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NEWS FROM THE COLONY.

SWISS RIFLE ASSOCIATION.

The 8th Annual Prize Distribution of the Swiss Rifle Association took place on November the 27th at the Union Helvetica Club, 1, Gerrard Place, W.I.

The President, M. G. E. DeBrunner referred in his very able and short speech to this event, as being a "Bohemian Meeting" and I think his description of this happy gathering was most appropriate, because there was no ceremony attached to it; it was an evening full of fun and conviviality.

The supper was preceded by a reception, at least so it was stated on my ticket; now, of course, I am ignorant of what a "Bohemian Reception" means. I was under the impression that all the participants would have to pass in single file the President and his Principal guest, and I had especially bought a pair of white gloves so as to do the thing properly, but I waited in vain.

On enquiring, I was informed that the reception was held at the "bar," and let me tell you, that same was very cordial and rather more substantial than the customary "parade."

In a very happy mood, I entered the Hall, and there on three tables, the prizes were exhibited. What a glorious sight, cups, bowls, plates all of shining silver, bottles of wine and many other useful articles were displayed, the magnificence of which made me feel very envious, and when my wife asked me, why I was not a member of a Society, which so liberally rewards the merits of its members, I had to admit that my experience in the shooting line was somehow limited, that all I knew about it, was, where the bullet leaves the rifle, and where it ought to go to. I was still admiring the lovely display, when the President in a stentorian voice announced that supper was served.

Everyone hurried to their seats and did full credit to the modest, but never-the-less much appreciated repast. The spirit of "Bohemia" was rampant, and affected even the waitresses, in as much, as some of them took it into their heads to sit down on the floor rather suddenly, with whatever they had in their hands, and I understand that this is the way things are served in the happy land of "Bohemia."

After the customary toasts had been proposed and honoured with acclamation, the President, Mr. G. E. DeBrunner addressed the company as follows:

Ladies and Gentlemen,

This Bohemian Meeting of ours hardly calls for any speeches from the top table, but it is nevertheless a fit and proper procedure to extend to you all, in the name of the S.R.A. a most hearty welcome. — When we met some 12 months ago for a similar function under far happier and certainly more pretentious conditions, little did we dream that the World-wide economic crisis would assume such an acute and serious aspect as, unfortunately, all of us have experienced, one way or another. It was felt, therefore, that to hold our 8th Annual Prize Distribution in the sumptuous manner of bygone days, would be rather "bad taste" and might easily place a relatively heavy burden upon many depleted pockets. As however, it is not the value of the clothes that makes the man, may I trust, in a similar trend of thought, that the absence of the gilded frame from our annual gathering will not detract from the picture of good fellowship and sociability, which we are anxious to call into being to-night, in spite of all the hardships and worries surrounding us in our daily avocations. May I invite you individually to enter wholeheartedly into the spirit of our Bohemian camaraderie and to contribute by your own efforts to the success and enjoyment of our to-night's function? We have little to offer, but that little comes from well meaning hearts!

I greet with particular pleasure Mr. Paul Hilfiker as the personal representative of our Hon. President, M. C. R. Paravicini, Swiss Minister in London. We should, of course, have been happy to welcome our Hon. President in person, but since our function is stripped of an official character, we can fully appreciate our Minister's decision. Mr. Hilfiker having rendered so many excellent services to our Society in the past, we are especially glad that the honour of representing our titular chief has been bestowed upon him.

We have no official guests (only "paying" ones) to-night, but we are, nevertheless, pleased to extend our hospitality, such as it is, to a few good friends in special recognition of what they have done for us. As representing our Landlords, I greet Mr. and Mrs. Meller, who are well-known to all those of our Members who visit the range, Mr. and Mrs. Meller having at all times proved their readiness to add to our comfort. I would ask Mr. Meller kindly to convey to his principals our grateful thanks for the ever accommodating spirit which has prompted their dealings with us and especially recent negotiations for the continuance of the

Lease of our Hendon shooting ground. Given the frugal nature of our repast to-night, we were too diffident to issue the usual invitation to our good friend, Mr. Redfern, but would ask Mr. Meller to assure his immediate chief that when brighter days have returned, we shall hope again to have the pleasure of his company.

