

News from the colony

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NEWS FROM THE COLONY

CITY SWISS CLUB

98th ANNUAL BANQUET AND BALL

In conjunction with

THE SWISS ECONOMIC COUNCIL

on Friday, 15th November, at the Dorchester Hotel, Park Lane, W.1

In the Chair:

The Swiss Ambassador, Monsieur A. Daeniker

In 1956, the City Swiss Club reached its first Centenary, an event which was at the time celebrated with great pomp and circumstance by a Gala Dinner at the Dorchester Hotel, to which a large number of notable guests — amongst them some from Switzerland — were invited. It was, what one might call *une grande affaire*. In two years' time the Club will be able, if nothing unforeseen happens, to celebrate another Centenary, as it will then be one hundred years since the first Banquet was held.

As last year, the Banquet and Ball on the 15th November 1963, was again held in conjunction with the Swiss Economic Council of which about ninety per cent of its members also belong to the City Swiss Club. If the 1962 attendance was very satisfactory, this year an even larger number of members and friends attended, which clearly shows that these Banquets have lost none of their pull. It was gratifying to note that quite a considerable number of the younger generation were present.

The evening started with a reception by H.E. the Swiss Ambassador, in the capacity of Honorary President of the City Swiss Club, accompanied by Madame Daeniker. The Ambassador was assisted by Mr. M. A. Keller, President of the City Swiss Club, and Mr. J. P. Christen, President of the Swiss Economic Council, with their ladies, who carried beautiful bouquets of flowers, which had been presented to them by the members of the two Societies.

To get the company into what is called "proper form", or what a friend of mine called "mildly tipsy", cocktails were served in an ante room and, judging from the lively conversation, seemed to be much enjoyed. Many a familiar face, not seen for some time, was recognised and the latest gossip exchanged, and what about the *toilettes* of the ladies? they were as lovely as their wearers, not a few of them being *le dernier cris* (I mean the *toilettes*, of course).

The lively chatter of the company was interrupted when the red-coated toast-master announced: My Lord, Your Excellency, Ladies and Gentlemen, dinner is served! Yes, this year again, we were honoured by the presence of a noble Lord, as on so many former occasions, when sometimes no fewer than four have attended. His presence was all the more appreciated, as they are getting scarce, so many going back to "old pastures".

The orchestra played a lively tune whilst the company filed into the lovely ballroom to take their places at their respective tables which were adorned with heavy silver candle-sticks, bearing lighted red candles. The principal top table was gaily decorated with red and white flowers, presenting a picture of great splendour.

When everyone had found his or her allotted place, Grace was said, and the company sat down to a sumptuous and excellent dinner consisting of *Le Consommé Mille Fanti*, *Les Paillettes Dorées*, *La Truite de Rivière Amandine*, *Le Faisan de Yorkshire Carême*, *Knöpfli*, *Les*

Petits Pois St. Cloud, *Le Délice des Rois*, *Les Friandises*, *Le Café*. The dinner was prepared under the supervision of the famous head-chef of the Dorchester Hotel, Mr. E. Kaeufeler, who is a member of the City Swiss Club. He attended the dinner with Madame Kaeufeler and, no doubt, received many compliments in person for its excellence. The *Menu* struck a familiar note, in as much as it included "Knöpfli", a favoured dish in our country. When mentioning this to a friend — who did not attend — he asked me, why could not f.i. "Blut- und Leberwurst" be on the *Menu* once, which he said "would fetch a record attendance". Whilst I have nothing against these sausages, I shudder to think what reception they would get in the exalted precincts of the Dorchester Hotel. Just fancy some of the smart ladies struggling to squeeze out a "Blutwurst"!!! Whilst *café* was being served the Toasts to H.M. the Queen and "La Suisse" were given by the President, Mr. M. A. Keller, the company being upstanding whilst the respective National Anthems were rendered by the orchestra. As to the Swiss National Anthem, which is "on trial", I am sorry to say, there was hardly a sound coming from the lips of my compatriots, most of them hardly knowing the words, leave alone the not easy tune. The sooner we get back to the old familiar "Rufst Du Mein Vaterland" the better.

