

MARCEL DERRON

1932-1970

During the last days of April, the news of the unexpected death of our associate member, Marcel Derron, caused great concern and sorrow among a large circle of his friends and acquaintances. Cheerfully he had looked forward to his early discharge from the hospital after a relatively harmless operation when on the evening of April 29th, an insidious embolism brought his young life to an end.

Marcel Derron was born on June 26th, 1932 in Muri, near Berne, Switzerland. After attending primary school in his hometown and the cantonal high school in Berne, the young man pursued a natural science program at the University of Berne and attained a high school teaching certificate there. He then spent several years teaching in various places and was able to inspire enthusiasm in his students with his own persuasive power. His work, however, did not give him full satisfaction and so in the year 1959 he turned to a new field: Actuarial Mathematics.

With great vigor and energy, the deceased became engrossed in the new subject matter after his entrance into the employ of the Swiss Life Insurance and Pension Company in April, 1959 and within a short time he acquired the necessary technical knowledge. His versatile abilities and talents stood out and were soon noticed, resulting in the rapid development of his professional career which found its temporary high point in his appointment as a vice-president on January 1, 1969. His conciliatory manner, his ability to negotiate and his linguistic aptitude proved very useful in his position as head of the international group insurance business of Swiss Life, enabling him to enter into friendships and contacts throughout the world.

Besides the professional-practical side of his work and the heavy demand on his time connected with it, the deceased again and again found time to study scientific problems. Various publications and lectures have made his name wellknown both in Switzerland and in foreign countries. He found two themes from property insurance of particular interest: automobile insurance and credibility. In both he provided notable contributions to the theory.

Marcel Derron consistently lent his valuable services to the Association of Swiss Actuaries, whether in speeches at the annual meeting or in the working groups, or through reports and articles

in the "Mitteilungen". Last year the members of the working group ASTIN Switzerland had the opportunity of attending an excellent survey which he gave on the subject of scientific methods in automobile liability insurance.

The deceased felt especially close to ASTIN and time and again he gladly took part in their Colloquia, where many of the participants were numbered among his closest friends. The outstanding organisation of the ASTIN Colloquium 1965 in Lucerne was largely due to his efforts. Prior to that, he had an important role in assisting in the editing of the ASTIN Bulletins.

Also on other foreign panels his technical knowledge and eloquency were appreciated. Thus he was invited by our German colleagues to speak at their annual meeting in 1966, and contributed much to the success of the congress in Munich in 1968 by leading the discussions on two main themes and through delivering the closing speech to the entire body. In the United States he was repeatedly welcomed as a speaker for the American Management Association seminars.

In our circles perhaps it was not so well-known that the deceased had also made a name for himself as a sportsman. In earlier years he had distinguished himself as a swimmer and had taken first places several times in the Swiss Championships. Owing to his winning personality he made many friends among his fellow athletes, and his popularity found expression last fall in his election as president of the Swiss Swim Club Union.

Those who had the privilege of having personal contact with Marcel Derron knew that he had a gift which few men have of evoking confidence and congeniality. Efficient and successful, yet nevertheless modest and sensitive, he had the respect of both his superiors and those under him. His even temperament coupled with a dry sense of humour enabled him to handle delicate problems effectively.

The gap that he left in our ranks will be difficult to close. A large congregation paid their last respects to Marcel Derron on May 2nd and thereby demonstrated their sympathy with the tragedy which had struck his family. May the high regard with which the deceased is remembered everywhere be a source of comfort and courage to his wife and his three children.

We do not doubt the fact that colleagues from far and near will hold the deceased in grateful memory.

H. AMMETER