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MAY

Sunday 3rd, 4.30 to 11 p.m. UNIONE TICIN-ESE DANCE, Dorchester Hotel — Harry Vardon's Band — Tickets (inclusive of Tea) 25/- obtainable from Secretary, E. P. Morganti, 10 Newport Buildings, Shaftesbury Ave.

Wednesday 13th. Swiss Mercantile Society monthly meeting.

MUSICAL EVENTS: On Tuesdays 7th and 14th April, GEZA ANDA will be the soloists of concerts given at the Royal Festival Hall, 8 p.m.

SCHWEIZERBUND

On 6th March, the Annual General Meeting of the "Schweizerbund" (Swiss Club) took place at the Glendower Hotel, attended by 16 members. The Club, which despite the lack of premises of its own remains active with a Standing Committee, had 44 paid-up members at the end of 1969. Mr. V. Berti, President, was in the chair, and he was re-elected together with his fellow officers (Mr. L. S. R. Asch, Hon. Treasurer, and Mr. J. Schmid, Hon. Secretary). After all business was settled, the Club's members and friends enjoyed an excellent dinner.

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THE SWISS RIFLE ASSOCIATION'S ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

The Swiss Rifle Association held its Annual General Meeting as usual at the Glendower Hotel. Unfortunately, only 12 out of 83 members were present and the Committee regretted the absence of such prominent members as Lucien Jobin and Bernard Jaeggi. Letters of apologies were received from the absentees, many of whom were abroad.

Mr. J. C. Wetter, the retiring President, greeted his guest of honour, Colonel Von Frisching, the Military Attaché at the Embassy, and made it known that I had been appointed as the Association's new Press reporter, in succession to Mr. J. Schmid.

The minutes of last year's AGM were read by Mr. Charles Abegglen, the Honorary Secretary, and approved. Mr. Wetter asked Mr. Peter Fischer to read out the President's Survey for 1969. The brilliant results at the shooting festival at Thun and the 6th Radio World Shoot were among the main events reported. The Association had met eight times and shot 5,620 rounds of ammunition against 3,360 in 1968. It had welcomed 16 new members and lost 12, 8 of them having left England, 2 having resigned and 2 passed away. The balance-sheet was examined and showed a very satisfactory financial situation.

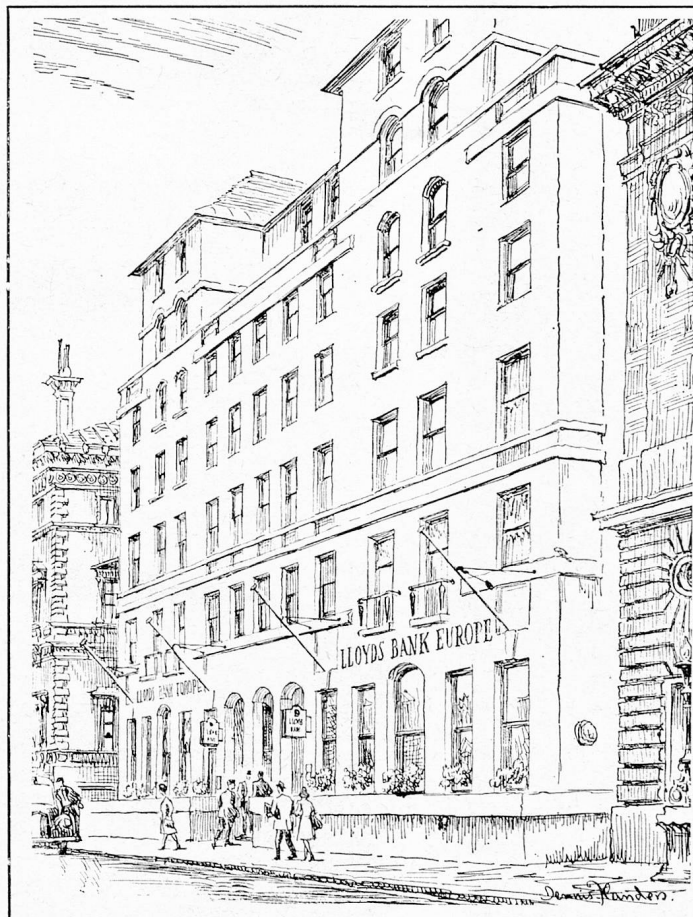
Mr. Wetter then announced his definite resignation from the presidency of the Association, thanked the members for their past support and announced that Mr. Marcel Bucherer