After the toast-master had announced "My Lord, Your Excellency, Ladies and Gentlemen, you may smoke", everyone sat back relaxed to listen to the speeches, which I am glad to say, were "short and sweet". The first one to "Nos Invités" was given by the President who, during his short term of office has gathered much popularity amongst the members of the Club and especially amongst the ladies, as he is rather, may I say, "attractive".

Mr. Keller said that he considered it a great privilege to welcome, on behalf of the City Swiss Club, and the Swiss Economic Council, a number of guests both British and Swiss, and both equally welcome. "I have", he said, "a sad duty to perform in bidding farewell to H.E. the Swiss Ambassador and Madame Daeniker who after nine years of fruitful activities in Great Britain are leaving us. We especially wish to convey to our Ambassador, heartfelt thanks for his untiring efforts on behalf of our country and the Swiss Colony". He also voiced his appreciation to Madame Daeniker for her many services rendered in the social sphere. "It is now my very great pleasure", he continued, "to present to you, on behalf of the entire Colony, a farewell present as a token of our gratitude. You have chosen a Louis XV writing table, too big to bring along, therefore, as a symbolic gesture, please accept its model as a temporary substitute. With it go our best wishes for the future".

Turning to Lord Mancroft, Mr. Keller expressed his pleasure at welcoming him, and Lady Mancroft. "Your visit is especially welcome as you are, I believe, for the first time amongst us". He said that though new to the

Club, Lord Mancroft was a public figure in this country. Amongst his many activities he was a member of the Bar, at one time a member of the Government, a Director of a big Department Store, Chairman of a Travel Organisation, President of the London Tourist Board. He also welcomed Sir Stanley Rous, President of the F.I.F.A., and Hon. Vice-President and past Secretary of the Football Association, an old friend of the City Swiss Club, he greeted the representatives of the Swiss Churches, the Rev. F. Jacot and Madame Jacot, the Rev. J. Scherer, Mrs. M. Meier, Editor of the "Swiss Observer", Mr. A. Stauffer, Hon. Vice-President and Press Reporter, and Mrs. Stauffer, Mr. G. A. Ronus, Managing Director of the Dorchester Hotel, and Mr. E. Kaeufeler, Head Chef of the Dorchester Hotel, and Mrs. Kaeufeler.

In conclusion the President referred to the Tombola, which he said contained wonderful prizes, thanking all those who had generously contributed to it, mentioning also that a part of the proceeds would go to the Swiss Benevolent Society.

The President in his witty address paid due respect to the Ladies, and when the applause acknowledging his speech subsided, the Swiss Ambassador rose to give the *Réponse*. He was accorded a sincere ovation, and said: *Mr. President, My Lord, Ladies and Gentlemen:*

I should like to express the heartfelt thanks of my wife and myself for having been invited to this magnificent banquet. I am afraid it is the last time we shall attend one of these delightful Swiss parties at the Dorchester Hotel, to which we have become so accustomed since the days when we had our first residence here. How many times we have enjoyed the Dorchester's perfect hospitality! Having put on quite a few pounds since I arrived in England, I find that one certainly needs a powerful physique to be a head of mission in this country.

I should also like to thank you for your warm welcome and for the very kind things you have said. We are both overwhelmed by the splendid presentation made to us by the Swiss Societies, and I can hardly find words to express our appreciation and gratitude. How thoughtful to give us a writing desk so that we shall always remember the generous donors; whether either of us will ever write his or her memoirs at it remains to be seen. As tonight's party was arranged jointly by the City Swiss Club and the Swiss Economic Council, we extend to all their members hearty thanks, as well as to members of the London Group of the Nouvelle Société Helvétique, many of whom are present, and of all other Societies which contributed so generously to this magnificent gift.

I am only the seventh head of the Swiss diplomatic mission in this country since a Legation was first created here over seventy years ago. This high average of more than ten years each proves that we were all well treated and gave no cause for — or had no reason to request — an early transfer. My term of office has certainly been a particularly happy one, and you will understand, therefore, that we regard our departure at the beginning of next month with great sadness.

When, on a cold night in January 1955, I approached the coasts of these islands, I looked forward with considerable awe and almost diffidence to the new mission which the Federal Council had entrusted to me. Thinking of the very distinguished diplomats who had previously occupied this post, I experienced somewhat similar emotions to those of the new Prime Minister of this country when he assumed office. Speaking about this recently, he said that he felt at the same time humble, elated

and stimulated. Well, I took up my post with these feelings, too: humble before my immense tasks and responsibilities, but soon elated to find — in the words of Sir Alec — that trust and loyalty are the finest rewards in life. I mean trust in, and loyalty from, those on whose support I have been able to count in the fulfilment of this mission.

