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AT THE SWISS MERCANTILE SOCIETY

The Monthly Meeting of the Society, held at Swiss House on Wednesday, 10th May, was well attended, despite the unavoidable absence of a number of those members who rarely miss a meeting.

The Chairman, Mr. R. Chappuis, read a letter received from the Swiss Ambassador in connection with the visit to the College on 27th April of Swiss Parliamentary journalists and officials of the Federal Political Department, which has already been reported in these columns.

Following the practice of the last two years, when the Society visited Woburn Abbey and Luton Hoo, the meeting decided to arrange a family outing by members' private cars to Parham, the Elizabethan House between Pulborough and Storrington, Sussex, on Sunday, 11th June. This will be combined with a visit to the lovely old-world village of Amberly at the foot of the South Downs, which is completely thatched and has a historic church and castle ruins. If possible, it is also intended to visit the Pestalozzi Children's Village at Battle on the same afternoon. Members, to whom full particulars will be circularised in due course, and their friends, are cordially invited to join in this outing.

Reporting on the activities of the College, Mr. A. Jaccard, Chairman of the Education Committee, stated that the College had won the Lints-Smith Challenge Cup in their annual football match versus The Times at Ravensbourne on 15th April, the score being 8:1. On the Saturday previous, they were runners-up in the London Hospital Six-a-Side Competition, having won through five rounds and being beaten in the final by Old Malvernians.

* * *

Mr. Jaccard further mentioned that the summer term of the day classes was fully booked and that further applications could only be accepted for 11th September and later entry dates. The evening courses, due to start on 15th May, included 18 classes, some of which were also fully booked and had to be run in duplicate.

After the official business, Mr. W. Stettbacher, a member of the Society, gave a very interesting talk on "Climbing in the Alps". He related how, from the early age of eight, he had developed a passion for climbing, starting first with such well-known mountains as Rigi, Pilatus, Säntis, Uri Rotstock, Titlis and Tödi, until at the age of 18 he joined the Swiss Alpine Club, of which he was recently made a "Freimitglied" after 40 years of membership. During this period, he had scaled some 65 peaks of 4,000 metres and over. All present followed with keen interest the story of his exploits in the higher regions. He also referred to the many advantages of being a member of the Swiss Alpine Club and told us of

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some of his experiences with the many guides with whom he had made his ascents.

To round off his talk, Mr. Stettbacher showed a selection from his fine collection of photographs on the Society's epidiastroscope. These portrayed many of the famous peaks in the Mont Blanc region, the Matterhorn and others from different angles and at various heights.

For all lovers of the Alps, this was a most enjoyable and entertaining account of a mountaineer who has made physical training and climbing his lifetime's hobby.

WB.

UNION TICINESE NEWS

Sunday, 7th May, was the occasion of yet another Tea Dance organised by the Unione Ticinese at the Dorchester Hotel, Park Lane. In the past the May Dance has usually coincided with very hot weather; but on this occasion a gusty wind, which nearly sent the writer's hat sailing across Hyde Park, kept the temperature down — much to the relief of the 350 people present.

The music for dancing was provided, as always, by Harry Vardon and his Band. It is really a record to be proud of, in this age of quickly changing tastes, that Harry's popularity over the many years since he first played for the Unione Ticinese has never diminished, so much so, that no Dorchester Dance would be complete without his presence.

The cabaret featured Mr. Lloyd Straus-Smith, a singer of international repute, whose fine rendering of three arias richly deserved the applause given by the audience. It is to be hoped that we shall soon have the pleasure of listening to him again. The cabaret was concluded by the Corale, who are now nearly as permanent a fixture at these dances as Harry Vardon. However, it was noticeable that the ladies of the Corale were rather fewer than usual and the Corale as a whole not as sure of themselves as on previous appearances. Lui Bruni, their Maestro, confirmed after the show that, due to illness and unavoidable absences, the Corale were not at their best but had nevertheless decided to sing so as not to disappoint their fans. It is to be hoped that this phase will pass, since the Corale has for many years been a source of much entertainment for us all. Finally, a word must be said about the men of the Corale. At long last they are able to match the splendour of the ladies in the matter of their costumes. The new costumes were worn at the Dorchester for the first time and a very colourful show they made indeed.

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After the cabaret the eager dancers once again took to the floor and spent the rest of the evening gliding over the floor to the toe-teasing music of Harry Vardon. They were granted a brief respite while the raffle was held and then all too soon another Tea Dance came to an end. A word of thanks must be accorded to the organisers, especially to Mr. F. A. De Maria, who have the unenviable task of arranging these dances with such obvious success.

J.B.D.

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AT THE SWISS RIFLE ASSOCIATION

The Swiss Rifle Association held their Annual General Meeting on 29th April at the Glendower Hotel, S.W.7. The ever gay and cheering Mr. A. Schmid was in the Chair. Next to him sat the secretary of the Association, the zealous Mr. Magnin, who spoke with his sympathetic Neuchâtelois accent.

For a press reporter, whether professional or not, the Swiss Rifle Association Annual Meeting is by far the easiest function to attend. The easiest and, may I say, the most agreeable. No long, monotonous speeches, no endless, weary discussions, no insuperable problems. Minutes of the last General Meeting and statements of accounts were quickly read, voted and accepted. The committee will remain the same for this year and so will annual subscription fee.

In a few words President Schmid summed up last year's activities of the Association. There were seven meetings at Bisley during the season and 3,430 rounds of ammunition fired against 4,160 in 1959. The Swiss Rifle Association shot for the Challenge Cup, the Challenge Shield for Swiss abroad, the Feldschiessen, the Talbot-Smith Cup, the Zurich-St. Gallen, the Handicap Competition and the Grümpelschiessen.

Nine new members were welcomed to the Association last year, while ten were lost — owing mainly to their departure for Switzerland. At present the Association consists of 67 members. It is a jolly group and no doubt their efforts to become a dead shot will be greatly stimulated by the Silver Challenge Cup generously offered by H.E. Monsieur Daeniker during the dinner which followed.

P. H.



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MONTHLY MEETING

on

WEDNESDAY, 7th JUNE 1961, at 7 p.m.

at

SWISS HOUSE, 34/35 FITZROY SQUARE, W.1

followed by a lecture on

“OUR JOURNEY TO AFRICA”

by H.E. THE SWISS AMBASSADOR,

Monsieur A. DAENIKER.

Canteen open from 6 to 7 p.m.

Members and Friends cordially invited.

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