

# Assembly of Presidents of the swiss Societies

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### MUSICAL PARTY AT THE LEGATION.

Princess Marie Louise was present at a musical party given by the Swiss Minister and Mme. de Torrenté, on Tuesday, November 28th, at the Legation, 21, Bryanston Square.

The artists were: Pierre Mollet (Baryton); Rolf Looser (Violoncelle); André Loew (Violon) and Margaret Kitchin (Piano).

The works of the following composers were rendered:—

Willy BURKHARD was born on the 17th April, 1900 and studied music at Berne, Leipzig, Munich and Paris. At the age of 28 already he was teacher at the Konservatorium in Berne.

He has produced several orchestral works, Oratoria, works for choir and orchestra, an opera, concertos for instruments and vocal soloists as well as songs and Lieders.

Pierre WISSMER was born on the 30th October, 1915, in Geneva. He studied in Geneva and in Paris under Roger-Ducasse and Daniel Lesur. He lives now in Geneva and is Director of Chamber Music at the Radio Genève.

He wrote pieces for Orchestra and Symphonies, a Suite for Piano and for Organ, also Ballet Music and several instrumental and vocal works.

Robert OBOUSSIER was born on the 9th July, 1900, at Antwerpen, and studied music in Heidelberg, Mannheim and Zurich as well as in Berne. Later on he moved to Florence, Munich and Paris and besides composing he was music critic for various French and German papers. Since 1939 he lives in Zurich.

The first public performance of his works was at the Chamber-Music Festival of 1923 in Germany.

Frank MARTIN was born on the 15th September, 1890, in Geneva. He studied under Joseph Lauber and Jaques-Dalcroze and lives now in Amsterdam, acting at the same time as Professor for Composition at the Konservatorium of Cologne.

He has written a great number of works. His "Petite Symphonie Concertante" was first played in Great Britain at the Edinburgh Festival of 1949, conducted by Ansermet. His other works include a big Symphony Oratoria, Piano Concertos, Chamber Music as well as pieces for Choir and Orchestra.

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### ASSEMBLY OF PRESIDENTS OF THE SWISS SOCIETIES.

A Meeting of the Presidents was held at the Swiss Legation in the evening of Monday, November 20th. Mr. F. G. Sommer (Swiss Male Choir) was in the Chair and Monsieur F. Rothenbühler and Monsieur P. Clottu attended on behalf of the Swiss Minister. The Hon. Secretary, Mr. F. Streit (Swiss Philatelic Society) read several letters received from Presidents of Swiss Societies in the Provinces and unable to be present. It was decided that in future the Provincial Societies should be given special notice of meetings and that their wishes should be taken into account when fixing the date.

It was noted with regret that the Swiss Orchestral Society had ceased to function and that the Union Helvetia Club would shortly be dissolved. On the other hand, the Mutual Benefit Society of the Union Helvetia will continue its activities.

The Chairman then called on Dr. H. W. Egli (Nouvelle Société Helvétique) who had recently attended the Journée des Suisses de l'Etranger at Lausanne and who had been delegated to present the Assembly's views to the Journée. Dr. Egli did not wish to add to his report published in the *Swiss Observer* on September 29th but he suggested that in future the Assembly's recommendations should be more clearly defined. After a full discussion of the best means of achieving this end it was decided to appoint a Committee consisting of Dr. H. W. Egli (N.S.H., Mr. A. Renou (Confrérie Vaudoise) and Mr.

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W. Meier (Swiss Mercantile Society). They were instructed to study in advance and submit proposals on any matter which was likely to come before the *Journée* and which might be of interest to the Swiss living in Great Britain. Any recommendations by individual Societies should therefore in the first instance be brought to the knowledge of this Committee, who would also study a recent proposal that young Swiss abroad should receive a commemorative gift on coming of age.

An idea put forward by Dr. Egli whereby the Swiss abroad should be enabled to participate in the Swiss Old Age and Dependents' Insurance Scheme at a flat rate of premium which would be on a self-balancing basis (said to be somewhat above Fr.300.— p.a.) received general support from the Assembly. The *Secrétariat des Suisses à l'Etranger* will be notified accordingly.

The question of securing more widespread support for the *Swiss Observer* both from subscribers and advertisers was held over owing to the absence of Mr. R. de Cintra (Cercle Genevois and Swiss Sports). He has been studying this matter with the Publisher and the Editor at the instance of the Assembly.

In accordance with the rules of the Assembly the officers then retired and they are not eligible for the next following year. Mr. C. Berti (Unione Ticinese), previously Vice-Chairman, was unable to accept nomination as Chairman and the following were then elected by unanimous vote: Mr. R. Dupraz (City Swiss Club), Chairman; Prof. J. Inebnit (Swiss Club Leeds), Vice-Chairman; Mr. W. Meier (Swiss Mercantile Society); Hon. Secretary.

An appeal was made to all concerned to give as much notice as possible for forthcoming events to the Editor of the *Swiss Observer* in order to avoid the clashing of dates. The proceedings then terminated.

W.M.

### SWISS BENEVOLENT SOCIETY AND CHRISTMAS.

Few members attended the quarterly meeting of the Swiss Benevolent Society on Monday, 27th November. This was because several councils and committees had happened to pick on the same Monday for their meetings. Owing to the absence abroad of the President the Hon. Vice-President, Mr. R. Dupraz, was in

the Chair. Two facts emerged from dealing with the customary agenda. The first showed that all the Society's expenses have gone up and that it will be difficult to balance the accounts by the end of the year. The Hon. Treasurer expressed his hope that all outstanding subscriptions would come in before the books for 1950 will have to be closed.

The second item was the Christmas appeal for the poor. Every year the S.B.S. send parcels to families and individuals that are on their books. Some ladies of the Colony spend weeks every year carefully sorting out the used clothing and shoes which have been given to the Society for distribution. A lot of clothes need repairing, for the S.B.S. pride themselves on never passing on torn garments. This takes up a lot of time. All the shoes have to be measured and carefully marked, and the clothing has to be sorted according to sizes. All this work has now been completed and the ladies and gentlemen, untiring and unselfish, are ready to make up the parcels. But, alas, where before the war there was plenty, there is little now, and money will not buy nearly as much as in former years.

Let us all go through our cupboards and chests once more and see whether we can't spare something else. There is that perfectly good pair of shoes which is just a trifle too small for us, but which would fit admirably some poor woman. And what about the warm, woollen underwear, almost new, which we never wear because it tickles. It would be a godsend to a sick old woman who feels the cold so terribly. What about some sheets and bath towels, the table cloths which we no longer use now that the children are grown up and have left home. And daddy's spare umbrella which is really rather a nuisance standing about. Then there are all the apples which we shall never be able to finish — there was such a large crop in the garden this year, and they would make a welcome addition to the children's stockings. So will the sweets; I am sure we shall get some Swiss chocolate sent to us, and we can easily spare a few coupons and buy some confectionery. What other food could we spare, some tea, perhaps some fat? The main thing is that we get all the things ready quickly and send them at once to the Swiss Benevolent Society, 31, Conway Street, W.1. We shall never miss what we take away from our stores now, for we have so much. But to those in need it will make all the difference. To many it will mean a happier Christmas, and is not this well worth achieving?

MARIANN.

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