

CLUB NOTES

When we met on September 24th after the summer holidays we were deeply concerned to hear of the grave illness of our President. The news came as a terrible shock to practically all of us, because Colonel Culverwell had been in his usual health and spirits when we last saw him on June 25th and he was greatly looking forward to attending the Meet at Neustift. He has had several operations but he is at last beginning to make progress, and we trust that by the time these lines are in print that we shall again be seeing him at our meetings. It has been a terribly anxious time for Mrs. Culverwell, but we hope that her troubles are now over.

The economic situation in 1952 was gravely aggravated by the drastic reduction in the currency allowance and this, unfortunately, more than offset the benefit of the 30 per cent. reduction in Guides' Tariffs which was again in operation. In consequence very few of our members were able to go to Switzerland except for a few days on their way to or from Austria. We have got to face the unpleasant fact that, until the economic situation substantially improves, a climbing holiday in Switzerland (as opposed to a walking holiday) is only possible at considerable sacrifice of one's material comforts.

Some of our younger members, however, who are prepared to spend their time almost entirely in huts, may be interested in the following extract from a letter which was received some months ago from **Mr. R. Bonwit** :

“The cost of food in Switzerland was an agreeable surprise. By buying at the Pontresina Konsum (co-op) shop, one can obtain enough food at the rate of about

frs. 25 a head per week. At the Boval hut, arrangements can be made whereby everything is cooked and hot water provided at an inclusive rate of frs. 4 per diem, including frs. 1.50 for lodging. Alternatively, full pension can be obtained at frs. 14 in winter and frs. 13 in summer. Altogether the stay at this hut should not cost much more than the equivalent of £5 a week, provided the average load carried up includes 10 kg. of food for each person. The guardian is CASPER GRASS (formerly Chief Guide of Pontresina), to whom all enquiries should be addressed; I gather that his fee would approximate frs. 50 per diem for a whole group of tourists. This hut is warmly recommended as touring centre and as training centre for ice technique. Some English spoken; also good French and Romansch, so that a knowledge of Italian would not be wasted. My friend and I spent little over and above the frs. 4 a head per diem, but we received every possible assistance and advice."

The possibility of holding a Meet in Switzerland this summer (for the first time since 1949), based entirely on one of the S.A.C. Huts, is under consideration.

As far as the Association is concerned our membership again shows a decrease, like that of most other clubs, which is perhaps scarcely surprising. But so long as the fall is not too rapid and our losses are confined to our "paper" members no very great harm will be done.

Once again, owing to the Swiss rate of exchange, plus the drastic reduction in the currency allowance, we had to content ourselves with a Meet in Austria, and for the third year in succession the Annual Swiss Dinner had to be abandoned which was a very great pity.

Members who cannot afford Guides are recommended either to join the Association Meet or else to join the climbs arranged by their respective Sections.
