

# City Swiss Club

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### CITY SWISS CLUB LUNCHEON.

On Saturday, March 7th, 1942, at the  
Dorchester Hotel, Park Lane, W.

In the Chair: THE SWISS MINISTER.

The members of the City Swiss Club and their Ladies met for the third time, since the war began, at the Dorchester Hotel for a Luncheon Party.

These gatherings have become very popular and few would like to miss them. One might sometimes ask oneself whether it is right, in times such as we are passing through, when there is so much misery and distress in this world, to hold functions of a social character, or to spend money on, what is called, non-essential things.

Providing, that such entertainments are kept within bounds and in accordance with existing circumstances, I feel we are justified to foregather from time to time, to exchange views, relate experiences, and cement old friendships. It does one good, and it acts as a tonic, to forget, if only for a few fleeting moments, the war with its terrible consequences, which hang like a dark spectre over a weary world.

Gatherings, like the one which was arranged on Saturday, March the 7th, are almost the only means of keeping in touch with each other, and I am sure, nobody will dispute the fact, that it is now, more than ever, an absolute necessity not to lose contact with one's friends and acquaintances. No one can tell what the future may have in store for us, the time may come when each of us may be called upon in the defence of liberty to play his or her part, and to be prepared for such emergencies we must not drift apart, but strengthen the ties which have kept us together in the past.

Although Switzerland is not one of the belligerent nations, we have no reason to be ashamed of the part our country plays in the tremendous struggle, which was not of our seeking.

True to our historic traditions, and thanks to a sound and solid inheritance achieved by many a bitter fight, our country, no sooner had hostilities began, put all her available humanitarian and charitable resources at the disposal of the belligerent nations.

I need only mention the tremendous work the International Red Cross at Geneva is doing. Thousands of our compatriots of both sexes in all the four corners of the globe are giving their services free, to heal the wounds which this insane war is inflicting upon mankind. By their unselfish, and untiring efforts, multitudes are benefitting, many an anxious heart has found relief and succour, and countless tears have been dried.

Thanks to her geographical position and her great achievements in all humanitarian undertakings, Switzerland is one of the few countries left, which can be of real assistance to all countries involved in the war, in keeping the channels of communications open. This is of tremendous value, and importance, and an undeniable help to mitigate the bitter blows which have fallen on millions of combatants and non-combatants alike.

Perhaps one of these days, when the last shot has been fired, and when the Angel of Peace mercifully spreads her wings over millions of graves, the tale of what our country has done in this war, will be told,

it will be a proud record, a record which will be in keeping with the heroic deeds of our forefathers. There should be no boasting about it, we have done nothing more than our duty to humanity and in this knowledge lies our reward, but it should nevertheless be made known as an inspiration to future generations. —

The Committee of the City Swiss Club was lucky in again procuring Mr. Lawrence Howard to address the members of the Club, his profound knowledge of Swiss history and Swiss achievements, coupled with an excellent and easy delivery, provides an attraction to any gathering.

Befitting the occasion, the Swiss Minister, accompanied by Madame Thurnheer, took the Chair, in the capacity as Honorary President of the City Swiss Club.

At the conclusion of an excellent Luncheon, which once again did full honour to the reputation of the *cuisine* of the Dorchester Hotel, the Swiss Minister proposed the toasts to H.M. The King and to the President of the Swiss Confederation.

M. Louis Chapuis, President of the City Swiss Club, in his short address welcomed the members of the Club and especially the Ladies, whom he termed as "delicate and precious instruments," their modest blushes proved how much they appreciated this compliment. He mentioned, that the Club was honoured by a number of distinguished guests amongst them, the guest of honour, Mr. Lawrence Howard, whom he called, referring to his previous visit to the Club, as a "modern Cesar," because he "came, talked and conquered."

The President also warmly welcomed the Swiss Minister and Madame Thurnheer, recalling the fact that exactly two years ago to the day, the Swiss Colony, some thousands strong, assembled at the Dorchester Hotel to greet them on their arrival in this country.

