Chapuis, with a truly magnificent record of 60 years membership, Mr. F. Dannmeyer, President of the Society from 1905 to 1909, with 56 years, and Mr. A. Bucher with 50 years membership." (Loud applause.)

Mr. Grob then announced that in appreciation of their loyal support, members who have belonged to the London section forty or more years would presently be honoured by the Secretary-General, Mr. A. Meier-Ragg, with the Gold Pin of the S.K.V., whilst members of twenty-five to forty years would receive the "Veteranen Abzeichen" (Silver Pin).

The President in conclusion proposed the Toast "The Guests and the Ladies". These Toasts were heartily responded to.

The next speaker was the Swiss Chargé d'Affaires, Monsieur J. J. de Tribolet, who was accorded a cordial reception. He said:

Mr. President, Ladies and Gentlemen,

There are several reasons why I feel gratified to address you and the members of the Swiss Mercantile Society this evening. In the first place, I am very happy to find myself in London at a time when the Swiss colony can rightly draw so much satisfaction and pride from the anniversary which we are celebrating; but it is a still greater privilege for me to have been called upon to voice here the expression of the congratulations of a compatriot who so deservedly enjoys your highest esteem and your fullest trust, I mean our Ambassador M. Daeniker. You know the inexhaustible interest and the great affection he bestows on you all and how closely he follows the activities of the various institutions and bodies which you have founded. If I compare the latter with the various flowers of a carefully tended garden, I do not hesitate to recognize the Swiss Mercantile Society as one of the brightest and proudest of them all, towering in the middle of the flower bed on its solid stately stem.

I would not do justice to the Swiss Mercantile Society if I described that institution simply as one of the finest achievements attained by the Swiss colony in London in the course of a long and fruitful activity. The Swiss Mercantile Society and particularly the School which it founded and developed, represent a very valuable gift by the colony to our Mother country. It is all the

more fair to stress this fact because since the war many Swiss colonies have suffered so much that they might well rather find themselves in need of some support from home. I know from personal experience that during the war the Swiss colony in London has been for quite an appreciable time in a position which might be described as the front line. Besides the actual losses this entailed, she had to carry many other burdens, not only during the war but also later on as a bitter consequence of those times. The Swiss colony in London has non-the-less never stinted the generous support given to the institutions founded in times of prosperity, or to the less privileged members of its ranks. Let me point out the various forms in which this generosity can be expressed. It is not only by giving ones money that one acquires a claim to gratitude, but still more so by sacrificing ones time and effort for a disinterested purpose over and above the strain of ones daily duties. In that respect I think the members of the Swiss Mercantile Society and particularly the Executive officers past and present should receive their full share of the acknowledgment and gratitude which Switzerland owes them. The records of devoted personal service to the Swiss Mercantile Society are so numerous and so well known, that the enumeration of individual names would be invidious. It would be nearly presumptuous on my part, to try to recall the services rendered by the society and the school which it runs and supports. I only want to say that I am quite sure that the value of their services will not decrease, but on the contrary become even greater in the future.

The Swiss who founded the school and who look after it to-day possess that set of qualities which were typical for the men responsible for the commercial and industrial wealth of our country. These people had patiently and stubbornly ploughed their way over ground covered with all kinds of obstacles. As time went on, and particularly during the course of the last decades, they had gathered a stock of experience, knowledge and goodwill which made things much easier for the younger generation. One even hears that there are now in our country increasing numbers of young people enjoying, without great pains, the advantages of a position which would have cost their forefathers long and arduous labour. In such a situation many young Swiss might find themselves in danger of taking for granted advantages which, after all, may only be temporary. For that reason I think it most valuable that they should get acquainted with circumstances which prevail in a country like Great Britain which has to face heavier responsibilities than ours and which has to cope with difficulties which are bound to strengthen the character and stimulate the thinking powers of anyone called upon to face them.

There is however one more thing that London and the Swiss Mercantile Society can teach our young — you can show them how to gain a capital that will pay untold dividends on rainy days as well as when the world smiles upon you — and that is "a sense of humour".

A sense of humour is *not* always amongst the most noticeable qualities of the Swiss. I trust that during their stay in London your pupils will acquire also the ability to laugh at themselves, for to face failure or success with equanimity, is the Hall mark of you the older members of our colony here present and we must hope that it will equally become impressed upon the young compatriots in your care.

And now, Ladies and Gentlemen, I invite you to raise your glass and drink a toast to the Swiss Mercantile Society, and its happy future.

