

News from the colony

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NEWS FROM THE COLONY

AT THE NOUVELLE SOCIÉTÉ HELVETIQUE

THE BRITISH POLICEMAN

It would, of course, be too much to ask that every member of the Metropolitan Police force should be able to converse with foreign visitors in their own language. Mind you, there are quite a number of police officers who are versed in one or several foreign languages. It would be unreasonable to find them on point duty. None the less, it has happened, as the following true story shows.

A Swiss maiden, on her first visit to this country, went up to a "man in blue" at St. Giles Circus and asking him for his guidance tried her not bad school English on him. Back came the question: "Grüezi Fräulein; Sind sie öppe s'erst mol in London?"

No, as it happened, he was a true-blood Englishman. On the other hand, it transpired during questions the other night that at least one member of the Swiss Colony, an urchige Bündner, belongs to the Metropolitan Special Constabulary.

However, all this is by-the-way. I am instructed faithfully to report what happened at the monthly meeting of the Nouvelle Société Helvétique which was held on 21st November at the Swiss Hostel for Girls, at Belsize Grove, N.W.3.

The president, Mr. Homberger, could welcome a fair-sized audience, who came to hear the guest of the evening, Inspector Goodson, of West End Central Police Station, tell us something of the policeman's work.

Inspector Goodson proved himself as a first-class lecturer. He started with some historical notes. There was some sort of policing throughout historic times. In this country we had records of local police — individuals locally elected to guard the peace and to arrest wrongdoers — from the times of the Conqueror. Gradually the practice changed from the purely local arrangement to a system of justice of the peace and the magistrate courts with their servants — or runners. The runners, i.e., a sort of policeman, of the Bow-Street Magistrates, the Bow-street Runners, have been made famous in British literature.

The modern police force, however, came into being through an Act of Parliament passed by ('forced through' might be more appropriate!) Parliament when Sir Robert Peel was Prime Minister. And, as one might have expected, the members of the new force were immediately known as "Peelers". On this Act of Peel as foundation, the whole of present-day police organisation is built. The present position is that with the exception of what is called the Metropolitan area — more or less comprising greater London — every county has its own force, commanded by a Chief Constable and supervised by a Watch Committee. The Metropolitan Police Force, with its Chief Commissioner as Commander-in-Chief, is finally subject to the Secretary for Home Affairs.

The lecturer then dealt with the build-up of the Metropolitan force; The various divisions and their tasks and responsibilities, New Scotland Yard with its technical

and scientific departments, and so forth. What interested his hearers was the fact that most "big" crimes, including murder, were dealt with to the end by the divisions. Scotland Yard would be asked to come in and help on the technical (finger-prints, photographs, etc.) and scientific (chemical analyses, etc.) side, or, in some cases where the field of search extended far beyond the reach of the divisional station.

A few somewhat gruesome details of murder and suicide cases were served up by the lecturer in such a humorous way that they evoked merriment amongst the audience.

Inspector Goodson also explained how policemen are being trained. The fact that it was now possible for an intelligent man in the early thirties to be appointed Inspector, was brought home to his listeners by his own youthful appearance.

All in all an excellent performance; one which could not but make one disposed to be friendly towards the Police Force which Inspector Goodson represents.

JHB.

MANCHESTER: A MOVING TRIBUTE TO FORMER CONSUL SCHNEIDER

At the last monthly meeting of the Swiss Club of Manchester, a moving tribute was paid to former Consul, Mr. Oskar Schneider, who was suddenly taken away from us, and from such an active and fruitful life. The City of Chicago, where in the last few years he represented our homeland as Consul-General, wanted to bestow on him civil and military honours in recognition of his selfless, useful and so human work, freely and unsparingly given, not only for the narrower circle of his own countrymen, but also for the City and its interests, and for his contribution in furthering the good relationship between the two countries.

Our own President, Mr. Simon, in a few very touching words reminded us here in the North of England, of the life and work of Mr. Oskar Schneider when he was "our" Consul, and those who saw him in action could not withhold the admiration they felt for the way he sacrificed his time and his health in the service of his countrymen, however humble they may have been.

For those who had the honour of being his friends, this sudden departure from their midst will be felt as a sad and irreplaceable loss. Time alone may heal our sadness, but we shall always remember him.

E.B.

A SWISS GASTRONOME REWARDED

Editor-author Walter Bachmann, of 20 Heath Rise, Putney, S.W.15, who translated the famous book, "Modern French Culinary Art", which has been printed in five languages and sold over 700,000 copies, was recently awarded a gold Escoffier plaque for services rendered to the culinary art.

DR. GUSTAVE KULLMANN

Dr. Gustave Kullmann, who died on 12th November, was a "Renaissance man", with a conscience; a mystic, with a command of practical affairs, writes Mr. P. M. Malin in "The Times". He came to know, probably, more about refugees — racial, religious, political — than anyone else on earth. And he dealt with their problems, not merely as a highly informed authority on the complexities of statelessness, but also as an indefatigable and effective helper in surmounting individual hardships.

Born into a prominent Swiss family, he early attained *summa cum laude*, his doctorate in Law at both Zurich and Berlin. But the ordinary practice of his profession in his native country could not contain his soaring spirit, and, after studying Theology at Yale, he helped found and direct the International Student Service, which in the early 1920's salvaged the educational careers of thousands of young men and women on the Continent. From that work he went on to render brilliant service as a member of the Intellectual Co-operation Section of the League of Nations Secretariat.

He thus brought unique preparation to his posts as Deputy High Commissioner for Refugees under the League of Nations and Assistant Director of the Intergovernmental Committee for Refugees. When the International Refugee Organization was established by the United Nations in 1947, he naturally was appointed its Chief Legal Officer — later, as his health began to fail because of his long and unstinted efforts, he became its representative in the United Kingdom.

A NOMINATION

The Ship and Boat Builders' National Federation have elected Mr. T. M. Hagenbach as their 1962 president.

Mr. Hagenbach, whose family is of Swiss extraction, is managing director of Windboats Ltd., of Wroxham, Norfolk, who manufacture boats in timber, aluminium, glass-fibre and "Seacrete" (a concrete derivative). "Seacrete" is claimed to be stronger than timber or glass-fibre and as strong as steel but cheaper than all three. Further claims are that "Seacrete" possesses great elasticity and resistance to cracking, is water resistant, corrosive-proof, fire-proof and can be moulded into any shape or form. Three boats built with hulls made from this material will be introduced by Windboats Ltd. for the 1962 hiring season on the Norfolk Broads. A boat with a "Seacrete" hull will be exhibited at the International Boat Show at Earl's Court from 3rd to 13th January 1962.

OUR NEXT ISSUE

Our next issue will be published on Friday, 12th January 1962. We take this opportunity of thanking the following subscribers for their kind and helpful donations over and above their subscription: P. Odermatt, John Schmid, Otto Schoenholzer, W. Iseli, O. Braga, O. Bhend, A. E. Wehrli, F. P. Bovet, A. Schmid, S. Brenni, E. C. Enz, Walter Flory and H. Bronimann.



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