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## SWISS MERCANTILE SOCIETY.

There was an unusually large attendance at the Monthly Meeting of the Society, held at Swiss House on Wednesday, October 13th.

The President, Mr. W. Meier, extended a cordial welcome to all present, including several past Presidents and the chief guests of the evening, Monsieur P. Clottu, Labour Counsellor of the Swiss Legation, and Mr. W. Baumgartner, Manager of the Employment Department of the S.K.V.

Applications for membership from Mr. M. M. Pfaendler, and Messrs. A. Nuetzi and F. Wicky, who had previously been members of Swiss Sections, were unanimously accepted.

The Chairman informed the meeting that Mr. O. Roethlisberger, Chairman of the Education Committee, was shortly being transferred to Switzerland, which meant a great loss to the Society. Mr. Roethlisberger was elected a member of the Education Committee when it was reconstituted after the war and took over the Chairmanship a year ago, when the former Chairman, Mr. K. E. Ammann, returned to Switzerland. Mr. Roethlisberger brought to his task a great amount of experience of men and affairs and proved himself very useful to the Committee by his boundless energy and initiative, but endeared himself most to his colleagues in the Council and in the Committees by his quiet manner, courtesy and modesty. The Chairman, on behalf of the Committee, conveyed thanks to Mr. Roethlisberger for the valuable services he had rendered to the College and expressed best wishes for his future career.

In introducing Mr. W. Baumgartner, the Chairman stated that by reason of his office, he was one of the best known members of the S.K.V., not only in Switzerland but all over the globe. Under his able guidance, the Employment Department of the S.K.V. had developed into a very strong service, probably one of the best organised in the whole world. Mr. Baumgartner's publication, "Handbuch für Uebersetzer," was considered a standard work on the subject and was well reviewed in the press. Anyone wishing to go overseas could obtain much valuable information and practical hints from the book.

Mr. Baumgartner, in his address to the members, said it was the first time that he had the opportunity of attending a meeting at Swiss House in London, although he had been a member of the Central Society for the past 32 years. He conveyed the greetings of the Central Society, Head Office as well as Employment Service. Being here on business, he thanked all who had contributed towards making his stay both beneficial and agreeable.

On behalf of the Board of Employment Service, he expressed heartiest thanks to Mr. J. J. Pfaendler, who recently celebrated his 40th anniversary as Manager of the Employment Department in London. During his period of office, Mr. Pfaendler had placed about 20,000 employees, not only here, but all over the world, and many of these had in the meantime acquired excellent positions in leading firms and gratefully remembered the services rendered to them by Mr. Pfaendler.

Mr. Baumgartner likewise thanked the members of the Advisory Board of the Employment Department, Messrs. E. Steiner, Chairman, C. Chapuis, W. Deutsch and W. Gamper, for the time they had devoted and

were still devoting to the Department, which services were greatly appreciated.

He went on to give a brief outline of the labour market in Switzerland, which, he said, had passed its peak although there was still full employment. Before coming to London, he said he had paid a visit to Belgium, where he had called on about thirty very important firms who used to engage Swiss before the war for Belgium and the Congo, but he regretted to state that the prospects for the immediate future were not very rosy. The possibilities of obtaining employment in overseas countries were not excellent but did exist. The S.K.V. Employment Service had in fact placed over 200 young men overseas since the end of the war. Many, however, were reluctant to sign long-term agreements.

Finally, Mr. Baumgartner expressed thanks to the Society for allowing the Employment Department to carry on at Swiss House, despite the fact that the S.M.S. itself was badly in need of additional accommodation for the College, thus recognising the important and valuable services rendered by the Employment Department. He concluded by expressing heartiest wishes for the 60th anniversary and the Society's future prosperity.

The Chairman then called on Monsieur Clottu, whom the members already knew from previous visits to Swiss House. He was going to deal with a subject of great interest to all present, the *Swiss Old Age and Dependents' Insurance Scheme*, on which he was an outstanding authority. He had been working on it for the past 12 months and had been good enough to give some members an opportunity of making suggestions and bringing to his notice any particular problem which occupied them.

M. Clottu, whose address is printed in full on another page of this issue, was given an enthusiastic ovation for the lucid manner in which he had dealt with a difficult and by its nature technical subject. He answered numerous questions and threw light on many points raised by members. A cordial vote of thanks was accorded to him at the close of a very interesting and animated meeting.

### ANNUAL LUNCHEON AND TEA DANCE.

The Society will celebrate its 60th anniversary and the 25th anniversary of the foundation of the College, with a Luncheon and Tea Dance at the Dorchester Hotel, on Saturday, November 6th. The Swiss Minister, Monsieur Henry de Torrenté and Madame de Torrenté, will be present, as well as a special delegation from the parent association in Switzerland, Central President K. Strickler, National Councillor Ph. Schmid-Ruedin, General Secretary of the S.K.V., Monsieur Emile Losey, Secrétaire Romand, and Mr. A. Meier-Ragg, Central Secretary.

The annual luncheon, a war-time innovation, has enjoyed great popularity ever since its inception and the Committee hope that this year, members will make a special point of being present to mark the occasion, and bring along their friends. For further particulars see advertisement.

In order to enable the S.K.V. delegates from Switzerland to be present, the next *Monthly Meeting* has been fixed for *Monday, November 8th* (see Forthcoming Events). Members of the delegation will address the meeting following the official business.

WB.