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The Chargé d'Affaires' address was much applauded.

Now came the turn of the Secretary General's oration. It is not often that the London section receives visitors from leading members of the Mother Society. That such occasional visits are appreciated was shown by the applause which Mr. Meier-Maag received on rising from his chair. He is, of course no stranger to the Society, having attended in 1948 the 60th anniversary celebration of the London section.

He said:

Herr Präsident, Meine Damen und Herren,

Ich freue mich darüber, dass mir die würdevolle Aufgabe zuteil wird, auf den liebenswürdigen Toast Ihres verehrten Präsidenten, Kollege Oskar Grob, zu antworten.

Vor allem habe ich nun die Ehre, Ihnen — gemeinsam mit meinen Kollegen Tröndle, Losey und Isliker — im Namen des Zentralkomitees die Grüsse des Schweizerischen Kaufmännischen Vereins zu überbringen und Ihnen gleichzeitig die Glückwünsche der Zentralleitung zu entbieten. Ganz besonders von Zentralpräsident Nationalrat Schmid-Ruedin.

Sie feiern heute Ihr 70jähriges Bestehen, und da muss ich Ihnen erklären, dass Ihr Jubiläum natürlich auch für den Zentralverein ein Ehrentag bedeutet; denn die eiserne Hochzeit Ihrer Sektion ruft im schweizerischen Verband Gefühle der Freude und der Dankbarkeit hervor.

Wir sind stolz darauf, dass Ihre Sektion seit sieben Jahrzehnten unserer grossen Solidaritätsgemeinschaft, der SKV-Familie, als wertvolles Glied angehört.

Sie sind der grösste und der wichtigste Aussenposten des Schweizerischen Kaufmännischen Vereins.

Ganz abgesehen vom Standpunkt des Verbandes muss betont werden, dass Sie als Auslandspioniere für die Heimat von eminenter Bedeutung sind, dass Sie viel Ehre für unser Vaterland einlegen und der schweizerischen Volkswirtschaft wertvolle Dienste leisten.

Wenn ich am Montag Gelegenheit bekomme, in Ihrer Schule zu sprechen, so werde ich Ihnen eindrücklich vor Augen führen, welch prächtiges Werk die Pioniere der Sektion London vor 35 Jahren mit der Tagesschule geschaffen haben.

Wir wollen aber nicht allein an die Gründer denken, sondern an unsere hier anwesenden Kollegen und Freunde, die weder Zeit noch Mühe scheuen, um der Schule zu dienen. Sie haben immer und immer wieder nach dem Motto gehandelt: um grosse Erfolge zu erringen, muss etwas gewagt werden; denn am Mute hängt der Erfolg.

Ihre Schule ist für uns im SKV eine Reklametafel, die wir gerne heraushängen, um mit ihr zu renommieren.

Gegenwärtig wird das Bundesgesetz über die berufliche Ausbildung einer Ueberprüfung unterzogen. Dieses Gesetzeswerk hat sich während einem Vierteljahrhundert bewährt. Wir werden aber bei der Revision dafür eintreten, dass Mittel und Wege gesucht werden, um den Schweizerschulen im Ausland in Zukunft noch mehr unter die Arme zu greifen.

Was uns Männer in der Zentralleitung aber — ganz abgesehen von verbandspolitischen Betrachtungen — besonders eng mit der Sektion London verbindet, das sind die freundschaftlichen Beziehungen.

Etwas vom schönsten im Leben besteht doch darin, gute Freunde zu haben. Und hier, in der Londoner Metropole der fünften Schweiz besitzen wir nun eben Kollegen, mit denen wir in wahrer, herzlicher Freundschaft verbunden sind.

Es ist mir ein Bedürfnis, dies hier zu bekennen.

J'ai appris avec une vive satisfaction que plusieurs dames et messieurs, qui sont présents ici, s'expriment dans la langue de Rousseau.

Il m'est tout particulièrement agréable d'adresser un salut chaleureux à ces amis welches.

Je puis les assurer que les organes directeurs de notre société centrale sont particulièrement heureux de pouvoir entretenir les meilleurs rapports avec les dames, demoiselles et messieurs d'expression française qui sont membres de notre association.

Nous autres Suisses alémaniques avons besoin de nous retremper dans l'ambiance romande empreinte de sagesse.

Last but not least; I should like to say a few words to our English-speaking ladies to bid them a hearty welcome. I am very sad that I have forgotten nearly all my knowledge of English which I acquired some 35 years ago.

