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CITY SWISS CLUB.

An outing to "Great Fosters", Egham, Surrey, on Friday, 10th June 1960.

Last year's "Informal Dinner Dance" which was held at "Great Fosters", Egham, Surrey, was a great success, no less than 120 members and friends being present.

Encouraged by the spontaneous response which was given twelve months ago, the committee has decided to arrange again an outing to one of Britain's finest country house hotels, reminiscent of such royal personages of the past as Henry VIII, Anne Boleyn and Queen Elizabeth I.

The wonderful gardens at "Great Fosters" are alone worth a visit; they will present at this time of the year a wonderful sight.

A circular which was sent to the members of the Club mentions "there will be no speeches"! Thus, the visitors can enjoy every minute of an outing which promises to be one of the most enjoyable social gatherings to be held this year. The committee has generously agreed that part of the cost will be borne by the Club's exchequer. Dinner will be served in the ancient baronial hall (by candle-light), and the Menu that has been arranged should satisfy even the most fastidious gourmet. Dancing will be catered for by a five-member band.

The invitation is not restricted to members only, and friends are cordially invited. Tables for parties can be arranged, and on applying for tickets the size of parties should be mentioned.

Private cars can reach "Great Fosters" by taking the Southampton Road (A.30) from London to Staines and Egham. In Egham follow the station road to Egham station, cross the level-crossing and follow the blue sign direct to "Great Fosters". Members who wish the committee to make arrangements for their transport should inform Mr. Lucien Jobin, Messrs. Marchand & Jobin, 100 Hatton Garden, E.C.1, as soon as possible.

We feel sure that all those who will give themselves *rendez-vous* at "Great Fosters" on 10th June are sure of spending an enjoyable evening in beautiful surroundings and congenial company.

Press Reporter
(City Swiss Club.)

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JAPAN

A Causerie by Mr. William Roch

Members and friends of the Nouvelle Société Helvétique, at the meeting which took place on 19th April, were entertained to a most interesting Causerie on some aspects of Japanese life and history, which was accompanied by coloured pictures. Monsieur William Roch of the Swiss Embassy is not only a good raconteur but evidently also a good amateur photographer. Some of the slides were exquisite. The long and hearty applause at the end of the lecture was clear evidence of how much the audience had enjoyed both words and pictures.

Mr. W. Renz, the President of N.S.H., thanked Mr. Roch, and added some well-earned complimentary remarks.

The following is a brief résumé of Mr. Roch's lecture.

While showing his slides on the region of Kyoto and Nara (Central Japan), Mr. Roch explained that this district is the cradle of Japanese history. In the fourth century the first ruler to be given the title of emperor, according to the historians, resided there. This imperial dynasty is still in power; it is therefore 1,500 years old. However, according to legend or popular belief, the imperial line is descended from the Sun Goddess Amaterasu. It is thus possible to understand the divine attributes with which the person of the emperor is endowed. Mr. Roch added that originally the Imperial Court moved about from place to place, but at the end of the seventh century it was established at Nara. Subsequently the emperor removed the court to Kyoto, which remained the capital of Japan until the nineteenth century. In the twelfth century, however, the emperor lost his temporal power to a prince (Shogun) who commanded an order of knights (Samurai). The Shogun first installed himself in a palace at Kyoto, later transferring his residence to a town called Edo; but in 1860 the emperor Meiji left Kyoto to go to Edo to dethrone the Shogun and set himself up in the prince's own palace. This was the end of the Samurai, that is to say of the feudal regime of chivalry. Japan became organized as a modern state under the dual authority, spiritual and temporal, of the emperor. The new capital, Edo, then took the name of Tokyo, which means "Capital of the East".

Mr. Roch showed the historic buildings of Nara and Kyoto, in particular the sumptuous palace of the Shogun at Kyoto. The speaker also explained the difference between the two religions which dominate Japan: Shintoism, the primitive belief (of which the principal divinity is Amaterasu, Goddess of the Sun), and Buddhism, which reached Japan from China in the sixth century. Shown also were the temple which the Shintoists dedicate to the Sun Goddess, and Horyuji, which is the most ancient Buddhist sanctuary in Japan and is regarded as the fountain-head of Japanese art and culture.

Mr. Roch devoted a part of his talk to Japanese gardens and floral art. He showed the classic garden of the Villa Katsura (near Kyoto). This park contains an admirable arrangement of trees, shrubberies, rocks and watergardens. As for flowers, Mr. Roch explained that the Japanese specialize in the cultivation of irises and chrysanthemums, of which they produce a large number of varieties.

