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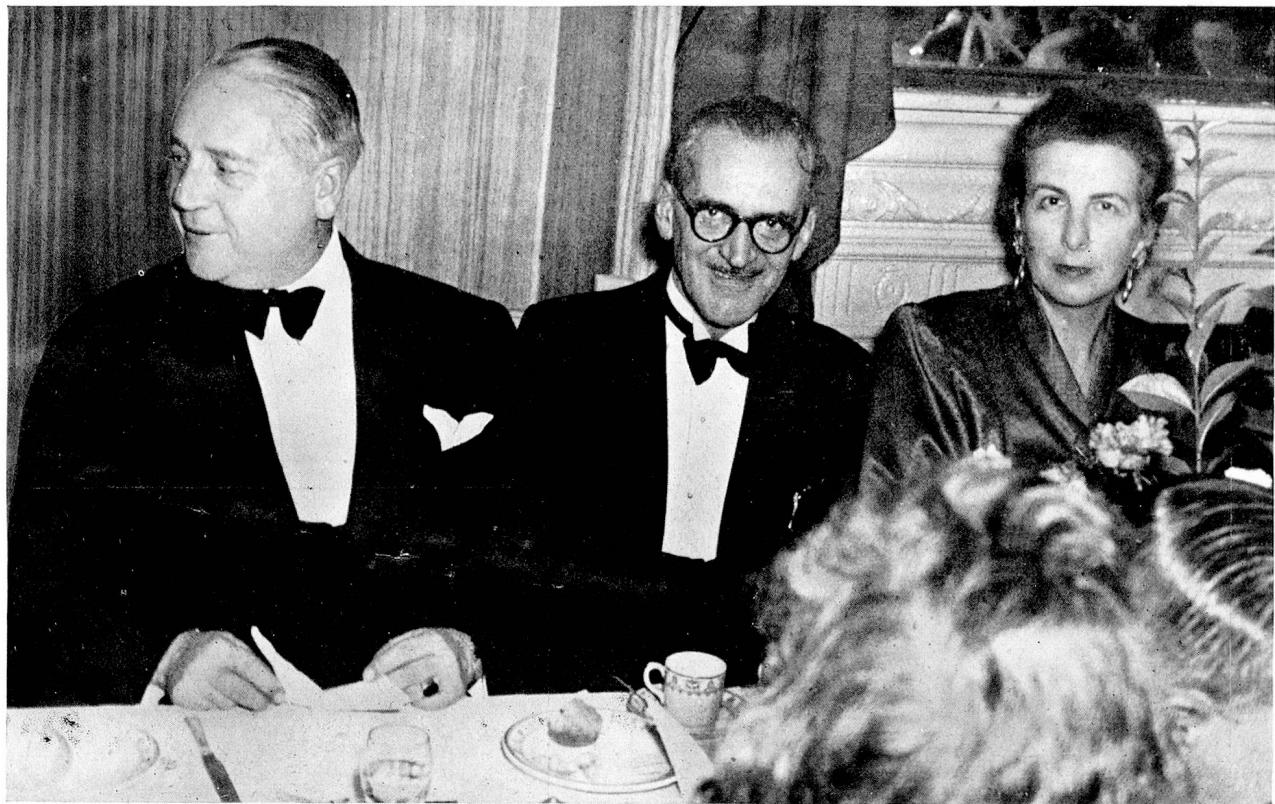
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Left to right: **The Swiss Minister, Mr. E. Siegrist** (President), **Madame H. de Torrenté**.

RE-OPENING OF THE SCHWEIZERBUND (Swiss Club)

FRIDAY, DECEMBER 3rd, 1948

Another anniversary has recently been celebrated in the Swiss Colony in London. The "Schweizerbund" (Swiss Club) has reached the venerable age of seventy, but does not look it, in fact this Society has just undergone a process of rejuvenation and seems as hearty and hale as in its teens.

This happy event luckily coincided with the re-opening of the new Club House premises, which as yet are not fully completed, but the rooms so far available are furnished and decorated with much taste; the "Bündnerstube" especially has an atmosphere of true Swiss homeliness and, no doubt, will be well frequented. The large dance hall too, looks attractive and is a great asset to the Club. On the first floor well equipped rooms, suitable for meetings and smaller parties, are to be found.

Those who have known the dreary and depressing appearance of the premises during the last few years, could hardly believe, that such a radical change in a relatively short time was at all possible.

