

City Swiss Club

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CITY SWISS CLUB. CHRISTMAS DINNER.

The candles on the Christmas tree have burned out, the carol singers have vanished from our door steps, the mistletoe has been relegated to the dustbin, all the rich Christmas fare has been digested, the bells have rung in the New Year, and only memories remain.

Amongst these is the Christmas Dinner of the City Swiss Club, which took place on Wednesday, 16th December 1959 at the Dorchester Hotel, Park Lane, W.1. This traditional dinner has been again well attended, about a hundred members and friends being present.

In spite of the absence of Father Christmas and a Christmas tree there was a real festive atmosphere prevalent. The cocktail party, which precedes all functions of the Club was this year rather more prolonged than usual, and to some it came as a relief, when it was announced that dinner was going to be served.

Full of pleasant anticipation the company adjourned to the Orchid Room, which looked very attractive each table being adorned with flowers and lighted candles.

A Christmas dinner without Turkey, Christmas Pudding and Mince Pies is quite unthinkable, so all these good things were provided by *Monsieur le chef* of the Dorchester Hotel.

Shortly before coffee was served, the President of the City Swiss Club, Mr. X. Speckert proposed the Toast to H.M. the Queen, and the Swiss Ambassador, Monsieur A. Daeniker gave, the Toast to "La Suisse".

The President then extended a warm welcome to all present, especially to H.E. the Swiss Ambassador and his collaborators at the Embassy, expressing his pleasure at also seeing a good sprinkling of older members in attendance. He paid a last tribute to two former Presidents and Honorary Vice-Presidents of the Club, Mr. Louis Chapuis and Mr. Anton Bon, and to a member, Mr. A. Im Obersteg, all of whom had passed away recently; the members honoured their memory by rising from their seats.

Mr. Speckert also mentioned that two members were present, one of whom was shortly going back to Switzerland — after twelve years of fruitful work in the Colony — namely Pasteur C. Reverdin, whilst the other, Mr. J. L. Guggenheim, a few days ago had

celebrated his eightieth birthday. To both members he extended hearty good wishes.

Pasteur Reverdin in a short address thanked the City Swiss Club for always having given him such a cordial hospitality, and briefly referred to some of his experiences during his *séjour* in this country.

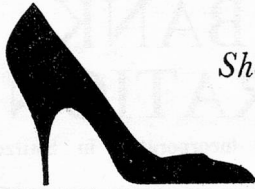
Mr. Guggenheim, visibly touched by the many birthday wishes showered upon him, gave vent to his emotion by rendering a Swiss song with Yodel.

The President then declared the official part of the evening closed, and expressed the wish, that the company should keep together for some little time longer. Now community singing started with the accompaniment of Mr. A. Gandon's accordion; moving from table to table he played a medley of Swiss melodies — "Schwyzerdütsch", French and Italian; it was a real feast of song and merriment.


An old and good friend of mine, hailing from the Jura Bernois, and a supporter of the the separatist movement, announced that for my special benefit as a Bernois (but not a separatist) he and his friends and supporters would sing their "Anthem". I cannot say that I liked it very much, nor that I was impressed by the honour, but I felt touched by their enthusiastic singing, in spite of the recent defeat which their fellow separatists have suffered at the poll, which apparently has not dimmed their ardour.

Before the President closed the proceedings, he wished all the members and their families a Happy Christmas and a Prosperous New Year, not forgetting to thank Mr. J. A. Ronus, Manager of the Dorchester Hotel, for the excellent Christmas fare provided, and for the hospitality provided throughout the year. He also expressed his appreciation to Mr. A. Gandon for his lively playing, which added much to a successful and really enjoyable and homely evening.

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