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SWISS MERCANTILE SOCIETY

The Annual General Meeting of the Swiss Mercantile Society (Limited by Guarantee) was held at Swiss House on Wednesday, 15th February.

The large number of members present were welcomed by the Chairman, Mr. O. Grob, who presided.

In presenting the accounts for 1960, the Chairman was able to state that the Society could look back on a year's satisfactory working. The accounts as presented were adopted and the auditor, Mr. Robert P. Huxley, F.C.A., re-appointed.

Reporting on the activities of the Society during the period under review, Mr. Grob stated that the programme of lectures and film shows, which he detailed, had proved very popular with the members, and that the attendances at the monthly meetings had been most satisfactory. It was gratifying that no less than 21 new members had been admitted during 1960. At the end of the year, the membership was as follows: 25 Honorary Members, 229 Active Members, 14 Corresponding Members, and 47 Contributing Members.

The report of the College was presented by the Chairman of the Education Committee, Mr. A. Jaccard. He was pleased to record another year of increased attendance, 463 new students having been admitted, compared with 446 during 1959, whereas the average attendance had risen to 191 from 178 in the previous year. This had enabled the College to keep the school fees at the same, relatively low, level for the third consecutive year, despite increased overhead expenses.

The curriculum and the programme of lectures, excursions, socials and sport had followed traditional lines, improvements and alterations being made where possible and where deemed necessary.

The results achieved at the diploma examinations, the high standard of which had been fully maintained, exceeded any previously achieved, 263 out of a total of 285 candidates, or 92%, having been successful.

The evening classes, too, continued to flourish, 968 students having enrolled, an increase of 75 over the previous year. At the examinations of Cambridge University held in June and December, both day and evening class students had obtained satisfactory results. Out of a total of 42 candidates, 22 had received the coveted Certificate of Proficiency in English, whilst of 161 candidates, 107 had been successful at the examinations for the Lower Certificate in English. These results compared very favourably with those of other Colleges.

Thanks to the employment advisory service provided by the Society, no less than 36 of our young compatriots had been able to obtain clerical employment in this country on completion of their studies.

Thanks were expressed to the teaching and the administrative staffs for their devoted and loyal service.

Mr. R. Chappuis, Chairman of the House Committee, reported on the repairs and renovations carried out at Swiss House in the course of last year. He also gave particulars of accommodation and amenities provided to other Swiss Societies and the competent authorities for holding the Cambridge University external examinations.

Concluding his report, Mr. Grob expressed thanks to our Honorary President, the Swiss Ambassador, Monsieur A. Daeniker, and his collaborators for the great interest taken in the Society and the College. He also warmly thanked National Councillor Ph. Schmid-Ruedin, Central President, and Mr. A. Meier-Ragg, Secretary-General of the S.K.V., for their continued advice and assistance.

Further, he gratefully acknowledged the subsidy received annually from the Swiss Government (B.I.G.A.), as well as the donations in favour of the Education Fund from contributing members and firms.

Ending on a personal note, Mr. Grob stated that, after three years of office, he had decided to relinquish the Presidency, and expressed his appreciation to his colleagues on the Council and the Committees, as well as all the members, for their loyal support and co-operation.

The report as presented was adopted with acclamation, thanks being expressed to those who had compiled it.

Under the temporary Chairmanship of Mr. W. Deutsch, the meeting then proceeded with the elections. Mr. R. Chappuis, Vice-President, who had served on various Committees for a large number of years, was unanimously elected as Mr. Grob's successor.

The meeting was also pleased to welcome back as Chairman of the House Committee, our Hon. Member Mr. L. W. Krucker, who had held that office some years ago. The Council and the Committees for the financial year 1961 were finally constituted as follows:—

Council:—Chairman: Mr. R. Chappuis; Trustees: Messrs. J. J. Boos, H. Knoll, L. W. Krucker, F. G. Sommer, C. Voegeli; Members: Messrs. J. W. Bonjour, A. Faes, O. Grob, A. Jaccard, W. Meier, J. E. Schneider, R. Senn, F. Streit.

General Purposes Committee:— President: Mr. R. Chappuis; Vice-Presidents: Messrs. A. Jaccard and L. W. Krucker; Hon. Secretary: Mr. J. E. Schneider; Hon. Treasurer: Mr. R. Senn; Members: Messrs. H. Andrea, H. Mock, E. P. Siegfried, E. Zwicky.

Education Committee:— Chairman: Mr. A. Jaccard; Vice-Chairman: Mr. A. Faes; Members: Messrs. J. W. Bonjour, F. Burri, G. Hediger, O. Luterbacher.

House Committee:— Chairman: Mr. L. W. Krucker; Vice-Chairman: Mr. H. J. Keller; Members: Mrs. W. Meier, Mr. W. Schedler.

On taking the Chair Mr. R. Chappuis thanked the meeting for the confidence shown in him and stated that he would do his utmost to maintain the high standard set by his predecessors.

It was his pleasant duty to propose, on behalf of the Council, the election of Mr. O. Grob as an Honorary Member of the London Section, which was enthusiastically adopted by the meeting with prolonged acclamation.

As a fitting sequel, Mr. J. J. Boos, Honorary Member, presented the golden badge (Ehrennadel) of the S.K.V. which the Central Committee had bestowed on Mr. Grob for long and valued services rendered to the London Section and the association in general.

This award was greatly appreciated by the recipient as well as all the members present.

W.B.

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