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at home. And Prof. Inebnit has never merely considered the Swiss Colony as a sounding board for his ideas! On the contrary, he is one of the most devoted contributors to the organised life of the Swiss of Yorkshire and nobody over there denies that without his tireless efforts, the Yorkshire Swiss Club and Swiss activities in the North would probably not survive for long. The furthering of the life of the Colony is indeed a major interest of his life of retirement.

In the course of our conversation, Prof. Inebnit said to me that life had a meaning only if there remained something of value to strive for. This became especially true in old age. Taking part in the fight of all men of good will in search of a better world by using the means afforded to him in the time and the place in which he was called to live, this is Prof. Inebnit's living embodiment of that confession. If only there were more men of Prof. Inebnit's calibre militating for the same cause and exercising their influence in the right places, then we could look forward to a cloudless future! We wish him many more long and fruitful years and remain with the certainty that his action has, and will help to build the foundations of a better world.

(PMB)

#### THE CITY SWISS CLUB SUMMER DINNER AND DANCE

Great Fosters, the vast Surrey manor in which the City Swiss Club holds its annual Summer Dance, would make an ideal setting for a romantic film—or even a horror film. But Frankenstein and the ghosts had been chased away by the oncoming members of the City Swiss Club on that Friday night. The evening air was tender, the light was mellow, and we enjoyed a prolonged gathering in the garden before dinner. These garden reunions are the traditional charm of the Summer Dinner and Dance.

We moved for dinner in the vast manorial hall in which we were to enjoy our evening. Massive cast iron chandeliers were looming from its ancient beams. The hundred or so guests glided to their tables, all set to enjoy a fairly unsophisticated menu, plenty of gay conversation and all the

other prandial pleasures. The prawns which we had to overcome as an entrée were huge and scaly. They required the patience and skill of everybody. The meal ended with a creamy, multi-layered gateau that left very few cavities inside.

The Summer Dinner is not followed by any speech. Neither are the guests interrupted by the mandatory toast to the Queen and "La Suisse" and, oh marvel, they may proceed with their obnoxious smoking habits without having to wait for permission! The tables are long and rectangular. This geometry and the absence of excess seats condemns each guest to remain at the table assigned to him or her. It is therefore harder to communicate with one's friends scattered across the ballroom and could be disastrous in the event where one had landed at a boring table!

The music was arch conservative. A bar pianist, who had been smacking his gorgeous chords during the meal, was assisted by three companions at dance-time. They played soft, rill music. No beat, no twang and no jumping. No exertion on the dance floor either, just intimate middle-age and middle-class prancing. Oh yes, there were two cha-cha-chas.

At one o'clock, the Dance was still going strong and plenty of laughter rising from the tables.

(PMB)

#### THE REVISION OF THE FEDERAL CONSTITUTION DEBATED AT THE NOUVELLE SOCIÉTÉ HELVÉTIQUE

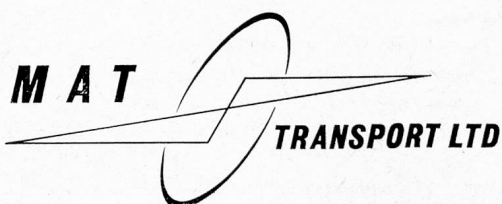
The last reunion of the Nouvelle Société Helvétique to take place before the summer holidays, originally scheduled for the 18th June but postponed for a week because of the elections, was devoted to the study of a questionnaire pertaining to the revision of the Constitution and specially drafted for us Swiss Abroad by the Secretariat that so devotedly looks after us in Berne. Mrs. Marianne Meier and Dr. Peter Hollenweger, from the Embassy, had painstakingly prepared the meeting but Dr. Hollenweger was unfortunately called on business to Berne at the last minute and it was for Mrs. Meier to handle the debate alone. She per-

formed this task remarkably well, introducing the subject by outlining the history of our Federal Constitution, the document on which rest the rules of our national life, and then moderating the discussion on each of the individual items raised in the questionnaire.