It is, of course, the biggest fault of my life, not to be a former pupil of your school. If I were not married, I should even now, in my old days, try and find an English girl-friend, just to brush up my English again!

Ich habe einleitend gesagt, der heutige Tag sei ein Ehrenfest des Verbandes. Dies insbesondere darum, weil heute Gelegenheit geboten wird, einer langen Reihe treuer Mitglieder dafür zu danken, dass sie jahrzehntelang getreu zur Fahne des SKV gehalten haben.

Das Zentralkomitee dankt Ihnen aufs beste für Ihre Verbandstreue.

Ich habe nun die Ehre und die Freude, einer Reihe von Kollegen die goldene SKV-Nadel und einer noch längeren Reihe von Kollegen das Veteranenabzeichen des Verbandes überreichen zu dürfen.

Long applause acknowledged the warm and friendly address of the speaker. Then took place the presentation of the "Gold Pin" of the S.K.V. to members with forty and more years of membership. The following, who were present, received this most coveted distinction:

L. Chapuis (60), F. Dannmeyer Past President (56), A. Bucher (50), Ch. Chapuis (49), E. Eha (48), R. Schweizer (45), A. C. Stahelin, Past President (44), H. Andrea (44), A. Stauffer, Past President (43), E. Werner, Past President (43), W. Fuchs (42), J. E. von Felten (42), E. Minelli (41), F. G. Sommer, Trustee (41), J. C. Wetter (40), and W. Wyss (40).

The same distinction was also accorded to the undermentioned members, who were not able to attend; they will receive the "Gold Pin" by post.

W. Zuppinger (49), L. Duffey (47) H. Truninger (47), J. J. Wetter (47), H. Ott (44), H. Schwander (44), O. Bosshard (42), E. Beutler (41), F. Eggar (41), O. Gasser (41), W. Jent (41), and Ch. Struebin (41), and E. Hardmeier.

The following members, although not Veterans yet, were also presented with the Gold Pin for services rendered to the Society: Mr. A. Jaccard, Chairman Education Department, Mr. J. E. Schneider, Hon. Secretary, and Mr. R. Senn, Hon. Treasurer.

The "Veteranen Abzeichen" (Silver Pin) for twenty-five years and more membership, was handed over to the following members present:

A. Aeberhard (31), L. S. R. Asch (27), A. Baenziger (37), J. A. Boos Past President (37), W. Burren (31), R. Chappuis (39), W. Deutsch (31), P. E. Dick (39), E. Engler (35), E. Enz (29), W. Fischer (37), J. Frei (39), A. Gandon (25), O. Grob, President (33), G. Hediger (38), M. Heiling (37), E. Kern (31), L. W. Krucker, Trustee (39), N. Leuzinger (38), E. Luterbacher (30), O. Luterbacher (37), W. Meier Past President (30), J. Oertli (35), J. H. Oltramare (36), W. Pellet (31), W. Renz (35), A. Rutishauser (38), J. J. Schneider (28), O. Schoenholzer (36), R. Senn (26) W. B. Sigerist (31), F. Streit (37), H. E. Vonwiller (31), W. Wagner (33), A. Wymann (36), J. Zimmermann (38), A. M. Zullig (25), E. Zwicky (38).

The following who were absent, have also qualified for this distinction, and will receive the Silver Pin in due course:

J. H. Attinger (34), W. Beckmann (38), W. Bloechlinger (38), R. Brand (37), P. Bruder (34), W. Brunner (34), M. F. Corbaz (39), A. C. Cramer (31), Miss H. Deloff (25), E. Frey (30), C. Frueh (37), E. Gehring (30), E. Gourbach (38), C. Gruetzner (38), P. B. Haberstick (31), A. Halbbluetzel (31), H. P. Holliger (37), J. J. Huber (31), E. A. Hueni (30), E. Hug (26), L. Jobin (30), A. Jufer

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(39), M. Jutzi (31), T. Kellenberger (33), H. Kipfer (27), C. Krebs (35), A. Loeffler (38), F. Magnin (28), A. Mengeu (37), J. Menoud (29), J. Moser (38), A. Mottet (29), Mrs. C. Müller (35), Miss G. Müller (31), Miss O. Müller (35), U. Neukomm (37), H. Nachbur (29), S. Perrin (31), E. Rietmann-Adams (31), O. Rohn (29), M. Rothlisberger (30), R. A. Rupp (31), C. L. Salzer (38), M. Schoenholzer (37), E. W. Schweizer (35), J. A. Seiffert (31), J. Senn (39), J. Sennhauser (38), A. Steinmann Past President (35), W. Stettbacher (33), J. Stettler (36), L. Stutz (38), O. Suter (32), A. Tall (34), O. Togni (37), F. Wespi (30), C. E. Wietlisbach (36), Dr. A. Woessner (Miss) (31), F. Zimmermann (38) and K. Zobrist (28).