would be ready to succeed him. Mr. Oscar Grob, who acted as interim chairman, thanked him for all he had done for the Association and motioned his election as Honorary Past President. This was unanimously accepted.

Mr. Bucherer thanked the members present for their vote of confidence and outlined the programme for this year. He unfolded the new Feldschiessen target and expressed the hope that a match with the .22 rifle could be organised between the Swiss Rifle Association and the Kensington Rifle and Pistol Club this season. There were unfortunately too few members present to pass any decision about this.

Mr. F. Magnin suggested that Mr. Alfred Schmid who, at a lively 84, is the doyen of the Association, be elected "second Vice-President" (next in rank after Mr. Peter Fischer, who remains Vice-President). Mr. Schmid wasn't showing much enthusiasm for this new honour and Mr. Wetter suggested that, by investing Mr. Schmid with this new and queer title, we would be creating an unnecessary precedent. He turned down the idea and got the approval of the meeting.

Mr. Schmid had brought the menu of the 7th Annual Meeting of the Association, which took place in 1930, and we could all appreciate that its fantastic list of courses compared rather well with present AGM menus. He also showed us the booklet of the Swiss Rifle Association's rules. This booklet, now out of print, used to be given to all new members. Mr. Schmid also raised the problem of the Association's pub-



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licity and said that he would like to see more being said about the Rifle Association's activities in the Swiss Observer. Another suggestion was to reintroduce the badges carried in the old days by range officers. He had a few of these badges with him and they were passed among the members.

Finally, Mr. Abegglen distributed the medal of the "Association Suisse des Carabiniers" to four proud recip-

ients: Messrs. Wetter, Magnin, Fischer and Bucherer.

Mr. Bucherer then declared the meeting officially closed and we proceeded on for dinner. It was a quiet old boys' party which lasted from about eight to ten. Wine was being downed slowly but steadily and we had plenty of conversation on shooting and the virtues of the Sturmgewehr.

(PMB)

produce their brand products but leave the marketing to them. Clayton Aniline has thus become solely a manufacturing plant responsible for the dyestuff production of three companies. It has no publicity and no marketing department and this is why the name is practically unknown".

I pointed out that the Ciba building across the road looked quite large and asked whether there was any production going on there.

"Ciba employs about two hundred people here", said Dr. Bolliger, "they are exclusively concerned with marketing and solving the particular problems of their customers, the dyers, and act as chemical consultants".

"How does this common ownership of one factory by three companies work out in practice? Aren't there some problems in co-ordination?" I asked.

"There were a few knots in the past. Nowadays there may be an occasional rub when one company is not content with its allocation of Clayton Aniline' production. The plant employs 1,200 workers, produces 10,000 tons of dyestuffs a year and 10,000 tons of various chemicals, some of which enter in the dyestuff-production process. This amounts to about ten tons of dyestuff per year per worker, which gives you an idea of our productivity. We are second in line after ICI, who produce roughly 18,000 tons of dyestuffs a year. There are about five other competitors well behind us. Much of our production is actually re-exported towards the parent company in Basle. This applies in general for what we can produce more cheaply in Great Britain than in Switzerland. This is also due to the acute shortage of labour in the home factories. As you know, Swiss employers have the right to a very restricted quota of foreign labour, with the result that their production is halted at a certain limit. This holds especially true of the big chemical companies, who are forced to expand through their outside subsidiaries. Our own production is in constant increase. Starting in 1952, we've accomplished a complete reconstruction and reorganisation of our plant and have spent over £10 million in capital expenditure".

"What about your research and development, is it linked with the work done in Basle?"