"Two years ago," M. Chapuis said, "we were all strangers to each other, to-day you, Monsieur le Ministre, know most of us, and the charitable work rendered in the Colony by Madame Thurnheer is highly appreciated."

The Swiss Minister, who received a hearty ovation on rising, paid a sincere tribute to the President and Committee of the City Swiss Club, especially to the former for his untiring efforts on behalf of the Club and in a wider range to the Swiss Colony as a whole, expressing the hope that M. Chapuis might find it possible to remain at the helm of the Club for some time to come.

The President, then thanked M. Bingguely, the Hon. Secretary of the Club for the work he is rendering in managing the various social functions of the Club.

It was subsequently announced that Mr. Lawrence Howard, would address the company on "Switzerland and the Film."

The lecturer, on approaching the microphone, was greeted with loud applause.

Mr. Howard said that he hoped after the second infliction of his person on the City Swiss Club, we would all leave weighed down by the heavy burden of responsibility which we, as individuals, as well as Switzerland as a whole, had towards mankind. He mentioned a discussion he had had a few days ago with a friend of his, who said she knew all about Swit-

zerland — lovely snow and wonderful sunshine and the beautiful city — and when asked which city she meant, mentioned Stockholm! The lecturer gave that as an illustration of the great ignorance which the majority of people had about Switzerland and all things Swiss, and it was in this connection, that it seemed to him the film was invaluable.

A book, even a best-seller would at best be read by say 100,000 people, whilst statistics have shown that a really good film would be seen by as many as 150 million people, the essence being that human beings, whilst objecting to education, are quite willing to accept entertainment and are as pleased as little children if they find, that with their afternoon's or evening's entertainment they also get some education thrown in.

In Mr. Howard's view, Switzerland had so much to give and show the world, that to him it appeared as a duty for every Swiss citizen, not so much towards his country as towards mankind, to show all and sundry what had been done in that small part of this earth.

Few people were aware that long before the Roman times there were periods of ancient culture in Switzerland, he reminded us of the age of the Lake-dwellers (Pfahlbauer) who had not only one but three distinct periods of culture, and who had produced exquisite forms in bronze and clay implements and ornaments and had a well-ordered communal life; few people knew of the exploits of the Helvetier and their battles for freedom and independence either against enemies from the north and east or enemies from the south; the lecturer then referred to the struggles in the 5th and 6th century to gain freedom from the Roman yoke, and then to the magnificent Swiss battles and fights for the consolidation of Switzerland and its freedom from the Austrian and French overlordship.

Although the Swiss loved a fight and in times gone by had often made a trade of it, they had never used their prowess for aggrandisement and national gain, but had always fought to the death in complete and utter disregard of cost to the individual, whenever their highest possessions of liberty and independence were threatened.

Nobody is in doubt now that the Swiss would be fighting, and yet they had kept neutral not only in this war and the last, but ever since Napoleonic times, owing to the great progress which had been made in education, for it is *superior education, superior intelligence* which has not only given Switzerland its present position but also found a way by which each local group can keep to its own individuality without merging into a lifeless standard pattern of the whole.

Although there was, at times, healthy strife and even acute differences between the different cantons, they sunk into insignificance whenever the country as a whole was threatened.

But not only had the individual, and the people as a whole, high ideals of liberty and independence, they had also made great progress and he referred to the "Referendum" as one of the great administrative implements which had been created in Switzerland, and which to him was a modern adaptation of the "Landsgemeinde."

He mentioned that a few years ago in Hollywood, as the result of a lecture he gave on Swiss civil institutions, the first Referendum Club in the North American Continent had been formed, which became the parent of a great number of similar clubs.