I feel it is only just to mention in the first instance the support which I have had from my wife, she being an excellent hostess and a capable adviser, who very soon extended her activities far beyond the residence to various kinds of work in the Colony and in British circles.

I am also greatly indebted to the people with whom I work at the Embassy. I have always been able to rely on their competence and devotion, and this — may I add — never more than at the present time.

But above all, I have found my contacts with the Colony and its many societies extremely stimulating. It has been immensely satisfying to be at the helm of the Swiss community for nine years, to live with its many problems, and to realize that the spirit of solidarity which has so characterized it during its long history is still alive, and that any good initiative will always meet with a generous response. I am sorry that we are leaving just when its life has received a new impetus, while many of its major problems still remain unsolved. However, having presided on more than one occasion over centenary and other jubilee celebrations, I think it essential for the head of a mission to avoid becoming himself an institution whose longevity has sooner or later to be celebrated. It is just as important that from time to time new blood and new ideas should help to regenerate the life of the Colony.

I cannot think of any mission more rewarding than that of the Swiss Ambassador at the Court of St. James's, and nothing makes his position more enviable than the certainty that he can count on the active support of English friends. Even in purely British circles, he always knows that he will meet with enthusiastic sympathy for his country and people. I am particularly happy that we have with us tonight Lord and Lady Mancroft. Not only are we neighbours, looking into each other's kitchen gardens, but my wife and I also owe them a great deal for their friendship and their help in enlarging our circle of English friends so quickly right from the start of our Mission.

Of my various happy experiences during these nine years, two have been of outstanding importance. On the one hand, there is the new position of the Swiss abroad in relation to their home country; now that the Colonies are represented through elected delegates they will be able to make their voice audible and express their grievances or put forward new initiatives.

*On the other hand, there is the fact that our two countries — this great nation with her world-wide responsibilities and our small democracy — have come gradually closer to each other. For a very long time, that is, during most of the last century, the Federal Council were extremely cautious with regard to their representation in the capital of the British Empire. They were reluctant to change its status, which lagged far behind those in other countries. Did you know that at the time of Napoleon the Swiss Church in London fulfilled consular functions? After a Consulate-General had been opened in London in 1853, it took the Federal Council forty years to transform it into a diplomatic mission. And even then they placed it under a *chargé d'affaires*, being quite content to know that he ranked last in precedence, even after the representative of the Queen of Hawaii, and was often excluded*

from official occasions. Compared with his successors, this diplomatic agent had a miserable life. His urgent and repeated appeals to the home authorities, reminding them of his existence, were almost ignored. Out of a vastly inadequate salary he at first had to pay his whole staff, the rent and other expenses of office. A message in which he tried to convince the Federal Council that it was absolutely necessary for him to serve champagne at his dinner table was received with scant credulity.

The Swiss press, too, caused him much trouble. The work of our Embassy is now supported and enhanced by the excellent activities of many London correspondents of Swiss newspapers. But around the turn of the century our press, entrenched as it was in the ivory tower of the Swiss policy of permanent neutrality, was often wont to judge the world situation with the mentality of a school-master, giving good or bad marks to the great powers and telling them what they should or should not do. They were largely served by agencies in continental capitals, and thus their attitude towards Great Britain lacked understanding and was almost defiant.

This state of affairs has now completely changed. In two world wars Britain has shown us all what her responsibilities towards Europe mean to her people. With tremendous sacrifices she has, through her intervention, saved the integrity of the European continent in the centre of which our country is situated. Ever since the end of the second world war Britain and Switzerland have been partners, striving together for the expansion of world trade and its liberation from all possible fetters. We did so within OEEC, uniting our endeavours to bring about the creation of a European Free Trade Area, and are now partners in EFTA. This gives our leading statesmen an opportunity to come together regularly for consultations, while the parliamentarians have a new chance to meet in the Council of Europe. Various new links are being steadily forged with a view to increasing the collaboration between our two countries.

