MEMOIRS

GOTTFRIED SCHAERTLIN

ON 20 August 1938 Dr Gottfried Schaertlin died in his 81st year, and thereby the Institute of Actuaries lost a valued, Corresponding Member and benefactor.

Born in Töss, Zurich, in 1857, his schooldays were spent at Aesch, Therwil and Basle and involved long daily tramps to which he mainly attributed his good health in later life. At the age of 17 he matriculated in the Philosophy Course at Basle University.

This materially helped his parents, who had but little means and who made every possible sacrifice to give their son his education. Later he studied also in Paris and Berlin pure and applied mathematics, natural science, philosophy and history, including the history of art. He took special interest in the lectures on mathematical statistics and assurance calculations of Hermann Kinkelin. After his study at the University there followed a period of school teaching. In 1885 his election as Director´of the mathematical section of the newly formed Federal Assurance Bureau in Bern determined his career. Eight years later he became Manager of the Société suisse d'Assurances générales sur la vie humaine, which post he retained for 42 years, retiring in 1936 but retaining his seat on the supervising Board. As he himself said he regarded his work there as a mission, recognizing that the most important period of his life was thereby dedicated to the service of mankind. His success may be gauged by the fact that under him the total of insurance was increased sixteen-fold and the annuity business increased even more. From 1905 onwards he helped the Swiss Society for the promotion of public good and from 1908 to 1917 he presided over the People's Welfare Commission. He also took part in carrying out the transfer of the pension funds of the private railways to the federal railways.

In 1905 he founded the Union of Swiss Actuaries of which he became President for the years 1913 to 1922.

His scientific works embraced the subjects of Swiss population mortality 1876/77 to 1880/81 and in 1880/81, the future financial burden of the old age provisions for Federal officials, the mathematical theory of Invalidity Assurance, the indirect method of calculating the reversion to a widow's pension and the terms for withdrawal of members of societies with average premiums.

In June 1934 he presented the Institute with the means to offer two prizes for the best two essays on the official universal notation, a gift which was highly appreciated both for itself and particularly for the

spirit in which it was offered. It is a happy memory that we were able to send him two essays on a subject of which he himself was a master.

G. G.

SAMUEL DUMAS

ON 24 September 1938 quite unexpectedly there died in his 57th year Professor Dr S. Dumas, the universally known and highly respected Chief of the Swiss Federal Assurance Bureau and a Corresponding Member of the Institute of Actuaries.

Born in a minister's family he was a native of the district at the foot of the Jura and passed through the literary side of the Gymnasium at Lausanne in order to devote himself later to the study of mathematics and physics at the Federal Technical High School and at Zurich University. At the High School he gained the Teachers' Diploma for mathematics and at the University the degree of Doctor of Philosophy for his dissertation on *The Development of Elliptic Functions as Continued Fractions*.

In 1905 he was appointed Actuary to the Federal Statistical Office. At that time he was attending the lectures of Professor Moser at the University, Bern, on Insurance Mathematics, and his acquaintance with insurance science thus obtained was of great importance in the further development of the young actuary. In the following year he entered the Federal Assurance Bureau where for more than seven years he held first the position of technical assistant and afterwards that of actuary, thereby having the opportunity to make himself familiar with all the questions of insurance technique and State supervision. Amongst the many publications from his pen on assurance questions at this time his study of the question of war risk in life assurance is specially worthy of note.

In 1913 his cantonal government appointed him Professor for Financial Mathematics and Insurance Technique in the University of Lausanne, and he became also consulting actuary to the Life Assurance Company "La Suisse". The Swiss Government also enlisted his help in the difficult negotiations arising out of the necessities of German Life Assurance Companies. When, therefore, in the year 1924 the position of Director of the Federal Assurance Bureau became vacant he was appointed by the Federal Government to this responsible post. This restricted his activities as a teacher at the University in Lausanne but he did not have to give it up entirely, and the combination of theory and practice proved a great help in his management of the Bureau.

The last 13 years have been perhaps the most important and most difficult since the introduction of Swiss State supervision. Under the care of Professor Dumas the liquidation of the German life assurance contracts was completed. The preliminary work, which had commenced