"We naturally work on Ciba processes but, as we have our own problems, we do quite a bit of independent development ourselves. I have a team of 60 chemists who are mainly concerned with applied problems like improving reaction yields".

"Are there any Swiss in your staff?"

"The scientific staff is British, apart from the occasional trainee".

"Are you difficult in the choice of your candidates?"

"We obviously try to get the best men. I'm always more happy to have men with doctorates. This isn't an absolute rule and we won't turn down a bril-

MY VISIT AT THE CLAYTON ANILINE COMPANY

Three weekends ago I made an enjoyable trip to Manchester in order to attend the Annual General Meeting of the Manchester Swiss Club. Mr. B. Simon, the President, very kindly arranged an interesting programme for me. I was invited by Dr. H. R. Bolliger, member of the Committee, to the modern production plant of the company of which he is research manager, the Clayton and Aniline Company, and the following day, I was shown around some of the Geigy plants in the Manchester area by Mr. Simon himself. This tour ended with a lunch at the home of Mr. Rolf Born, the Swiss Consul in Manchester.

The Vice-Consul, Mr. W. A. Zellweger, was at Manchester's Piccadilly Station to greet me. He put me in the care of the Clayton Aniline chauffeur, who drove the company's shiny Zephyr to the factory, some three miles out of town. This was my first trip to the Lancashire capital and, with the mist and the snow, the slums which girdle the central area and are in the course of demolition gave me a dismal first picture of the city.

As the main road reaches the Mancunian suburb of Clayton, there are two modern groups of buildings, those of Ciba on the left, and, on the right, the imposing complex of the Clayton Aniline Company. The car had hardly stopped in front of the administrative block when Dr. Bollinger, coming across the wet tarmac from another building, arrived on the dot to greet me and invite me to have lunch with him and the other managers of the company.

We climbed up a flight of stairs and entered the managerial dining-room. Dr. Bollinger's collaborators were already there drinking their aperitifs. Time for a quick Dubonnet and a short conversation of the virtues of soft water fish with the production manager and we sat down. All managers enjoy a comfortable dining-room—one of the consolations of their heavy responsibilities and hard work. At Clayton Aniline's they had the additional advantage of having a choice of three menus. There were also wines and cigars in plenty.

As Dr. Bolliger later explained to

me, the company is run on the Swiss model. All decisions are taken by a board of seven managers, three of them being Swiss, including the Managing Director, Mr. E. P. Banderet, who comes from Neuchatel and who sits on the common board of Clayton Aniline's controlling companies.

After a very pleasant meal flavoured with plenty of good humour, Dr. Bolliger invited me to his office for a briefing on the history and the activities of his Company.

"The chemical industry", he explained, "and by chemical, understand the dyestuffs industry, began when Sir William Perkin changed benzine into nitrobenzine and nitrobenzine into aniline, thus discovering the basic component of dyestuffs. That was around 1860. The first dyestuff factories sprouted up during the last third of the 19th century and a company called the Manchester Aniline Company got started here in Manchester. One of its employees, a Frenchman called Dreyfuss, got the sack for some reason and decided to move outside Manchester, to Clayton, and founded the present company. The Manchester Aniline Company failed. The Clayton Aniline Company fell on the brink of bankruptcy a couple of times, and got properly bankrupt in 1911, when Ciba intervened and salvaged it".

"Then came the first World War, the company switched over to war production. Britain was absolutely unprepared for the war and was buying German explosives on the eve of the fighting. At the end of the war, the British Government voted a bill that was intended to be temporary, but which in fact lasted for over thirty years, to protect the home chemical industry by forbidding the import of all chemicals already produced in the U.K. This of course made life difficult for the Swiss chemical industry, particularly for the two other large Basle-based companies, Geigy and Sandoz".

"The Clayton factory being an ideal way of penetrating the British market, the three firms Ciba, Geigy and Sandoz agreed to control it in common in the 1920s. Ciba held 50% of the shares, the two other firms 25% each. The Clayton Aniline Company was to