I need hardly refer again to the successes of the Swiss Fortnight in 1959 and the British Weeks and the Lord Mayor's visit to Zurich this autumn. Both were manifestations of friendship and mutual appreciation.

It has been my privilege to witness these developments during the past nine years, to give a helping hand where required, and to co-ordinate initiatives aimed at new objectives. At the same time I have been much encouraged by the good will and support manifested on so many occasions by the Swiss community, and in particular by the City Swiss Club and the Swiss Economic Council. All this has been a tremendous experience. And now that we have to leave, my wife and I are extremely gratified to know that our efforts have been appreciated, and we thank you again for your great loyalty and for the trust which you have placed in us both.

The Ambassador's excellent address was loudly cheered.

It is the custom in polite Society to say Thank You, when you receive an invitation. This task to convey the thanks of the guests, was entrusted to Lord Mancroft, and no better man, I am sure, could have been chosen as he is an acknowledged after dinner speaker much sought after. In his witty and very humorous address, which was interspersed with many anecdotes, he referred to the happy and intimate relations which existed between his family and the departing Ambassador and Madame Daeniker and some of their predecessors. He also mentioned and emphasised the close and friendly relations

which exist between his and our country, expressing the hope that these will become ever closer to the benefit of the two nations. Lord Mancroft's fine address was loudly cheered.

Thus the official part of the evening came to its end, and dancing started after a short interval to Arthur Salisbury's dance orchestra.

If the first part of the evening was a success, the second one was no less so. The dance floor soon became crowded with young and not so old couples. Old time dances were played by the orchestra, and, of course, the famous twist. Watching it, I must say I found these dancers jolly good Twisters. Needless to say the floor became deserted by the "Old ones" during this exhibition of body contortions. Encouraged by my charming table neighbour, I had a try, but it was no good, whilst I could go "down", I could not get "up". To give the dancers and the band a rest, the Tombola tickets were then drawn; amongst the many prizes were two free tickets for a Swissair European Inaugural Flight during 1964, a £20 Savings Account Book, £20 Premium Bonds, Watches, Handbags, Perfumes, Wines, Spirits, to mention only a few. I am delighted to say that the financial result of this Tombola was substantial, a part of it going to the Swiss Benevolent Society.

Then on went the dancing, only to be interrupted by a very clever performance of the well-known radio and television ventriloquist Dennis Spicer.

Midnight was approaching, but still the couples kept on dancing and twisting, in fact they did not stop until 2 a.m. when Auld Lang Syne was played. One sure proof, that the evening was an enjoyable one was that almost everybody stayed right to the end.

To sum up, one can safely say that the 98th Banquet and Ball was a success in every way and can well compete with former festivals. Once more the members have given proof that they are loyal to the Club and are determined to uphold the age long traditions of the City Swiss Club and to carry on in a spirit of patriotism and friendship.

In conclusion, I would like to congratulate the committee on the arrangements made, and especially the Hon. Secretary, Mr. H. Jauslin, who by his hard work has contributed largely to the success of the evening.

ST.,

Press Reporter, C.S.C.

THE "SWISS OBSERVER" THIRTY YEARS AGO

In the five issues of December 1933 there were two reports of the death of prominent Swiss whom many of us remember. One was Mr. Henri Jenne, Assistant Manager of the Swiss Bank Corporation; the other Mr. Alexandre Schupbach, late Manager of the London Office of the Crédit Lyonnais, twice President of the City Swiss Club and Honorary Member, also of the Swiss Mercantile Society of which he had been a Trustee.

Many were the social functions reported thirty years ago, among them the Banquet and Ball of the City Swiss Club, a Display by the London Swiss Gymnastic Society and the Annual Dinner and Dance of the S.M.S. College.

The articles ranged from a "Survey of Glaciers" to "Ballet in Switzerland". News items included the election by the Federal Assembly of Monsieur Pilet-Golaz as President of the Swiss Confederation for the new year, and of Mr. Rudolf Minger as Vice-President, the first Farmer on the Federal Council.



HOSPITALITY

Occasionally we are asked, mainly by young people, why the Swiss Embassy is not open to all on the Swiss National Day and on other similar occasions. The answer is simple — the Embassy would be far too small to hold the many thousands of Swiss in and near London. And who would be the first to go? — mainly the young people who otherwise don't support the Colony's activities or only in as much as it profits them.