Furthermore, I greet Mr. and Mrs. Stauffer, the former in his quality of Deputy Chief Editor of our eminent official journal, the "Swiss Observer" which periodically—every 18 to 24 months at a rough guess—kindly reports upon the doings of the S.R.A. Fortunately, one of the "due-dates" of these journalistic activities has befallen within my new years of office and I take the opportunity of thanking Mr. St. for his Report about our "Endschiesser" and to say, that we have enjoyed his wit and humour.

Many of our friends to-night may well ask, WHY I should again have taken over the reins of the society, and I would answer such question by saying that though fully cognisant of my shortcomings either as a Crack Shot, or Leader of the present-day mentality, I deemed it to be my duty to TRY and save the S.R.A. from untimely decay, and to keep its banner afloat for yet another year, in the ardent hope that in due course a new and energetic President may be found to conduct the Association to yet a higher pinnacle of success than ever attained heretofore. My 4th year of office being now practically at an end, I am most anxious to express to my colleagues on the several Committees, who have so loyally served and supported me, my most sincere and appreciative thanks. Comparisons being odious, I refrain from singling out names, but would stress the fact that in spite of many disappointing odds, quite a number of our Committee Members have shown a most commendable esprit de corps and for their great sacrifices in time, labour and expense, I am afraid that by now the first layer of the dust of oblivion would already rest upon the fair fame of the S.R.A. as a "live" Sporting Club of the London Swiss Colony.

Before concluding my short address, I would like to make one last and emphatic appeal to all those who are lovers of the time-honoured Swiss sport of marksmanship to group themselves together in the spirit of real sportsmen during the coming winter months, with the object of finding a number of willing workers ready to take up afresh and with renewed vigour, the traditional aims and objects of our society, so soon as Springtime will remind us of our healthy national open-air exercise and recreation.

And may I invite you all to join me in drinking to a happy and prosperous future of the S.R.A. notwithstanding the thorny difficulties which may lay in its path!

Needless to say that a salvo of applause greeted this fine oration, and although I am not a member of the S.R.A. I had to fight hard to disguise my deep emotion, especially during the passage when the "efficient" services of the "Swiss Observer" were mentioned, a sip of sparkling Neuchâtel and a gentle push from my wife brought back my equilibrium and made me realise that this is simply the way compliments are dished out in a Bohemian sort of way; oh! if only we could always be imbued with this happy devil-don't-care spirit, coupled with a sound dose of sense of humour what a united, lovable and forgiving family we would be.

A terrific knock on the table, with an instrument looking like a sledge hammer brought me back from the land of dreams in which I was about to wander, and it was announced that Mr. P. Hilfiker, as representative of the Swiss Minister, would address the gathering.

On rising from his "fauteuil Présidentiel," M. Hilfiker received a hearty reception, and I felt tempted to shout across the table something like "Good old Boy," when I suddenly remembered that he was standing there "on higher authority," what a faux-pas that would have been, and yet after he had finished I nearly did it again, a fact which made me wonder whether I had not dropped my "charming" manners during the reception, at the bar.

The speaker conveyed the greetings of the Honorary President, M. C. R. Paravicini, and in a few words expressed his appreciation to the President and the Committee for the great services they have rendered to the Association during the current year. M. Hilfiker mentioned that this address was his "Maiden speech" and I heartily congratulate him on this, his first attempt, it was "short and sweet," it came from the heart and went to the heart, and can one pay a higher compliment. The applause which greeted his words when resuming the chair, should be an encouragement to him in his future oratorical efforts which I shall watch with ever-growing interest. This ended the official speech making.

Whilst the supper was in progress, a small orchestra rendered most appropriate music, familiar tunes such as "If you were the only boy and I were the only girl" from the Bing Boys, "Tipperary," and the sweet little "Mademoiselle from Armentière" were played with much gusto.

Another hefty knock with that infernal little instrument made all and sundry jump, and after silence had been restored, the President announced that the prize distribution was now going to take place. The names of the various lucky recipients will be published at the foot of this report, so I do not propose, on account of lack of space, to go into details. However, as at least three names were mentioned at regular intervals, (The President called them season ticket holders), I would like, first of all, to most heartily congratulate Mr. Alf. Schmid, who seems to be one of the ace's of the S. R. A.; cup after cup was collected by him, and I began to wonder what on earth he was going to do with all his treasures. I was anxiously waiting for the moment when his head was going to be adorned with that famous and much coveted laurel wreath, but when my neighbour informed me that this is not done here, I felt rather disappointed because I thought he would look awfully nice thus decorated. Then there was Mr. J. C. Wetter, an old friend of mine, who also helped to deplete the "Gäbentisch" in a most alarming manner, and to complete the trio, Mr. Ed. Brullhardt, the devoted Secretary of the Association was frequently called.

