

Easter walk of the Swiss Club Manchester

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EASTER WALK OF THE SWISS CLUB MANCHESTER.

(Rambles and Excursions are a regular feature of this Club, and we are pleased to publish a report of one of these outings.)

Easter is the first holiday of the year, and our walk was indeed our first traditional outing this year, to be followed, we hope, by many more. Such walks afford us a welcome break in our daily occupations and worries, mainly in spring when we can observe the slow awakening and rebirth of nature's life, and its beauties are a true inspiration to us all.

Escape to nature, away from our northern industrial towns and crowded cities always gives us new hope and brightens not only our outlook for the days to come, but strengthens our health, so necessary in the successful fight against all sorts of difficulties we might encounter. Also this time we considered it worth while to take a little risk, accept wind and rain if we got it, but enjoy and be thankful if providence decided otherwise.

In this holiday-mood a small but enthusiastic group of our Club met by train and car at our starting place Chapel-en-le-Frith, the name tells us that in Norman times it was a Chapel surrounded by forests, now almost dissappeared. Good support was given to us from younger members and Ladies who helped to give a joyful touch to our company. What a change from those times when our male members used to enjoy themselves in quite a different way, perhaps not very much in keeping with what we consider now the Easter spirit. We also greatly appreciated the presence of our dear Consul Mr. O. Schneider and of several other prominent members of our Club.

After a good walk we eventually reached a rather lofty ridge and settled down on a steep grass slope overlooking the beautiful, perhaps slightly melancholic but so peace inspiring dales. This slope was like a mountainside in steepness but protected us well against wind and snow; we greatly enjoyed our sandwiches and the view. The dales and the high moors, the great curves of the limestone hills, the shadings of green in meadows and pastures, the speckles of woodland and rocks emerging here and there, the dark lines of hedges in the far distance and this sky with its fantastic and everchanging pattern of clouds, the rain, snow and sun chasing each other, all this impressed us by their grandeur and filled us with admiration.

Moving on, via Rushop Edge, we soon reached the lower regions with their caverns, caves, pit-chambers and mines, for which Derbyshire and the Westridings are well known. Who has not heard of such names as the Blue John Mine, the Peak Cavern, the Speedwell Cavern and many others formed by erosion and other causes during the glacial and past glacial times?

Entering such a gulf one follows a maze of passages, brilliantly adorned with the most beautiful deposits of all colours and varieties of form, calcite crystals, stalactites and stalagmites, which are crystalized pendants and pillars of fantastic shape and wondrous beauty whose growth is slow indeed, one inch every 4,000 years or so, and many surprises. You

have to cross long series of vaults and lofty halls, watery tunnels, underground lakes and mysterious shallows. Eventually we emerged out of the sea of shadows and it was like passing into another world.

Cave exploring is sometimes called "mountaineering reversed". This might seem disrespectful to those explorers whose objects are strictly scientific. Mr. Martel, a great speleologue, called it also a sporting science, known to us under the name of speleologie.

We might prefer open mountaineering with the sun or the stars as our guides, nevertheless everyone at least once in his life should visit such a cavern; it is not like Dantes "Divina Commedia" when he wrote the famous passage "lasciate ogni speranza voi ch'entrate", but with a good guide you have a fair chance of emerging safely from this adventure.

Through the pinnacled defile of the Winnats with their crages of limestone towering above us as if to threaten assailants, truly a wild and romantic scenery, we eventually reached the main road and our final destination, the Bulls Head Hotel in Castleton, a place well known by its castle, also an interesting holiday and excursion center.

The tired, but happy wanderers found a well earned rest and Mr. Dixon, our host, proved to be a most sympathetic and understanding soul, serving us some excellent drinks, and afterwards a high tea which completely restored our failing forces. Time, alas, passed only too quickly in songs and lively discussions, and we promised each other that we would meet again, soon, under the untiring and inspiring leadership of our friend Henry Monney, who so much loves and knows the countryside around Manchester, and who is indeed a competent and invaluable guide.

We parted, some by train from Hope, and others by car, well satisfied with our day, and with a most hearty "bon voyage and au revoir".

E.B.

Nouvelle Société Helvétique (LONDON GROUP)

OPEN MEETING

Thursday, April 30th, 1953, 7 p.m.

Dr. JAKOB HEUSSER

Obergerrichts Präsident des Kanton Zürich

will speak (in German) on:

"DAS SCHWEIZERISCHE STRAFRECHT"

at the

Swiss Club "Schweizerbund"

74, Charlotte, W.1.

All Swiss and Friends are heartily welcome.