

# Swiss Mercantile Society

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needs are for greater integration within Europe and a better spirit of understanding towards countries outside Europe, and this includes the developing world whose aspirations and needs are our common concern.

These aims are by no means incompatible. To hold back on integration through anxiety about the transatlantic relationship would be a fundamental error. It would benefit no-one. An economically strong and united Western Europe may create some awkward cases of competition for the United States. But a weak and divided Western Europe would be a dangerous source of instability.

And only if Western Europe is strong, can it contribute in full measures

to the narrowing of the gap between the living standards of the rich and poor countries of the world, a gap which must be closed in the interests of all of us.

We should therefore give the search for co-operation and understanding priority over technical and doctrinal differences. In every sector there should be the strongest incentive to work for agreed solutions. Each of the countries of Western Europe must be resolved to play its part in discussions at the highest level to preserve the harmony of the West.

These are exciting days. The new Europe is for us to fashion. It is on the move. It is for us to ensure that when the new Europe speaks, the world listens.

Switzerland, the Society was able to secure a three-year lease in *Henrietta Street*, off the Strand. The day school thus came into being in January, 1923 with a Headmaster and a full-time secretary looking after 50 students. Some of them are still alive today and members of the S.M.S.

Three years later, it proved necessary to seek more suitable premises. The S.M.S. College moved to its present site at 34-35 *Fitzroy Square*. This terraced building had served as a Swiss hostel for girls since 1906. The S.M.S. obtained a long lease on the building, carried out major transformations and moved in after an inaugural ceremony presided by the Swiss Minister, *Mr. C. R. Paravicini*, on 11th December, 1926.

This is where the school still stands today and will continue to carry out its valuable services in future following the purchase of the freehold. This was made possible last year thanks to an appeal with the support of leading businessmen. The SKV and the Swiss Government's support were essential to the realisation of the project. The SMS is presently awaiting final authorisation by the Council to extend the premises and carry out modernisation work all round. These works are planned to last about eight months. During that time, the school will have to operate in other, unfortunately scattered premises. This problem is gradually nearing its solution.

The teaching work of the S.M.S. hasn't essentially changed during these fifty years. There were over 200 students before the war, there are 260-280 of them today. The outbreak of war forced the closure of the College. Its premises (also called "Swiss House" in the Colony) were in fact used as a mobilisation centre. One day in September, 1939, the College's male students, some of its teachers, and many members of the Colony who had received their call-up assembled at Fitzroy Square for the ominous journey home which they accomplished in a special train.

Since the opening of the Fitzroy Square premises, the S.M.S. College has given evening classes as well as day classes with, today, a full-time staff of 16 teachers all of British nationality. More than 20,000 students have sat on the College's benches over those fifty years.

The College sets high standards and students can hardly afford to be slack if they want to successfully complete the full course, which consists of six stages of five weeks' duration. Curriculum includes English language, translation to and from Germans, French and Italian, commercial correspondence, commerce and literature and also English shorthand. The diploma examination, which embraces all subjects taught, can be taken at the end of grade six, which can only be reached by passing the regular monthly class-tests. The award of an S.M.S. diploma therefore vouches for a good working knowledge of English. It is certainly no coincidence that a higher-than-average number of S.M.S.

# NEWS FROM THE COLONY

## The Swiss Mercantile Society College is 50 years old



The College of English run by the Swiss Mercantile Society in London celebrates its 50th Anniversary this year. By coincidence, the *Schweizerische Kaufmannische Verein* (SKV), the Parent Organisation, celebrates its Centenary Year. This event was marked by a special issue of the weekly SKV paper. Among various special features and an outline of the work and history of the SKV, there appeared a long article written by *Mr. Walter Burren*, Secretary of the S.M.S. and teacher at its college, relating the history of those past fifty years.

Mr. Burren first recalled that the Swiss Mercantile Society in London was created on 26th September, 1888 by 13 compatriots in London with the object of advancing professional and linguistic education. Within a month, an application

was sent to the SKV for admission as a local section. This would give members of the SMS the advantages offered by the Central Society.

For the first thirty years of its existence, the SMS confined its teaching activities to evening classes. This was made possible by the absence of restrictions on immigration. Young Swiss had no trouble finding work in Britain and could therefore combine work with the study of English at off duty hours. With the introduction of the Aliens Act of 1920, it became increasingly difficult for young Swiss to obtain permits in England. But the need to learn English remained, and it was decided to create full-time courses in England and commercial subjects.

As a result of an appeal launched in

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students not only pass their exams, but make the grade in professional life.

Results are also obtained by a right balance between hard work and fun. The College's managements organises football matches (the SMS team has an honourable record in a businesshouse league) tennis, outings and dances. Students satisfied with their masters surely give them satisfaction in return.

As for evening classes, they benefit those young Swiss who have managed to find employment in Britain, some with the Society's assistance following an initial course of studies. Evening classes prepare in particular for the Cambridge examinations which enjoy ever growing popularity and are widely recognized.

### LONDON SWISS PHILATELIC SOCIETY

The annual general meeting of the society was held on Friday, May 18th, 1973. Mr. W. Burren, President, welcomed members and guests and expressed his pleasure at the good attendance.

The accounts for the past year were dealt with, which showed a satisfactory surplus and thanks were expressed to the Hon. Treasurer, Mr. M. Rothlisberger, and his deputy Mr. H. C. Gay, for the efficient way in which the accounts had been presented.