To Mr. Howard it appeared an imperative duty of every Swiss to strive to communicate to the world the old, as well as the new, achievements of Switzerland, telling in simple straightforward fashion of its history, about Wilhelm Tell (whom everybody would like to have in his Darts Club), of Winkelried, of Zwingli or Calvin those founders of great religious movements, or Pestalozzi, the great educational reformer, or of the "Landsgemeinde," or the working of the Referendum and other modern administrative or social achievements. The world needed to be shown and taught these things, and the only way of doing this successfully and adequately was by means of the film, which would reach millions of people in other parts of the world, and teach them to follow our example.

Mr. Howard, on resuming his seat was cheered by the entire gathering for the excellent manner in which he had portrayed his subject. —

Before bringing this rather lengthy report to a conclusion, I would like to draw the attention of my colleague, the Honorary Secretary, to the fact that the Swiss flag, which was so conspicuously displayed, together with the Union Jack, could do with a "good wash," I think this could be done in spite of the soap rationing, if however he should encounter some difficulties, I would be quite prepared to give up my weekly ration, even if I would have to go without washing for a few days; I might even consent to do it myself, although I have never before taken "washing in." —

The Meeting came to an end shortly after 4 o'clock and everybody left the Dorchester Hotel with the satisfaction of having spent a few happy and profitable hours in congenial company.

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Amongst those present, not already mentioned, were:

Mr. and Mrs. Amman, Mr. and Mrs. Bachofen, Mr. Barbey, Mr. Bartholdi, Mr. and Mrs. Beckmann, Miss Beglinger, Mr. Berger, Mr. Bertschi, Mr. and Mrs. Bessire, Mr. and Mrs. Binguely, Dr. Bircher, Mr. Bon, Mr. and Mrs. Boos, Mr. Borel, Mr. Brun, Mr. Bucher, Mr. Candish, Mrs. L. Chapuis, Mr. and Mrs. C. Chapuis, Mr. de Cintra, Mr. Comoy, Mr. Coulton, Mr. and Mrs. Deutsch, Mr. Dietrich, Mr. Dominicé, Mr. and Mrs. Dubs, Mr. and Mrs. Fankhauser, Mr. Fenton, Mr. and Mrs. Fer, Mrs. E. Fischer, Mr. J. Fischer, Mr. and Mrs. W. Fischer, Mr. and Mrs. Flory, Mr. and Mrs. Frei, Mr. Gattiker, Lieut. Gerig, Mr. Girardet, Mr. and Mrs. Glauser, Mr. Goodyear, Mr. and Mrs. Grau, Miss Gsteiger, Mr. Guggenheim, Mr. Haefley, Mr. and Mrs. Heimerdinger, Mr. Hunziker, Mr. and Mrs. Hilpert, Mr. Hirs, Mr. and Mrs. Jenne, Mr. and Mrs. Jobin, Mr. Keller, Mr. and Mrs. Kreis, Mr. and Mrs. Kung, Mr. Laemlé, Rev. Lanfranchi, Mr. and Mrs. Lanfranchi, Mr. Mc Cormac, Mr. G. Marchand, Mr. Margot, Mr. and Mrs. Matthey, Mr. and Mrs. Meier, Mr. Michaut, Mr. Mitchell, Mr. and Mrs. Moehr, Mr. and Mrs. Obussier, Mr. Renoux, Mr. and Mrs. de Rham, Mr. and Mrs. Rohr, Mr. and Mrs. Rueff, Mr. and Mrs. Ryf, Mr. and Mrs. Saager, Mr. Sadler, Mr. and Mrs. de Salis, Mr. and Mrs. A. Schmid, Mr. and Mrs. Schorno, Mr. and Mrs. Seinet, Mr. F. G. Sommer, Mr. Sommer, jun., Mr. and Mrs. Stauffer, Mr. Steinmann, Mr. and Mrs. Steiner, Mr. and Mrs. Suter, Mr. and Mrs. Weber, Mr. Dudley Weil, Mr. and Mrs. Weist, Mr. West, Mrs. Wetter, Mr. Wuthrich, Mr. Zimmermann, Mr. Zobrist, Mr. Zullig.