Barely a year ago the Club, owing to mismanagement over a long period, was on the verge of collapse, and prospects of a revival looked pretty grim.

The Society then had the good fortune to find a man in the person of Mr. E. Siegrist, its own President, who, with both the moral and financial support of a group of members, undertook the hard task of putting this institution on its feet again; and the Re-opening of the new premises was an undeniable

personal success for the President and his faithful collaborators.

The Club was honoured on this opening ceremony by the presence of the Swiss Minister and Madame de Torrenté, accompanied by M. E. de Graffenreid and Mme de Graffenreid, M. and Mme V. Umbricht, Messieurs E. M. Bircher, P. Clottu, F. Magnin and H. Bähler. Madame de Torrenté kindly consented to declare the Club re-opened.

An excellent dinner was served, under somewhat trying circumstances, the kitchen we understand, not being quite finished, and the stewards, Mr. and Mrs. A. Diethelm are to be heartily congratulated on their successful *début*.

The traditional toasts were proposed by the Swiss Minister and the President, and were heartily responded to. During the dinner members of the Accordeon Club provided the "Tafelmusik" and the Swiss Male Choir sang two songs which earned them much applause.

Mr. F. Delaloye, one of the Trustee's of the "Schweizerbund" extended greetings to the numerous official guests, and extended a specially hearty welcome to the Swiss Minister and Madame de Torrenté.

Mr. R. Dupraz, President of the 1st of August committee, on behalf of the guests, thanked the Society for their hospitality, wishing them good luck and all the support they deserve.

The principal toast of the evening, the "Schweizerbund" was entrusted to the President, who was heartily cheered when rising to address the company, he too, thanked the Minister and Madame de Torrenté for their presence and mentioned that the following Swiss Societies and institutions were represented: Société de Secours Mutuels: A. L. Gandon, President; City Swiss Club: R. de Cintra, President; Swiss Mercantile Society: Mr. W. Meier, President; Swiss Male Choir: Mr. F. G. Sommer, President; Nouvelle Société Helvétique: Dr. H. W. Egli, President; Unione Ticinese: Mr. C. Berti, President; Swiss Orchestral Society: Mr. Pellet, President; Union Helvetia: Mr. Boog; Swiss Philatelic Society: Mr. F. Streit, President; 1st of August Committee: Mr. R. Dupraz, President; Rütti Club: Mme Bolla, President; Swiss Observer: Mr. A. Stauffer, Eglise Suisse: Pasteur C. Reverdin; Schweizerkirche: Pfarrer H. Blum, Swiss Catholics: Father A. Lanfranchi.

Mr. Siegrist mentioned that representatives of the landlord and a number of suppliers were present too.

He shortly traced the history of the Society since its foundation in 1879 to the present day, and acquainted the gathering with the plans for its future.

The President expressed the gratitude of the Club to Messrs. C. Strubin, Bruschweiler and Schneeberger for their generous financial support, and to all those who had helped in one way or another.

He thanked the architect, Mr. Kormanic, who had studied at the "Politechnikum" in Zurich, for having created a work which should last for future generations.

There was long applause after Mr. Siegrist concluded his address, and the entire company sang "For he is a jolly good fellow!"

The Swiss Minister, after having expressed thanks for the complimentary remarks made about him and his wife, congratulated the President on the happy atmosphere which was so prevalent, saying that this new building was the result of energy, perseverance and mutual understanding, the same spirit in which our own country was made into a nation.

He concluded his address by raising his glass to a happy and successful future of the "Schweizerbund."

Two more speakers, Mr. G. Wyss and Mr. C. Berti, President of the Unione Ticinese, voiced their pleasure at what the Society has achieved thanks to the great work of its President. Mr. Delaloye, who throughout the evening acted very efficiently as "Zeremonien

Meister," thanked, in the name of the Trustees', Mr. E. Siegrist for his untiring efforts.

Various telegrams, amongst them one from the "Jodlergruppe" Basle, were received sending best wishes.

The official part of the evening then came to an end, and dancing began, which lasted until 2 a.m. Everyone seemed in high spirits and judging from the happy faces all around, the second part of the evening was no less successful than the first.

We too, join the many well-wishers for the future prosperity of the "Schweizerbund," may it become, in the real sense of the word, a "Home from Home."

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