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are in direct relation with an enlightened, efficient and dedicated leadership, coupled with the wholehearted and loyal support of its members, and any deviation from this could well endanger its very life.

A few weeks after our General Meeting we were able to hold our second "Dinner-Social". This was held on April 25th, 1970, at the Griffin Hotel in Leeds. It proved to be a great success and a source of great satisfaction to the organising social-committee.

As usual we assembled gradually in the foyer-bar of this most hospitable Hotel until called by the unexpected homely ring of a Swiss cow-bell to the banqueting hall, which had been nicely decorated with wall and table flags, individually decorated menu cards with its Kantons-Wappen and entry into the Confederation. The whole history laid down on our tables. The Hotel Management had also added some lovely flower arrangements.

Our President, Professor J. Ph. Inebnit, having taken the chair, our Vice-President stood up to welcome our guests and expressed our great satisfaction and pleasure in seeing our Consul and Madam Born amongst us, who had come a long and hazardous way, but had found a temporary refuge in this Hotel. We had also Mr. and Mrs. L. Themans with us, reminding us of the very friendly relationship we have with the Manchester Swiss Club. Also Mr. and Mrs. Fletcher who through the newly founded Hebden Bridge-Swiss Association are trying very hard to strengthen the already friendly bonds linking us with that community, organising a yearly Swiss Week, supporting our Landsgemeinde, and encouraging the personal exchange of ideas and hospitality. There were other faithful members at the top table, some of our Committee, and then Mr. and Mrs. R. Mueller who are very generous in their financial support of our Club.

After having said grace everybody sat down to what proved to be an excellent dinner, helped along by a good selection of vintage wines. Eventually sweets and coffee were served, after which our President stood up to propose the toast to the Queen and to Switzerland. He did this in a most unusual way by linking together both toasts—quite a deviation from established order.

It was with pleasure and great interest that we listened to the short address of our Consul, Mr. Born, who spoke to us in his very friendly and homely way, touching on some actualities and topics of our homeland and the world around us. When he mentioned to us the early increase of 10% in the Swiss Pension Scheme benefits, he was straight away assured of our fullest sympathy and his popularity further increased. The loud and warm applause was a clear indication to him how much we appreciated both himself and his wife being with us.

All the time we could listen to

pleasant, discreet, and subdued background music, which later on increased in volume and the tunes of our mountain valleys, the yodlers, the landlers, created the type of atmosphere which appeals to us.

The second part of our evening commenced with a raffle, enhanced by some lovely and interesting prizes. The modest proceeds—we preferred it that way—went towards the expenses of the evening. One of our guests provided us with some "mystifying entertainment". Although a young member of the Leeds Magic Circle even to a professional or critical observer his performance was of a high standard. At the finish of his act he received a well deserved applause.

Society games, some of a most amusing character and occasional sing songs made us forgetful of the passing time. Alas all too soon our most enjoyable evening neared its close. There was much handshaking, good wishes for a safe journey home—some facing quite long car drives—but all were quite determined in their mind to meet again soon under similar circumstances.

BRAVO! Yorkshire Swiss Club.

(E. Berner)

#### FIDIRA, FIDIRA . . .

The faithful family of Schweizerbund members turned up in force at the Orpheus Club on Friday evening, 22nd May, for one of their usual merry parties. One or two faithful and old time members couldn't attend and had sent us their regrets. There were on the other hand newcomers among the young and we were blessed by a strong representation from the Embassy as Mr. F. Adams, our Consul in London, had come with Mrs. Adams and Mr. Charles Abegglen and Mr. Franz Bischoff had also come with their ladies. After a particularly filling meal, Mr. Virgil Berti, the Schweizerbund's president for so many years, rose and made a bucolic and vibrant address, praising the joys of Schweizerbund friendship and togetherness. Mr. Adams then rose to say a few short words. He told us how glad he was to be with the Schweizerbund and to enjoy a carefree evening. With his characteristic humour, he cracked the joke that he hadn't been sure until moments before, when he had rediscovered his membership card, whether he was actually a member, but now he knew that after a meal at the Schweizerbund one became a *full* member! But Mr. Adams would say no more jokes. He reminded us of the old after-dinner saying that there are three kinds of after-dinner speakers—those who are expected to speak, those who actually have something to say and those who cannot be prevented from speaking. Afraid that he should fall into the latter category, Mr. Adams obstinately sat down and soon the singing got started under the direction of his colleague at the Embassy, Mr. Charles Abegglen, Vice-Consul.

Now Mr. Abegglen is not only a remarkable vice-consul, he is an outstanding mixed choir conductor and cheerleader as well! What a pity for the Schweizerbund that he and Mrs. Adams will have to be leaving us soon, as was disclosed by Mr. Berti.

He launched the singing with 's *Ramsevers wei go grase*, that breezy example of Swiss folklore. We then flicked the pages of our song books (a Swissair publication called "Let's sing with the Swiss"! ) and sang the song on page number two, which was *Fa mal i pe*, a swinging song from Ticino. All warmed up by that first bout, we then sang something softer and more romantic (and in French) *Là haut sur la montagne*. That was just a beginning. I could enumerate half the Swiss Folklore, it all got trumpeted through our chords. Some of the songs were percussive and martial, such as *Roulez Tambours*, others were as sweet as the springs of Mount Parnassus. One of them (it was *Im Oberland uf or Lustig is das Zigeunerleben*) offered plenty of scope for vocalisation and for one moment I thought I was at a showing of "Ivan the Terrible".

In the end, when voices were getting hoarse and the wind falling, half the attendance broke into frolicsome conversation while Mr. Abegglen, *singing relentlessly onward*, led his faithful band of minstrels in the quivering and melodious world of Alpine Songs.

The party began to break up at eleven after a particularly friendly and merry evening.

(PMB)

#### SOCIETE DE SECOURS MUTUELS DES SUISSES A LONDRES

Ten members attended the Annual General Meeting of the Society at its headquarters 34/5 Fitzroy Square, W.1, on Wednesday, May 13th, 1970.

Following the reading of the minutes of last year's A.G.M. and a brief discussion on the Accounts the Balance Sheet for 1969 was duly adopted.

The proposed increase in the annual subscription (the first in over 50 years) recommended by the Committee in its circular letter of April 1970 was debated and comments received by post from three members taken into consideration before finally recording a vote in favour of one of two counter proposals for a modified increase of just over 50%, the various benefits remained unaltered.

Similarly the customary donation to the Swiss Benevolent Society, the subscription to the Federation of Swiss Societies in the U.K. and the Swiss Observer were re-confirmed.

Before vacating the chair, the President, Mr. A. L. Gandon, thanked his officers and committee members for their loyal support in the past year. The chairman pro-tem, Mr. F. Delaloye, received a ready response from the members present and in the absence of other nominations obtained