This Constitution, drafted in 1874 and constantly enlarged throughout the years, may eventually be totally revised. There have been a number of initiatives and efforts by various quarters (including the Nouvelle Société Helvétique) in the past, but they have been thwarted by a Swiss people and a Swiss parliament quite satisfied with the Constitution as it was. A national councillor and a councillor of state proposed together in 1965 to settle the matter by asking for the opinion of each individual canton, party and university. The Federal Council appointed a committee presided by Dr. F. T. Wahlen, former Federal Councillor, which drafted a questionnaire for the attention of the aforesaid cantons, parties and universities. The churches and economic groupements were eventually also asked to fill the questionnaire, although their positions were not to have any official value. For the Swiss Abroad, it was not possible to send the "Wahlen questionnaire" because it raised questions on which no one living outside Switzerland could be expected to have a definite opinion. The Secretariat for the Swiss Abroad therefore drafted a simplified questionnaire containing questions in which the 300,000 denizens of Fifth Switzerland could be concerned. This questionnaire was described in detail in these columns by MM in the last but one issue.

There is no escaping it, the "revision of the constitution" is an arid subject and rather academic too. In spite of this and the small attendance at the meeting (about 30 people turned up) we managed to have a prolonged and lively discussion on nearly all the points in the questionnaire. Each question had to be ticked by a "yes", "no" and "no opinion" answer and the meeting was useful to those who had patriotically decided to fill and send the questionnaire to Berne. It helped them not only to make up their minds, but gave them the opportunity to see the problems more in perspective by listening

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to the opinion of others.

Mrs. Meier was seated alone at her little table, adjudicating the questions and taking notes for the report she will send to Berne, while we were couched in Swiss Hostel armchairs, musing on the higher political issues facing the motherland. The debate never flagged and this was not only due to our general interest and Mrs. Meier's chairmanship, but especially to Dr. Egli, who was thoroughly versed in all the issues, and showed a wide background knowledge and very definite opinions on each of the questions put forward in the questionnaire. He provided the informative basis to our verdict and I can say that I ticked my questionnaire under his guiding inspiration. One point where, I believe, there was an unbridgeable difference was the question of giving the right of vote to the Swiss Abroad. Dr. Egli and most of the elder members present were opposed to giving a right of vote to the Swiss Abroad. One or two younger people however took the opposite stand.

I shan't describe the debate in detail, as there will be other opportunities to examine the problems set by the revision of the Constitution in the near future. This theme will, as you know, be discussed by the Swiss Abroad in their Zofingen meeting in August. However, it was quite clear that the Swiss of London, as represented by a small cross section at the N.S.H. two weeks ago, are conservative and not really keen in seeing the Constitution overhauled. Although the Swiss Colony does not officially have a say in the running of Switzerland, I'm sure that our masters in Berne will take note of its position with interest and probably find that it agrees with the general feeling in Switzerland.

(PMB)

### THE WALDFEST

The "Waldfest", which is the yearly highlight of the Swiss Rifle Association, took place on Sunday afternoon, 28th June, under an occasionally cloudy, but altogether inviting and shiny sky. There were not too many people, and we have to apologise here to those people who might have been misled by a faulty indication in the Swiss Observer concerning the date of the Waldfest. We hope that this error in our communications with our printers has not led to anyone missing this important and friendly event. There were in fact very few Swiss Rifle Association members present. Those who were there and spent most of the afternoon at the Siberia Range were the old regulars, those who collect the medals and clean the guns. Your Editor had a bash at the 10-point "A" target at 300 m and (readers will be glad to learn . . .) reaped one or two 7's, an abundance of 8's and even a handful of 9's. No bulls-eyes, alas.

While these few Association regulars were perfecting their marksmanship

grass to lie on, to bask in the sun and read the Sunday papers.

