

# Annual general meeting of Swiss catholics

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## ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING OF SWISS CATHOLICS.

Following the "Easter Service" which took place on April 17th at St. Ann's Church, S.W.1, about which there is a special report, the Swiss Catholics held the Annual General Meeting at the Hall of Westminster Catholic School.

After an "informal tea" the Chairman, Mr. J. Boos, welcomed the assembly.

The Annual Report and Accounts had been circulated and augmenting the report the Chairman once more stressed the great services rendered by H.E. the Swiss Minister, M. H. de Torrenté, during his stay in London. He also felt sure that in the new Swiss Minister, Mr. Daeniker, we would have equally a man whom we could rely upon for support and assisting when needed, a proof, we were honoured by his presence at the service preceding the meeting. He also mentioned Mr. A. Steinmann who had been the Committee's Honorary Treasurer for 14 years until his return to Switzerland. He thanked the Chaplain, Fr. Lanfranchi, for his untiring work for the Parish and the Swiss Colony.

Fr. Lanfranchi in turn expressed his appreciation and thanks for the work done by the Committee and the support he had from the Colony in general.

Mr. Jardon and Mr. R. Vögtli proposed that the Reports and Accounts be accepted and the Chaplain and Committee be thanked for work done so well.

For the period 1955/56 the present Committee Members were then re-elected and in addition Dr. Fässler and Mr. L. Mueller were elected as Members of the Committee, Mr. Buschor being nominated as Hon. Treasurer.

Following the business part of the meeting the Rev. Dr. Zihler, S. J., of Zürich (gave a most interesting talk on the "Jesuitenfrage" in Switzerland. He related how after the religious strifes in Switzerland (Sonderbund war, etc.) in the late century, the various Cantons and even the 1848 Swiss Constitution included restrictions in the Religious orders, restrictions that were contested by many in Switzerland and passed only by a small majority, and applying in particular to the order of the Society of Jesus, forbidding their preaching, teaching and writing.

It is true that many of these restrictions today are on paper only and many religious orders have done and are doing sterling work in Switzerland amongst whom the Swiss priests of the S.J. order are foremost in the Apostolic work in various parts of Switzerland.

Conditions in Switzerland today, compared with a 100 or more years ago, are so different, when Catholics and Protestants alike now need all co-operation to combat the evils of modern life and Communism, that there is a strong feeling that the wrong of the Swiss Constitution regarding the religious orders should be amended, the Swiss Catholic orders not only be "tolerated" but be "permitted" to carry on their work.

The assembly greatly appreciated the most interesting talk by Dr. Zihler, there could be no doubt on which side we would vote if we were asked to decide the issue.

J.B.

## SWISS CATHOLICS IN LONDON. "Our Patron Saint."

A breath of Switzerland surely came to London to our little Church of St. Ann, Abbey Orchard Street, S.W.1, on Sunday the 17th April, when in place of the usual "Easter Service" a special ceremony was held.

On that day, proudly midst such a solemn but joyful occasion, we witnessed the solemn blessing, the procession and the erection and veneration of a beautiful carved statue in wood of our Patron Saint, St. Niklaus von der Flue, given by a generous London Swiss.

H.E. Monsieur A. Daeniker, the new Minister to London, and his wife graced us with their presence, a gesture much appreciated by the Swiss Catholics, and we pray that St. Niklaus will guide him safely and successfully through his diplomatic life and his Mission in London. Other members of the Swiss Legation present were Dr. Fässler, Mr. and Mrs. Huber and Mr. Albertini.

There was a good congregation but it was a pity the church was not filled to overflowing for this simple and moving ceremony.

A most interesting talk on St. Niklaus' life, history and glory opened the service given by the Rev. J. Zihler from Zürich. We feel honoured to have had Fr. Zihler with us, and offer him our deep gratitude for bringing to us, in his own charming English-Irish accent, the story of such a humble man as St.

As exciting as the tempo of a Mazurka. As delicate as the movement of a waltz. As memorable as the grace and charm of the ballet.

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