The President followed with his own report on the activities of the Society during the past 12 months, mentioning that it was exactly 30 years since the first members met here at Swiss House to launch the London Swiss Philatelic Society. He referred briefly to the interesting and varied programme during the year under review, but as all the activities had been fully reported in the Society's Bulletin he did not mention these individually, but said how pleased he was to look back upon another successful year, which in fact was to be his last as President. He ended by thanking the principal officers for their valued services and singled out Miss Grunberg, Mr. Rothlisberger and Mrs. Paschoud, who as Hon. Secretary, Hon. Treasurer and Packet Secretary respectively, had borne the brunt of the work during the year. He also thanked members for their support during his 11 years as President and felt confident that they would continue to support the new President in the future.

Mr. Jack Beken as chairman *pro tem*, after thanking the outgoing Presi-

dent and Committee for their untiring work during the past year, proceeded with the elections. Mr. David Paschoud was unanimously elected President for 1973/74 and Mr. H. C. Gay Vice-President. The remaining officers and members of the committee were then re-elected en bloc.

Mr. Paschoud took the chair and expressed his appreciation for the confidence members had placed in him and assured them that he would do his utmost to maintain the prosperity and aims of the Society and hoped that he in turn could count on their continued support. He particularly stressed the importance of better attendance at the meetings and after some deliberations it was decided to change the date of these from the last Friday to the last Wednesday in the month. Full details will be circulated to all members.

After the official part of the meeting there followed an auction, which, however, due to lack of suitable material proved to be rather disappointing. Nevertheless, the auctioneer, Mr. E. M. Huber, was able to announce a sales total of £17.50.

E. M. H.

### Swiss Mountaineers are guests at Embassy

A Reception was held on Thursday 24th May, at the Embassy in honour of a delegation of the Swiss Alpine Club. The visitors were the guests of the British Mountaineering Council and were to spend an extended weekend climbing on some cliffs in North Wales with fellow British alpinists.

It was explained to me that for the first time, the British Mountaineering Council was playing host this year to the Annual Meet of the International Mountaineering Federation. This will take place in North Wales at the end of August. The several dozens of national and county mountaineering organisations had not so long ago formed a Federation and recently decided to develop their contacts with fellow mountaineers abroad. The decision to host the International Meet and invite beforehand a team of Swiss mountaineers accorded with this new policy. British rock-climbers always went abroad and tested their skills in the Alps, the Dolomites and the Himalayas. A member of the Association of British Members of the Swiss Alpine Club (there

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# Swiss Churches

SERVICES EN FRANCAIS: à l'Eglise Suisse, 79 Endell Street, W.C.2, tous les dimanches à 11h15 et 19h00.

PERMANENCE: chaque jeudi de 15h00 à dimanche du mois, matin et soir.

SAINTE-CENE: le premier et troisième 18h00.

REUNION DE QUARTIER: huit veillées en automne et au printemps: voir "Le Messager".

CLUB DES JEUNES: tous les dimanches de 12h00 à 22h30, tous les jeudis de 15h00 à 22h30.

REUNION DE COUTURE: le 2e mardi du mois.

LUNCH, tous les dimanches à 13h00.

VISITES: sur demande.

PASTEUR: A. Nicod, 8 Park View Road, London, N.3. Téléphone 01-346 5281.



SWISS CATHOLIC MISSION: John Southworth Centre, 48 Great Peter Street, London, SW1P 2HA.

Sundays: Holy Mass at 6.30 p.m. with sermon in German, in the Club hall, ground floor.

(2nd floor at the same time, Protestant service in German).

CONSULTATIONS AND CONFESSIONS: by appointment.

SERVICES EN FRANCAIS: Notre Dame de France, 5 Leicester Place, W.C.2, on Sundays, 10.00, 11.00, 12.15, and 6.30 p.m.

SWISS CATHOLIC YOUTH CLUB: Open every Sunday from 3 p.m. to 11 p.m. (48 Great Peter Street). Discussions, dance, lectures (with members of other denominations), Sunday services and refreshments. See programme "Die Stimme."

During the week: open according to programme of the English Youth Club.

RESIDENCE OF CHAPLAIN: Bossard, Swiss Catholic Mission, 48 Great Peter Street, (2nd floor), London SW1P 2HA. Telephone: 01-222 2895.



SERVICES IN GERMAN: at Eglise Suisse, 79, Endell Street, W.C.2, every Sunday at 9.45 a.m. Sunday school takes place on the first and the third Sunday in the month for children of all age groups. Children assemble in the church with their parents who attend the normal Service. Liturgical Service takes place every second Sunday in the month. Services also at John Southworth Centre, 48 Gt. Peter Street, S.W.1 every Sunday at 6.30 p.m.

HOLY COMMUNION: every first Sunday of the month at evening service at John Southworth Centre. Every second Sunday of the month at morning Services at Eglise Suisse. On major feasts at morning and evening services.

CONSULTATIONS: every Wednesday 4-6 p.m. at Eglise Suisse.

DISTRICT GROUP S.E.21 and SERVICES OUTSIDE LONDON: see "Stimme."

"KONTAKT" (Youth Group): every Wednesday 4-10 p.m. at Eglise Suisse. Supper at 7 p.m. Programme at 8 p.m.

WOMEN'S CIRCLE: every first Tuesday of the month from 12 noon onwards at the Eglise Suisse.

MOTHER'S REUNION: third Wednesday in the month, 11 a.m. to 4 p.m. at the Eglise Suisse.

VISITS: by request.

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