A number of members who had received the Gold Pin previously received a book instead.

The microphone was then passed to M. E. Losey (Secrétaire romand of the S.K.V.). He has now attended three anniversaries of the London section, being present at the Golden Jubilee, the 60th and now 70th, and I hope to see him again in five year's time.

Old friends are always much appreciated by the S.M.S., and he was, therefore accorded a very hearty reception. He said: Monsieur le Président, Monsieur le Chargé d'Affaires, Mesdames, Messieurs, Mes chers collègues.

Etre l'hôte de la section de Londres est un plaisir de qualité rare. J'eus le privilège d'être son invité en 1938, puis en 1948 et je le suis encore ce soir. J'ai vivement apprécié votre invitation et vous en remercie sincèrement. Mon épouse vous dit sa gratitude.

Etre membre d'honneur de la section de Londres est une faveur insigne. Vous venez d'accorder cette suprême distinction à notre sympathique et dynamique secrétaire général M. A. Meier-Ragg, à notre distingué rédacteur de notre organe central M. Adolphe Galliker et à moi-même. Nous sommes extrêmement sensibles à votre geste, nous sommes fiers de l'honneur qui nous échoit et vous prions de croire à nos sentiments de profonde reconnaissance.

Vous avez créé entre le Secrétariat central et le Secrétariat romand d'une part et la section de Londres, d'autre part, des liens plus étroits, plus solides et plus cordiaux.

Mes chers collègues, votre section célèbre ce soir, dans une ambiance charmante, le 70me anniversaire de sa fondation. Je vous apporte les vives félicitations et les vœux sincères des membres de la Suisse romande.

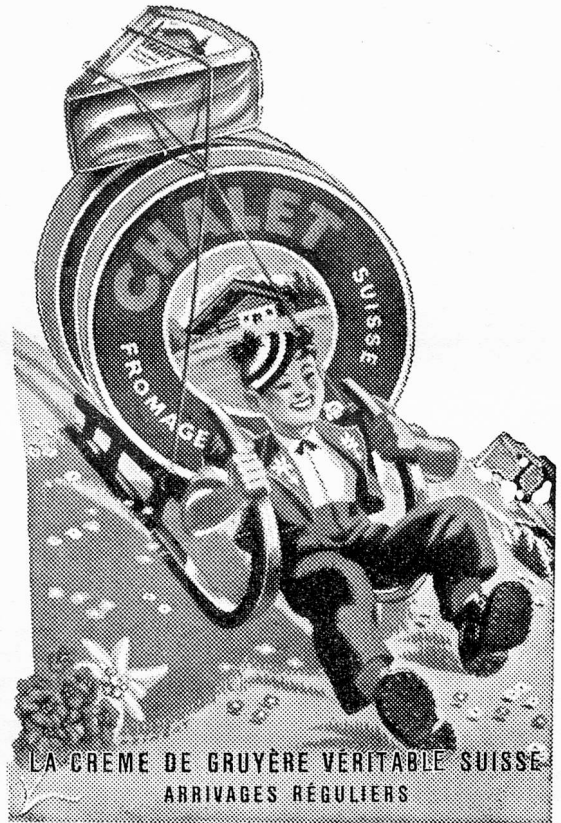
Si votre section accomplit, depuis 1888, une oeuvre féconde, elle le doit au dévouement inlassable, à la clairvoyante activité, à l'énergie d'une élite de compatriotes qui ont bien mérité de la Société Suisse des employés de commerce et de notre chère patrie Suisse.

A mon tour, j'exprime à ses collègues qui se sont consacrés à une belle et noble tâche avec toute leur intelligence et tout leur coeur, mes sentiments d'estime, d'affection et de gratitude.


Je souhaite que l'heureuse jubilaire trouve toujours des hommes de valeur pour reprendre le flambeau d'une main ferme. Chers amis, votre jubilé restera comme une étoile au coeur du souvenir. Je lève mon verre à la prospérité de votre section, à l'essor de son école — foyer de culture hautement apprécié — je bois à votre bonheur personnel et à votre santé.