The Swiss Ambassadors (Ministers) and their wives have extended hospitality above all to those fellow countrymen who have worked in the interest of the Colony and the homeland. None have tried harder than Monsieur and Madame Daeniker to show their appreciation of what is being done in the Colony. It is, of course, not possible to reach everybody, but by and large Monsieur and Madame Daeniker have succeeded in welcoming at the Embassy as many compatriots as possible from amongst those who in one way or another serve the Colony and the country. Office holders of the various Swiss societies and institutions, the Clergy, the women who knit and sew for the Swiss Benevolent Society, journalists, welfare and community workers — they all had their turn sooner or later, and were able to enjoy some Embassy hospitality. Whenever a Swiss artist, politician, writer or anybody of consequence came on a visit to London the Daenikers (as they are affectionately known in the Colony) gave a reception for them, even to such large groups as the "Männerchor Zürich". And this all in addition to entertaining vast numbers of English friends and other nationals.

And now Monsieur and Madame Daeniker have gone, and we hope they are enjoying the rest they so well deserve. The last few weeks prior to their departure were an ordeal and real endurance test. In spite of a multitude of official and private engagements, the Daenikers gave three farewell receptions for English friends, and on 2nd and 16th November they welcomed a large number of members of the Swiss Colony for the last time. It was typical of their conception of hospitality to do this — the first time it has ever been done on such a large scale on the departure of the head of a Swiss Diplomatic Mission.

The definition of hospitality is "friendly and liberal reception of guests or strangers". Monsieur and Madame Armin and Martha Daeniker have lived up to the meaning of the word splendidly, and we say a very warm thank you.

Mariann.

DINNER OF THE SWISS ECONOMIC COUNCIL AT THE DORCHESTER HOTEL

Nearly fifty members and guests attended a dinner of the Swiss Economic Council on Wednesday, 27th November.

After the usual Toasts were proposed by the Chairman, Mr. J. P. Christen, he extended a hearty welcome to the guests and members present. He asked for the indulgence of the former, to talk "shop" for a few minutes as he wished to make a short statement dealing with the affairs of the Council. He said, that at the last Council Meeting he was able to inform the members of the signing of the contract for the "Swiss Centre", when it was decided — as there seemed to be a need for a Swiss Information Centre, coupled with an Employment Agency — that this unique opportunity to have both formed and housed at the new "Swiss Centre", should not be missed, and that the Council should approach the Swiss Government for financial support.

Although immediately the resolution was adopted, a report was submitted to the Swiss Government, followed by a personal visit to Berne by the Chairman of the Swiss Economic Council, it was only quite recently — after exactly six months(!) that a reply came to hand suggesting that the proposed scheme should be supported and financed by the private industry rather than by the Government.

Mr. Christen said that as a specific request was made at the time to abstain from approaching the various trade associations in Switzerland, until a decision was taken by the Government, it was only now possible to approach the various organisations at home.

He continued by saying "Your committee has, therefore, decided to ask the Swiss Bank Corporation, the landlord of the 'Swiss Centre', to give us until 31st March 1964, to find out if there is the demand and need for such an Information Centre, and what is even more important, to find the necessary financial support for it". The Chairman mentioned that as soon as further news was received he would call a meeting to be held.

Mr. Christen then introduced the principal guest and speaker of the evening, Mr. Shirley, who is a member of the British Railways Board, lent to the Board by the Unilever Organisation. He is functionally responsible for Finance, Supplies and the Hotels. At the last Business Efficiency Exhibition, Mr. Shirley gave the main lecture on "Efficiency in Planning" at the Symposium held by the Automatic Data Processing Section. The Chairman of the Swiss Economic Council had been so impressed by this lecture which he had attended that he had not been able to resist asking Mr. Shirley to give a similar talk to the members. The theme of the lecture was "The British Railways". As the speaker was principally addressing business people he was listened to with keen interest. He was loudly cheered on resuming his seat after having delivered one of the finest addresses given to the Swiss Economic Council. An animated discussion then took place in which several members participated.

The Chairman, Mr. J. P. Christen, thanked the speaker very warmly for his excellent address. He also thanked Mr. G. A. Ronus for the fine dinner and the generous hospitality always extended to the Swiss Economic Council by the Dorchester Hotel.

ST.