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## SWISS CLUB MANCHESTER.

The memory of the splendid centenary celebration held at the Midland Hotel in November of last year, had hardly faded away, when the Committee of this enterprising Club, invited the members and their families to a social afternoon, which took place on Saturday the 14th of April, again at the Midland Hotel.

Not content to rest on their laurels, the Committee had been anxious to keep in close contact with their members and their idea of a "family gathering" where young and old could meet together, proved most successful.

After welcoming the numerous guests, the President, Mr. E. Berner, announced, that Mr. Richard Müller, an excellent photographer and great lover of nature, would show a number of lantern slides from photographs taken in our mountains.

The lights were switched off and, Mr. Müller complemented the showing of his excellent pictures by an address dealing with "The Shape of Mountain Valleys", he said :

"When we are looking at our beautiful Alpine valleys and in fact on valleys of any mountainous regions, we are confronted with an amazing variety of details and with a considerable complexity in character and mood. Can we see in this complexity a common pattern? How do alpine valleys compare with other valleys of mountainous regions?

We can find the key to such questions if we consider the tools which nature used to shape the valleys, i.e., the erosive action of water and the scraping action of large valley glaciers during the various ice ages.

After, and already during the folding of mountains, water would carve valleys by dragging loose materials along the newly formed river beds. Water is a rather "flexible" substance and will therefore easily follow the course of least resistance. Such V-shaped water carved valleys therefore, are zig-zagging their way down between over-lapping spurs. Tributary rivers meet the bed of the main river without waterfalls or gorges at the "correct" level. This can be seen very plainly in pictures of Devonian and Cornish valleys or in the valleys of the Appenines which have never been shaped by ice.

But in the North of England, and in the Alps, these water carved valleys have been subject to considerable alterations by the action of huge valley

glaciers. Boulders, frozen into the ice were dragged along the bed of the glacier, scraping and grinding, widening and deepening the valleys into U-shaped troughs. A large valley glacier has a very limited "flexibility". Prominent points and "noses" therefore, were attacked most severely. Spurs were truncated, the valleys were straightened and small tributary valleys were left "hanging" high above the base of the main valley.



The Creation of a Tarn.

Where large tributary valleys enter, the combined glaciers needed more room and with their combined grinding power, were able to make it. We thus find the main valley deeper and wider below the entrance of each large tributary valley.

In England, with few exceptions, the ice entirely over-rode the hills and rounded them off from top to bottom. In the Alps it is possible to see nearly everywhere the boundary up to which the valleys were filled with ice and above which the mountains are sharp edged.

In England as well as in Switzerland, erratic blocks and morainic deposits were scattered by the glaciers over wide areas. Behind morainic dams lakes were formed when the ice retreated. What then hap-

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pened on a large scale can now be observed in a smaller way. During the last decades our Alpine Glaciers have shrunk considerably. At their end we very often find small lakes behind morainic dams.

Since the Ice-age the water has been busy altering the characteristic shapes created by the glaciers. The V-shape of valleys is being restored. Moraines are being washed away and lakes filled in with sand and gravel. In steep sections of the valleys, the water is cutting gorges leaving the typical terraces of our Alpine valleys on either side of the gorges.

But the water has a long way to go before it has reached its aim. Until then, say during the next 100,000 years, we have ample time to enjoy the immense beauty of mountain valleys which are so varied and rich in form just because the action of water has been superimposed upon the great simple shapes created by the glaciers."

Great applause greeted the lecturer on the conclusion of the show, and the President, on behalf of the company thanked Mr. Müller very warmly on his fine and interesting performance. A very sumptuous afternoon tea was then provided, much to everyone's delight and later on the younger generation indulged in singing and dancing, whilst the older one's enjoyed a game of "Yass".

All too soon this pleasant afternoon came to a close, and after a few words by the President, everyone left the "Midland" with the feeling of having spent a few happy hours amongst good friends.

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## NOUVELLE SOCIETE HELVETIQUE, A Fine Film Show.

There was a "full house" on Friday, May 18th, at the Vienna Café, when a remarkable film dealing with military ski patrols was shown.

Dr. V. Umbrecht, Commercial Attaché, at the Swiss Legation, gave a very lucid and competent introduction to the film, which had as its title "Ski Patrols in Action".

We Swiss have always been proud of our army, although it has for over two centuries had no opportunity to prove its fighting worth, we feel sure, that should it be called upon to defend our frontiers it would give a good account of itself.

The deeds of heroism shown by our soldiers at Morgarten, Sempach and St. Jakob an der Birs, would inspire our present army with the same spirit to defend every inch of our native soil. There would be no quarter given.

Switzerland possesses to-day the largest army in Europe, and foreign military experts agree, that with regard to equipment and efficiency in shooting, it is second to none.

Our country has made, and is making tremendous sacrifices in order to have a first class fighting force at its disposal should it be needed, and the film shown, portrayed very vividly what has been achieved in winter training of our soldiers for the last 45 years.

\* \* \* \* In his introduction, Dr. Umbrecht said :

"As will easily be understood, the Swiss army needs a great number of winter trained soldiers. This ski training has been rendered particularly necessary since the days when our authorities arrived at the conclusion, that in case of war, Switzerland would have to fight in the last resort in the so-called "réduit national"; this means the central part of Switzerland, which is, of course, completely surrounded by mountains.

The first time the Swiss army organised a voluntary ski course for soldiers was in 1905, some 45 years ago, when the frontier guards were invited to take such a course of training. The frontier guards are to this day the backbone of our ski-patrols, and they are really the troops who have spread among our soldiers the interest in ski patrols. In 1908 a team of these frontier guards participated for the first time in an international military competition in Chamonix, and won a fine victory. Since 1909, there have been regular competitions and championships for ski patrols in our country, partly with foreign participation. These competitions helped considerably to attract the attention of our younger people, and to increase their interest in ski patrols.

During the first world war winter training in the Swiss army was staged on a large scale, and in 1916 the army had about 180 fully trained ski patrols. This number was not very impressive, but it was quite a big one compared with those of other countries.

After the 1914-18 war, stagnation set in, so much so that when there was an international military competition in 1923, again in Chamonix, Swit-