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SWISS MERCANTILE SOCIETY

It is gratifying to record that for the second month in succession there was a "full house" when the President, Mr. O. Grob, opened the proceedings at the Monthly Meeting, held on Wednesday, 9th November.

Like most other Swiss societies in the U.K., the S.M.S. find it difficult to maintain the membership of resident Swiss in view of the advancing average age of the members and the fact that the great majority of the younger generation stay here for a limited period only. It is, therefore, pleasing to state that with the transfer of Mr. Rolf Gerber, previously a member of the Lausanne Section, no less than 20 new members have so far been admitted this year.

After the official part of the meeting, the following colour films were shown by courtesy of our member, Mr. Charles Fer, of Cinex Ltd., on the new Paillard-Bolex 16 m/m sound projector.

West Country Holiday — a graphic account of a journey by motor coach through Devonshire and Cornwall, portraying the beautiful scenery from Plymouth to Land's End, with numerous holiday resorts and quaint places of interest, both on the coast and inland. This would not have been complete without a trip by boat across to the Scilly Isles, famed for the mass of flowers sent to the English markets in the early part of the year and noted for their tropical vegetation.

The Bank of England — a new film and the *pièce de résistance* of the evening, enabled members to gain, for the first time, an insight into this famous institution, steeped in tradition and popularly known as the Old Lady of Threadneedle Street. To-day it is aptly described as the Bankers' Bank, employing a staff of several thousand and equipped with the most modern machinery used in banking. The Bank of England is the hub of London's financial business, which has made it the most important centre in the world. One could see how news is speedily disseminated to all parts of the globe and how this vast undertaking, presided over and directed by the Court, carries on its daily affairs. The film also gives an interesting historic survey of the Bank and portraits by famous painters of many of the eminent personalities who have served and shaped the Bank's policy in its long and honourable career. It also shows how the financial resources are deployed into industry and commerce, and the excellent commentary, spoken by the actor, Stephen Murray, greatly adds to the enjoyment. Altogether a very fine film.

Banana Calypso — the third and last film, showed an important fruit industry in all its aspects. Probably few people realise how many laborious processes are involved in bringing this delicious fruit to the table in this country. We saw the tending of the plantations in the West Indies from root to harvest, the shipping of the fruit in refrigerated boats, and the final storage in specially constructed warehouses in London, from which it reaches the consumer through the retailers.

Members and friends are reminded that the next meeting will be held on December 7th, i.e., the first and *not* the second Wednesday as customarily. It will be followed by a talk, illustrated by colour slides, on his visit to Canada and the U.S.A., by Mr. F. G. Sommer, Hon. Member and Trustee of the S.M.S.

W.B.

"WER BIST DU — MENSCH HIOB!"

A treat of rare value rewarded those who filled the Eglise Suisse on Saturday, 5th November, to watch the presentation of the Biblical play on Job by the "Kammerspielkreis" Luebeck. With a minimum of stage effects, a handful of actors succeeded in holding the audience spellbound by their voices and movements, depicting the battle between God and Satan for the soul of Job. The old story known to us from childhood days came to life before our eyes so naturally in this new setting that its message for us to-day gained new strength and importance.

The figure of Job was at the centre of the play as we watched the different stages of his temptation, from wealth to poverty, from health to disease, and from happiness to despondency, until he repents and finds his faith in God again. But it is impossible to single out individual actors — some of them played more than one role — they worked as a whole and gave of their best, whether seen or unseen, heard or unheard. The inspired singing of the hymn of praise towards the end made a very deep impression on all those present.

The Swiss author of the play, Erica von Schulthess, lives in Zurich, and the present work is based on an old play on Job, which was presented on the "Muensterhof" in Zurich in 1535. It was certainly a great privilege for us to have this unique opportunity of seeing it during the present English tour of the "Kammerspielkreis," and our thanks are due to the Swiss Embassy and others who helped in making this presentation possible, and to the players for an unforgettable experience.

M.

ADDENDUM

Two things prompt me to suggest another item to be included in my appeal to women readers which I made in the last issue of the "S.O.". Firstly, I was touched by Mr. G. Keller's earnest reflections on the future of the "Swiss Observer", and secondly, my own "Swiss Colony Collection Box" has already been so surprisingly successful that I feel justified in proposing to include the "Swiss Observer" amongst the good works we women like to support by means of our "collecting effort". We do not want to be deprived of this valuable publication so dear to us. If we increase our individual efforts throughout the year, the collection will be enlarged and the shares will then not be smaller, even if we do cover one more deserving cause.

MARIANN.

A FURTHER TRANSLATION

It may interest readers to know that "The Young Traveller in Switzerland" by Mariann Meier (Phoenix House, Ltd.) has just been translated into Hebrew. It was published in Israel and joins the English, Danish, American and Japanese editions already on the market.

CHRISTMAS GREETINGS

We wish to direct the attention of our readers to the announcement on the front page of this issue.

In order to avoid disappointment, we should be glad to receive orders, enclosing 10/-, not later than Friday, 2nd December, 1960.