Amongst the first prize winners in the various competitions, were such familiar names as Messrs. DeBrunner, P. Hilfiker, W. Fischer, Ad. Schmid, A. Fuchs, A. Dubelbeiss and J. Muller. I was rather luckily placed, in as much as my neighbour collected amongst innumerable prizes a box of cigars, samples of which he generously offered to all in his immediate company. Among the various prizes, I detected neatly sealed envelopes, and some of the ladies near me were very curious indeed to know what secrets these little "billets doux" harboured, and when invariably the recipients handed these dutifully over to their wives their curiosity reached the culminating point; luckily one of my near neighbours was presented with such an envelope, and when his good lady opened same, she found that it contained a treasury note, now that proves that the members of the S.R.A. are not only splendid shots but also very kind hearted husbands.

I noticed that there was also a 13th prize, consisting of four bottles of a very famous Swiss vintage, and this prize went curiously enough to a very good friend of mine. I am rather ashamed to confess that I am a wee bit superstitious, and I think he ought not to touch this beverage unless he is in company, in case he should be overcome by a sudden choking fit, I therefore most humbly offer my assistance should first aid be required.

Some of the prizes were then auctioned, among these was a canary in a gilded cage and, according to the auctioneer's announcement, this little bird was able to sing in three languages, it went to Mr. J. C. Wetter, and I unite myself with the wish of the Chairman, that it may sing him to many more victories. The amount realized from the various auctions came to the respectable sum of £9 10s. 0d. which was handed over to Mr. P. Hilfiker for the "Fonds Secours," the latter thanked in the name of the Benevolent Society for this splendid and most welcome gift.

Dancing then began, and the cups of the various winners containing sparkling wine were passed from lips to lips, and at 2 o'clock a.m., the customary onion soup was served, which was greatly enjoyed.

Mr. and Mrs. Rossier looked well after the company, and they can claim a fair share of the success of the evening. I understand that it was the last time they were in attendance before their departure, it was a fine "finale" and many will miss them.

This ends a rather lengthy report, which I, however, did not grudge writing, as it called back to my mind a homely, jolly and most successful evening spent among my friends of the Swiss Rifle Association. ST.

RESULTS.

Yearly Competition 300 meters.

- 1st, Mr. Alfr. Schmid; 2nd, Mr. J. C. Wetter; 3rd, Mr. Ed. Brullhardt; 4th, Mr. Ad. Schmid; 5th, Mr. A. Fuchs; 6th, Mr. W. Fischer; 7th, Mr. A. Ryhn; 8th, Mr. P. Odermatt; 9th, Mr. H. Senn; 10th, Mr. M. Wallschlegler; 11th, Mr. J. Muller; 12th, Mr. O. Bartholdi; 13th, Mr. Micheli.

Yearly Competition 100 yds.

- 1st, Mr. C. J. Wetter; 2nd, Mr. Alf. Schmid; 3rd, Mr. J. Muller; 4th, Mr. Ed. Brullhardt; 5th, Mr. Micheli; 6th, Mr. Fischer; 7th, Mr. P. Odermatt; 8th, Mr. Fuchs; 9th, Mr. Ad. Schmid; 10th, Mr. A. Ryhn.

Glück.

- 1st, Mr. G. E. DeBrunner; 2nd, Mr. A. Fuchs; 3rd, Mr. Alf. Schmid;

Kunst.

- 1st, Mr. P. Hilfiker; 2nd, Mr. A. Fuchs; 3rd, Mr. J. C. Wetter.

Combined Results of Skill and Handicap on both distances into one prize for each Competitor.

- 1st, Mr. Alf. Schmid; 2nd, Mr. A. Ryhn; 3rd, Mr. P. Hilfiker; 4th, Mr. Ed. Brullhardt; 5th, Mr. Fischer; 6th, Mr. Adolf Schmid; 7th, Mr. Fuchs; 8th, Mr. P. Odermatt; 9th, Mr. H. Senn; 10th, Mr. J. C. Wetter; 11th, Mr. Deubelbeiss; 12th, Mr. Conrad; 13th, Mr. Strublin; 14th, Mr. C. O. Brullhardt; 15th, Mr. G. E. DeBrunner; 16th, Mr. Muller; 17th, Mr. Suter.