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Annual Banquet and Ball of the SWISS CLUB (Schweizerbund)

on Friday, March 25th 1938
at 74 Charlotte Street, W.I.

F. HEDIGER,

President of the SWISS CLUB (Schweizerbund).

With the traditional punctuality all of its own our homely Swiss Club in Charlotte Street held its Annual Dinner and Ball for the 51st time on Friday, March 25th, with a large attendance of members and friends. When the Schweizerbund says 8 p.m. for the start of the dinner and 7.30 for the reception it means somewhere not much later than 9. I register this fact not for the benefit of the members, to whom it has become a matter of course, but for the guidance of future guests who, like your reporter, have not yet been initiated into this time-honoured disregard of time so strictly adhered to by our very charming and merry hosts of the Swiss Club. It cannot be changed — so I am told on the strength of an abortive attempt at reform — for the simple reason that if they said 9 on the invitation it would without fail be taken to mean 10 or there-after.

To prevent any misunderstanding I should like to make it quite clear that any guest straying in too early, as I have done, is in the meantime looked after very nicely indeed and given the benefit of really making friends with the Club's officers, their ladies and other guests. There is much to be said for this aspect of the Swiss Club's time-lag as compared with the more usual hand-shake and how d'you do in other quarters. When amongst a lot of other highly interesting persons you meet the man who has created one of the most racy Accordeon Clubs in London in the space of a few months out of nothing, or, more intriguing still, the very venerable compatriot of our's who has personally attended Her Majesty Queen Mary as her hair-dresser for over 25 years — the reader will understand how very real that benefit of a leisurely reception at Charlotte Street is.

The dinner and ball were, of course, no less enjoyable to everyone present, as was proved by the fact that none left before the club had to close its doors at 2 a.m., the guest of honour, Monsieur de Rham of our Legation, not excluded! An excellent dinner put the company in the best of spirit and the Accordeon Club, whose headquarters are at the Schweizerbund, enriched the dancing entertainment by a number of our charming Swiss peasant tunes.

The Club's indefatigable President, Mr. Hediger, opened the round of speeches. He gave the representative of the Legation, Monsieur de Rham, a specially hearty welcome, as this was the first occasion on which he occupied the chair of honour at a Swiss social function. In the course of his speech Mr. Hediger thanked all the officers of the Club for their faithful service in the past year, mentioning especially the four trustees Messrs. Joerin, Keller, Scheidegger and Bernhard, the Secretary Mr. Imhof and the able Stewards Mr. and Mrs. Rossier. He also thanked the Société de Secours Mutuel, the Unione Ticinese, the Swiss Gymnastic Society, the Symphonic Social Choir and the new Swiss Accordeon Club, all of whom have chosen the Schweizerbund as their head-quarters, for their support. The

speaker closed with an expression of confidence in the Club's future.

The Vice-President Mr. Caluori greeted the guests, including the following:

Mr. Eusebio, and Mr. Ferrari, Unione Ticinese.
Mr. and Mrs. Bleiker, Société de Secours Mutuels.
Mr. E. Wymann and Mrs. Greenfield, Union Helvetia.

Mr. Meier, Swiss Mercantile Society.

Dr. Egli, Swiss Observer.

Pfarrer Hahn, Swiss Church.

Mr. and Mrs. G. Koch, Symphonic Social Choir.

Mr. Hausermann and Mr. Gandon, Swiss Accordeon Club.

Mr. Eusebio, the new President of the Unione Ticinese, responded with a happy speech in the name of the guests.

The *pièce-de-resistance* was, of course, Monsieur de Rham's first address delivered at a banquet of our Colony. He revealed himself as a really first-class orator with a sense of humour as well as earnestness and an exemplary command of English, the more remarkable in view of his short stay in this country. He greeted his immediate hearers and the Colony at large with the following important message:

"... Let me compliment M. Hediger, the present President of the Swiss Club, and all his predecessors, on having so successfully carried out the various tasks connected with this Club, whose chief function is to provide a social home for a multitude of compatriots. The presence here to-night of so many guests and of such distinguished representatives of other Swiss Societies shows how popular the "Schweizerbund" is in the Swiss Colony.

I would allude in passing to the statement recently made by the Swiss Federal Council on the international situation of Switzerland. I think the Federal Council were right when they solemnly affirmed the Swiss nation's desire to remain united and to defend the incomparable fatherland God gave us against anyone and to the last breath.

We, the members of the great Swiss family who are living abroad, join heart and soul in this declaration, and meetings like the one here to-night show that we also intend to strengthen and improve the bonds which hold together the community of Swiss people destined to live away from home. The more serious the situation the more essential it seems to me not to let ourselves become depressed by things, but to face them with absolute calm, courage and determination. Now more than ever it is a time not for words but for action. And each of us who continues to devote himself to his task — whatever that task may happen to be — will be helping to create this atmosphere of confidence and satisfaction which it is so essential to attain at the present time."

Dr. E.

"knave" for "jack" and the result is 53 letters; substitute "dame" for "reine" and there are 51 letters.

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A PACK OF CARDS.

All card players know the almost astronomical number of variations which can occur when dealing 4 hands from a pack of 52 cards. The actual number is a matter of mathematics.

Not so well-known is the fact that all the letters in the English names of the cards, added together make 52. Here they are so that you can check:— Ace, two, three, four, five, six, seven, eight, nine, ten, jack, queen, king.

The same is true both in the French and Dutch. French:— As, deux, trois, quatre, cinq, six, sept, huit, neuf, dix, valet, reine, roi. Dutch: Aas, twee, drie, vier, vijf, zes, zeven, acht, negen, tien, boer, vrouw, heer.

In both the English and French names, however there are popular alternatives which rather spoil the remarkable coincidence. Substitute

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