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CITY SWISS CLUB. Christmas Dinner.

Christmas 1957 has gone. The candles on the Christmas tree, which shone so brightly, have burnt out, holly and mistletoe decorations have disappeared, the carol-singers — getting scarcer and scarcer every year — have vanished from our front doors, the bells have rung-in the New Year, the festivities, to which the children especially have so eagerly looked forward for many weeks, are over, and nothing remains but memories.

Amongst these is the Christmas Dinner which took place on Wednesday, December 18th, at the Dorchester Hotel, Park Lane, W.1.

The previous year (1956) this dinner was attended by about 130 members and friends. This record attendance was, no doubt, due to the fact that three members of the May 1956 Swiss expedition, who successfully climbed Lhotse and Everest mountains, were the guests of honour of the Club, and that ladies were invited.

No special arrangements having been made for the 1957 dinner, the number of visitors was considerably smaller, about 75 members being present. Those who were unable for one reason or another to come along missed a pleasant and congenial evening.

The chief attraction this year was the dinner, with its main course of Turkey, Christmas Pudding and Mince Pie, which kindled the real Christmas "Stimmung".

Amongst the absentees were Father Christmas and the Christmas tree; the former was otherwise engaged, and the latter was placed in the large lounge. There were also missing the usual decorations, such as mistletoe and holly, but the pleasant Orchid Room with its crystal candelabra hardly needs any extra beautifying, and, as there was nobody present to be kissed, mistletoe was not required!

Towards the end of the dinner, the President of the Club, Mr. H. Knoll, proposed the Toasts "H.M. the Queen" and "La Suisse", and afterwards extended a cordial welcome to the guests of the evening, Dr. E. M. Bircher, Press Counsellor at the Swiss Embassy, Colonel Th. Mosimann, Military and Air Attaché, Monsieur Hans Müller, Attaché, and Mr. A. Stauffer, Editor of the "Swiss Observer". The Swiss Ambassador, Monsieur A. Daeniker, and Monsieur J. J. de Tribolet, 1st Counsellor of Embassy, were unavoidably prevented from attending. The President also mentioned the presence of Mr. W. Rénz, President of the Nouvelle Société Helvétique, Mr. M. Wiesendanger, President of the Swiss Economic Council, Father A. Lanfranchi and Pasteur C. Reverdin.

During the short meeting the President informed the company of the recent passing away of three members, Messrs. H. Koch, J. Graf and J. H. Speich,

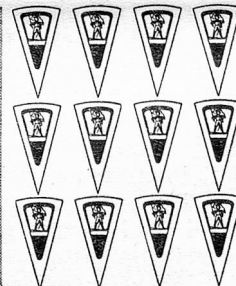
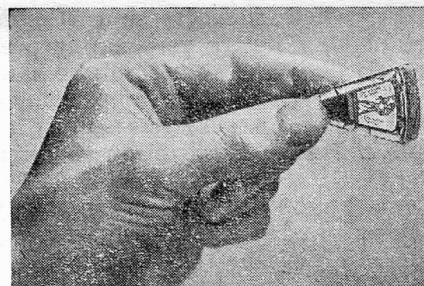
to whom a silent tribute was accorded. He also proposed the admittance of three new members, who were duly elected.

The meeting being over, the social part of the evening followed, beginning with sing-songs with accordion accompaniment rendered by a member of the Accordion Group. Many of our popular folk-lore tunes were sung; and innumerable toasts were proposed and honoured at the various tables — glasses being emptied without the slightest provocation! A member of the Club recited a poem, entitled Noël (which will be found in another column of this issue).

Before the gathering broke up, Mr. Knoll thanked the General Manager of the Dorchester Hotel, Mr. G. A. Ronus — a member of the committee of the Club — for the excellent dinner provided, and for the hospitality which the Club enjoy throughout the year at their headquarters, and wished all those present and their families a Happy Christmas and a Prosperous New Year.

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