Mr. Adolf Schmid doyen of the Association, presided over the success of the afternoon, handing out Brissagos and offering kirsch coffees to the younger generation. He told me that he remembered the days when the Waldfest drew hundreds of compatriots. He was surprised that the Schiessverein should have such a small attendance at present. After all, he maintained, marksmanship was not just any sport: it was a discipline lying at the heart of our Swiss history and culture. But although the heyday of the Swiss Rifle Association may be over, there can be no doubt that its most recent Waldfest was as enjoyable as any of its predecessors.

If any trigger-happy outsider to the Swiss Rifle Association reads this, he should know that there are still three shooting sessions this year, taking place all day on the Sundays 13th moved into one of two vast international lorries that had miraculously made their way on the tortuous stone track to the Siberia range and the party got started in the lorry. The drivers were friends and customers of Mr. Armin Loetscher, alighting at the club which he manages in the West End, the "St. Moritz", after their regular long treks from Switzerland. Mr. Armin Loetscher, it should be said, was the driving force behind the Waldfest and was responsible for the supply in booze and schnapps as well as the organisational details.

Dancing in the lorry was not the only physical exertion practised by the young participants to the Waldfest. A game of football was organised in which the girls took place. It was a joy to see our buxom Swiss lassies charging for the ball, tackling the men and scoring like Jairzinho. Football is definitely a sport for women too. For the indolent, there was a soft and luscious ship, there was a lot going on in the beer tent. This tent, replacing the plastic panoply of former years, had been pieced together out of Swiss Army individual tent sheets. They had been mailed over as a gift by the Swiss team which came for a friendly competition with the Swiss Rifle Association last year. A long table and benches were set in the tent and fully occupied by a crowd of young Swiss enjoying themselves. Very few Colony members were to be seen and these young people, some coming from the Swiss Centre, others working as Embassy clerks and a few brought along by the former were in the great majority. A hired van parked next to the tent was filled with Warteck beer and kirsch. Cervelas were sizzling and bursting on a charcoal grill and although we were geographically somewhere in Surrey, gastronomically we were smack inside Switzerland.

A loud record-player was bellowing yodel and youtz inside the fun tent. Eventually pick-up and records were

September, 27th September and 11th October. The range is the "Siberia" range, which lies at the end of a narrow road branching off on the left shortly after the main N.R.A. Bisley range as one drives in from Brookwood. As the surroundings are beautiful it is very appropriate to bring the family along. The patrons of the Swiss Rifle Association are a charming lot and anyone who comes to Bisley is in for a friendly afternoon! As a newly-found saying goes, a .22 bullet is made to make friends.

(PMB)

### FORTHCOMING EVENTS

- Every Thursday from 6 to 7.30 p.m. Discussion Circle in English. Young men especially invited. Tea from 6 to 6.15 p.m. Swiss Room, YMCA, Gt. Russell St., W.C.1.
- Secours Mutues des Suisses à Londres. No meeting until October.
- Friday 31st July. Swiss Club Manchester. 1st August Celebrations at Cottons Hotel, near Knutsford, at 8 p.m.
- Saturday 1st August. SWISS NATIONAL DAY AND GALA DANCE at the Wimbledon Town Hall at 19.30. Yodel, choral, alphorn and flag-throwing performances. Dancing and enjoyment all night! Tickets at 6/- available at the door.
- Sunday 2nd August. Swiss Church at Endell Street. The German and French-speaking parishes meet for a service in common at 11 a.m.
- The Swiss Societies take a break in summer, but we remind our readers that the Swiss Rifle Association shoots all day at the Siberia range on Sunday 13th September, Sunday 27th September and Sunday 11th October.

### SWISS CULTURAL EVENTS

- Up to 25th July at the Gimpel Fils Gallery, 50 South Molton Street, W.1. Exhibition of Metal Reliefs by Willy Weber.
- Monday 20th July. Westfield College Chapel, Kidderpore Avenue, Hampstead, at 8.15 p.m. Recital by András de Töszeghi, viola, and Anne de Dadelsen, piano. Works by Bach, Schubert, Kodaly, Brahms. Admission free.
- Wednesday 15th July and Thursday 16th July. St. Paul's Cathedral, at 8.45 p.m. "Music without distraction" presented during the Festival of the City of London.

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