Prolonged applause was accorded to M. Losey.


The President then asked leave to make a proposal, namely to elect the following members of the "Zentral Direktion" of the S.K.V. as Honorary Members of the London section: Mr. A.



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Meier-Ragg, M. E. Losey, and Mr. A. Galliker. This proposal was unanimously accepted, and the above mentioned members received the respective documents.

Mr. Grob informed the company that a great number of letters and telegrams had been received, amongst them a telegram from Monsieur R. Faessler, Economic Counsellor at the Swiss Embassy in London. He read out a letter received from the President of the Nouvelle Société Helvétique, Mr. W. Renz, congratulating the Society on their 70th birthday.

Mr. W. Deutsch, the Poet Laureate of the Colony then read out a sonnet, which he had written for the occasion, and which will be found at the end of this report. He was heartily congratulated for this *beau geste*.

Mrs. Charles Chapuis replied to the Toast for the Ladies, she did this — as usual — in a most charming manner, which went straight to the heart of her "male" listeners.

The veterans having been so much eulogised throughout the evening, it was only right and proper — that on their behalf — thanks should be given for so much praise received.

The reply to the Toast for "The Veterans" was entrusted to Mr. A. C. Stahelin, and I am sure no better man could have been chosen for this task, not only is he a past President of the S.M.S., and an Honorary Member, but he has also been one of the chief promoters of the Day School, and his services rendered to the Society are innumerable. Mr. Stahelin is one of the "star orators" of the Colony, and it is always a pleasure to listen to him. Very wittily he thanked the President for the honour so generously bestowed by the S.M.S. on his fellow veterans.

It was left to Mr. A. Jaccard, President of the Education Committee, to express thanks on behalf of the members, to the President and Mrs. Grob for the efficient way in which this festival had been arranged and conducted, adding that they well deserved to be congratulated on their efforts for making this evening a really enjoyable one. Mr. Grob, in acknowledging the compliments that had been paid, in his turn, thanked his colleagues on the Council and the Committee for their whole-hearted collaboration.

This concluded the official part of the evening; an evening which will not soon be forgotten by all who were present. The bonds of many old friendships were re-newed and strengthened, and more than ever before it was felt that the Swiss Mercantile Society is a happy family, anxious to always stand together, whatever the future may bring.

During the short interval, most of the company enjoyed the view from the windows of the Banqueting Hall which overlooked the brilliant lights of Piccadilly Circus, and which enjoys the reputation of being the centre of the British Empire.

The second part of the evening was devoted to a "Gemütlicher Abend". Our friend Mr. A. Gandon untiringly played the accordeon, and his son, Jean Michel — so well known in the Colony for his fine yodeling — ably assisted him.

Many of our folk-lore melodies, such as "O Blümli my", "Ich bin ein Schweizerknabe", "La — haut sur la montagne", "Ticinesi son bravi soldati", were sung with great fervour, perhaps not always quite in tune.

At about 11.30 p.m. the hour of departing struck, and everyone left the Criterion satisfied at having spent a few hours in congenial company, it was a happy, carefree evening, which augures well for the 75th anniversary which will be celebrated in five years time.

* * *

On Sunday, a coach took the Swiss visitors, and some of the members with their ladies to the ancient University city of Cambridge, where after a luncheon, the various beautiful and historical colleges and grounds were visited. Mr. C. Slade, M.A., Headmaster of the S.M.S. College, acted as guide through the colleges of his *Alma Mater*. It was a most enjoyable and interesting visit.

This concluded the three days festivities — at least as far as your reporter was concerned. I have for the last thirty years written innumerable reports in connection with Swiss festivals, but never before have I written a narrative with more pleasure and satisfaction.

ST.

**To the SWISS MERCANTILE SOCIETY
(On its 70th Anniversary).**

Greetings and all best wishes, S.M.S.,
You valiant daughter of the S.K.V.;
Three score and ten, a worthy Jubilee,
That's what you celebrate this day — no less.

What is the secret of your great success,
How to this query shall we find the key?
Is it the President or Committee,
Or do the Members some sweet charm possess?

The answer to this questioning is No;
It's teamwork — perfect teamwork all the while,
With unity and joyous zeal thrown in.

The College is your pride since long ago
And of its kind the finest in this Isle;
Let gratitude extol its origin!

London, September 13th, 1958.

"GALLUS".



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