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ASSOCIATION OF BRITISH MEMBERS OF THE SWISS ALPINE CLUB.

For the last thirty years it had been the custom of the Association of British Members of the Swiss Alpine Club, to meet in Switzerland early in the month of August, and to celebrate the occasion with a dinner at one of the well-known holiday resorts such as Kandersteg or Grindelwald.

These happy gatherings had to be suspended in 1939, owing to war conditions. It was however hoped that this year a meeting could have been arranged again, but the difficulties in obtaining permits and the travelling facilities being so drastically restricted made such an undertaking impossible, much to the regret of all those who were anxious to renew their acquaintance with our country.

As an alternative, it was decided that a Meeting with the Ladies should be held in London, and consequently a dinner took place, on Wednesday, August 1st at Brown's Hotel, where nearly a hundred members and guests assembled.

The Banqueting Hall was decorated with the Union Jack and the Swiss National emblem, the latter one was, no doubt, exhibited in honour of Switzerland's Independence Day and as a *beau geste* to a number of invited Swiss guests.

Mr. Charles Lehmann, the popular President of the Association, after having proposed the toasts to H.M. the King, and to the Swiss Confederation, expressed his regret that the Swiss Minister, Monsieur

Ruegger, was unfortunately prevented from attending, but he voiced his pleasure in greeting his representatives, Monsieur Escher, Counsellor of Legation, and Monsieur de Rham, Secretary of Legation. He also welcomed Mr. Ernst of the Swiss Federal Railways, who was representing M. Céresole, at present in Switzerland, and Mr. Stauffer, who was present on behalf of the Swiss Observer.

The President in a happy little speech alluded to the celebration, on that very day, of Switzerland's Independence anniversary, expressing the hope, that before long members of the Association would again be able to do some climbing in the glorious Swiss Alps.

Monsieur Escher, thanked the President and members, on behalf of his fellow guests, for having enabled them to spend a few hours amongst old and trusted friends. He hoped that in a not too distant time, our English friends, who have been missed sorely, during the last six years, would once more be able to spend their holidays within the borders of our country.

He said, that by personal contact countries will understand each other better, and such contacts will be adamant in cementing a deep and genuine friendship which will be one of the guarantees for Peace and Goodwill amongst all peoples.

Mr. Ernst, then gave a short *résumé* about actual travel conditions, and future possibilities of journeying to Switzerland.

Judging from his information, there seems but little hope, that the existing restrictions will be relaxed in the near future concerning holiday travelling, but let us hope that ways and means will be found to enable thousands of our fervent English friends to renew their acquaintance with Peaceful Switzerland, they will be welcomed with open arms.

Through the courtesy of the Swiss Legation, two films, "Hochgebirgspatrouille" and "Il Neige sur le Haut Pays" were shown, which were greatly enjoyed by the audience.

Thus a most enjoyable gathering came to an end, a gathering which was composed almost entirely of old and enthusiastic friends of our homeland, friends whom we value not only from a pecuniary point of view, but for their similar outlook on life and their characteristics which have endeared them to us in the past.

NEUTRALITY.

by C.J.B.

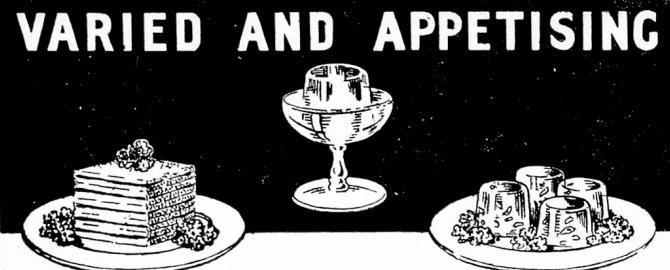
There is a name, in time of war,
Which some deride and some abhor:—
The neutrals! . . . They who in effect
Of cowardice are oft suspect.

But whatsoever view you take,
Rash judgment would be a mistake,
Elsewhere than on the battlefield
May real courage be revealed.

Our army, strong and sword in hand,
Protected us and saved our land.
It stood alone, no help in sight,
When danger threatened, day and night.

Yes, we were neutral, at the price
Of armament and sacrifice,
But true neutrality of mind
Amongst the Swiss you'll never find.

Transl. from the French by J.J.F.S.



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