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NEWS FROM THE COLONY

ETIENNE R. COTTET †



As reported in the last issue, Mr. E. R. Cottet, of 95a Belsize Lane, London N.W.3, passed away at the age of 71 after a short illness. Once again death has taken from us one of the "Old Guard", and a distinguished member of the Swiss Colony in Great Britain.

The departed was born at Bossonens (Ct. Fribourg) in 1894. He started his schooling in his native village, and at the Ecole Régionale d'Attalens. On the conclusion of his studies he made his apprenticeship at the Hotel Beau Séjour in Lausanne going later on to the Hotel Eden at Montreux.

In 1911, at the age of nearly eighteen, he decided to go abroad to gain more experience, and his choice was Germany where he obtained a position at the Kaiserhof Hotel in Berlin, and afterwards held posts at Breslau, Bad Salzbrunn, etc.

It was in 1913 that Mr. Cottet arrived in this country where his meteoric career started. He obtained a position at the Adelphi Hotel in Liverpool. After seven years he moved to the Midland Hotel Bradford, and in 1922 took over the restaurant of the Adelphi, Liverpool, until 1930 when he was given control of the restaurant of the Midland Hotel Manchester. Each summer Mr. Cottet went to Gleneagles Hotel in Scotland to take charge of the famous restaurant du Soleil.

In 1937, he was appointed manager of the Euston Hotel, London, during the coronation of the late King George VI. Three years later (1940) he went back to the Adelphi Hotel Liverpool, this time as manager. Whilst he was in charge there the hotel was, on many occasions, bombed and badly damaged. In 1943, he took over the management of the Midland Hotel Manchester, and in 1947, when Gleneagles Hotel was re-opened, he returned there as manager for two seasons.

After nationalisation of the railway hotels Mr. Cottet in 1949 was appointed area superintendent of the Midland Group of hotels attached to the British Transport Commission. A year later (1950) he became area superintendent in London for the Southern and Western hotels and on reorganisation of hotel services of the commission, he went to York as chief hotels manager. He retired from the British Transport Commission in 1954. Shortly afterwards Mr. Cottet joined Gordon hotels as general manager

and a director. He resigned in 1958, but offered to act in an advisory capacity which was readily accepted by the board. Since then he had been increasingly active in educational work in the hotel industry, as a Fellow of the Hotel and Catering Institute and as an official of the Salon Culinaire. He was hon. treasurer of the Réunion des Gastronomes and an honorary member of the Association Culinaire Française and the Société des Clefs d'or.

One of his chief hobbies was photography — the writer received on many occasions copies of some of his masterpieces — he was also a keen gardener.

In spite of having been a resident in this country for over half a century he kept in constant touch with the country of his birth spending many holidays there. In 1943 he became a member of the Swiss Club Manchester. After nine years' membership, he was elected president in 1952. To this Society he rendered outstanding services, which were duly acknowledged when he was elected an Honorary Member. Not the least service was when he found a new home for the Club at the Midland Hotel.

Mr. Cottet had been a member of the City Swiss Club London since 1952, and he and his wife attended many social functions of the Club. Both he and Mrs. Cottet were members of the committee of the Swiss Hostel for Girls, where their collaboration was much appreciated. He was also a member of the Swiss Catholics and the Nouvelle Société Helvétique.

A life full of success and devotion to duty has now come to its Journey's End — alas — all too soon. Etienne Cottet was a patriot in the full sense of the word. He had, indirectly rendered many services to our country for which we thank him beyond the grave. In all his work he found a devoted helper in his wife to whom we are tendering our deepest sympathy in her sad loss. The departed will always be affectionately remembered by his many friends for his courtesy, kindness and loyalty. We are proud that we could call him "one of us"; he has diligently upheld the good name of our country. ST.

A requiem mass was held on Thursday, 13th May, at the church of St. Thomas More, Maresfield Gardens, N.W.3. Amongst the large congregation were many friends and former colleagues. The Swiss Ambassador was represented by Monsieur F. Ansermoz, Counsellor of Embassy. The City Swiss Club by Mr. E. Bonvin, President, and Mr. A. Stauffer, Hon. Vice-President, the "Swiss Observer" by Mrs. Mariann Meier, Editor, the Swiss Club Manchester by Mrs. T. Monney, Hon. Secretary, the Swiss Hostel for Girls by Miss Preiswerk, and the Nouvelle Société Helvétique by Mrs. F. Suter.

S.O.S. FROM THE SWISS HOSTEL FOR GIRLS

After many years of devoted service, Miss R. Preiswerk is retiring as Warden of the Swiss Hostel for Girls in Hampstead. The Council of Management are trying to find a successor. A responsible person between 30 and 45 is required who has experience in dealing with young people and is capable of running a hostel for sixty girls. Housekeeping staff is available. Thorough knowledge of English is essential. A good salary is offered.

Applications should be made to the Council of Management, Swiss Hostel for Girls, 9/11 Belsize Grove, London N.W.3.