The speaker showed several scenes of Tokyo, which is the biggest and most populous capital in the world. In the centre of this vast city stands the historic palace of which Mr. Roch also showed some very good pictures. At the same time he told the famous story of the forty-seven Samurai which reveals, so poignantly, the Japanese character. He also put on a recording, of court music which goes back to the ninth century. It is a martial dance, slow and rhythmical. This dance demands great precision on the part of the warrior who performs it, but with this precision the Japanese know how to unite an astonishing agility.

To end his talk, Mr. Roch, as a true Swiss, took his audience to the summit of Fujiyama (the Japanese call it Fujisan). This sacred mountain is a volcano of approximately 4,000 m. (12.391 ft.). The ascent is made in summer, when the snow has melted, but it is dangerous to venture on this mountain after the month of August, on account of typhoons. It is possible to reach the foot of Fujiyama by car, at a height of about 800m. In order to avoid the intense heat, one may climb the lower slopes at night, and complete the ascent next day at sunrise.

After his talk, Mr. Roch showed some of the crockery which the Japanese use for their meals. He gave some explanations of the type of food which they eat and the method of eating with chopsticks. Finally, the speaker displayed the ordinary garment worn by the Japanese, called Yukata. This is made of cotton and resembles a kimono, the latter, however, being made of silk. Melle. Rentz, the daughter of the President of the Society, put on this Yukata and showed how charming a westerner can look in an authentic Japanese dress.

Jo. B.

SWISS CATHOLICS IN LONDON

This year's annual general meeting took place on Sunday, 1st May, in the Cathedral School Hall, Great Peter Street, S.W.1. After opening prayers, and a welcome extended by the Chairman, Mr. Boos, the annual reports were given. The Chairman informed the gathering that the first year of our new Chaplain, the Rev. Joseph Scherer, had proved no easy task for him, but he had, in spite of all difficulties, fulfilled his duties admirably. There is a pressing need for a second priest in the colony, and negotiations with Swiss authorities are continually going on. Mr. Boos then mentioned the death of Colonel Anton Bon, in early December in Basle, who until his retirement in 1952 was the first president of the Committee, and a silent tribute was paid. The Chaplain in his report gave an account of his activities during the past year, especially concerning the Alpenrosen Youth Club. He said that every Sunday, after Evening Service, entertainments, talks, and dances were held in which large numbers of young Swiss took part. In the Summer months excursions were arranged — to places of historical interest, such as Windsor Castle, St. Albans, Cambridge — as well as country walks. All new arrivals whose addresses we are able to discover receive our printed leaflet with attached reply card and club programme, and it is satisfactory to state that cards are continually flowing in. Unfortunately, the visiting of our permanently resident Swiss had to be neglected for the time being, but the Chaplain hopes that this can soon be rectified with the arrival of a second chaplain. Finally Fr. Scherer thanked His Eminence

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(A company limited by shares incorporated in Switzerland)

1872

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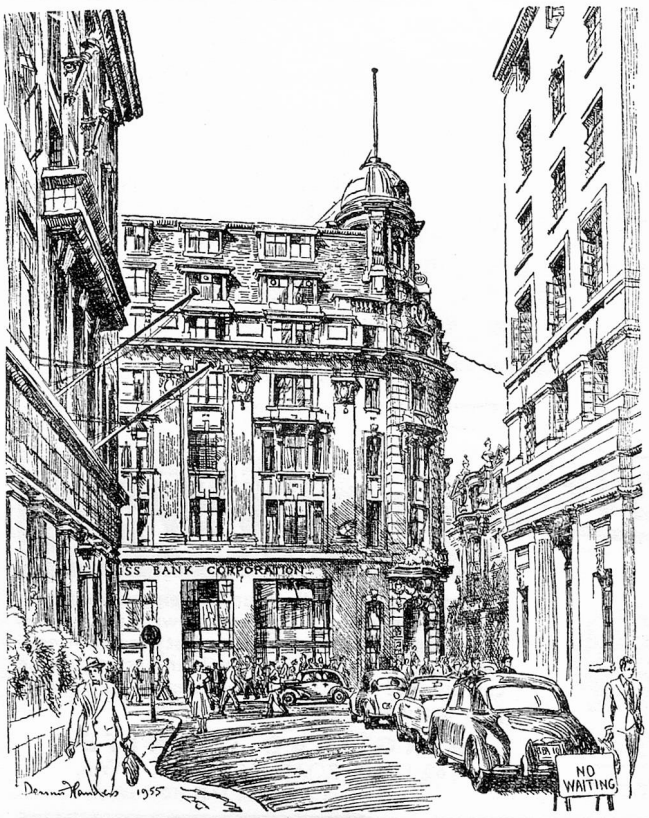
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