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## THE SWISS COLONY'S FAREWELL TO MR. BORSINGER.

A very jolly and hearty send off was given Mr. F. J. Borsinger who, as "Counsellor of Legation," will shortly be transferred to Brussels, by our Colony at a Farewell Dinner at Pagani's on Friday, May 3rd. How deeply the impending loss of Mr. Borsinger is felt in the whole Colony was proved by the large attendance at this spontaneously-arranged dinner party. It was organised by a small committee, consisting of Messrs. P. F. Boehringer, W. Notari and J. Zimmermann, on behalf of all Swiss societies and clubs in London, who all contributed equally towards the costs of the entertainment and the charming souvenir presented to Mr. Borsinger, in the form of a pair of double candlesticks made of silver in a very pretty though simple shape.

For some reason or other—was it jealousy of Mr. Borsinger's popularity?—the farewell party was meant to be for gentlemen only, but by a charming ruse a number of ladies engaged at the Legation managed to get in as well, determined to take part in the demonstration of sympathy for their departing chief. One male member of the Legation had reserved a few tickets without giving the name of the purchasers. As everybody was seated a number of exceedingly youthful looking gentlemen arrived, who only on second scrutiny were recognised as the ladies from the Legation, dressed up in male garb. Most other members of the Legation were also present, as well as the presidents of the various Swiss societies and clubs, and many other members of the Colony, mostly City men. In all the participants numbered about 100.

Towards the end of the excellent meal the president of the City Swiss Club, Mr. E. Werner, who presided at the dinner, proposed the loyal toast to the President and the other members of the Federal Council, and thereafter addressed himself to the guest of honour and the company present in the following words:

Gentlemen,

The occasion of our meeting here to-night is both a sad and a happy one—sad because we have met to say farewell to an old friend, Mr. Borsinger, Chargé d'Affaires de Suisse en Grande Bretagne; happy because we have been given this opportunity—I am not going to say the last opportunity—of spending in his company an informal and, I trust, very enjoyable evening.

It is therefore with very mixed feelings that I give you the toast of "Our Guest," wishing Mr. Borsinger, in the name of the Swiss Colony, on whose behalf this gathering has been arranged, every success in his new sphere of activity; we trust that the position to which he has been appointed by the Federal Council will give his energy and abilities even fuller scope than the one which he is about to vacate.

Most of us have known Mr. Borsinger at the Swiss Legation for the last ten years, but a good many are probably not aware of the fact that he came to this country before he entered the Diplomatic Service, putting the finishing touches to his studies as a member of the Inner Temple, having even had a taste, and I sincerely hope a sweet taste, of everyday business life of the Metropolis. He started his Diplomatic career in 1915, came to London in 1919 as Third Secretary, was promoted to First Secretary in 1921, and has been Chargé d'Affaires at different times, altogether for over two years.

I am not giving any secrets away when I say that a Diplomat's life is not exactly a bed of roses. From men who, like most of us, pursue their peaceful way aloof from the storm and turmoil of international strife and complications, a deep debt is due to those who, like Mr. Borsinger, cast their lot on such troubled waters, who forsake quiet and often lucrative appointments in order to serve the interests of their country, incidentally getting more than their fair share of the kicks and precious few of the plums.

We all know that promotion in the Diplomatic Service is very slow, and Mr. Borsinger is to be congratulated on having reached the position of second in command of an important diplomatic post such as London within a comparatively short space of time, and it is very gratifying to know that his splendid work in the interest of our country has been recognised by the Federal Council, who have recently appointed him Counsellor or Legation, subsequently to his having acted in that capacity for about eight years.

Gentlemen, it would therefore not only be presumptuous on my part, but unnecessary, to sing his praises. I shall only say that during his stay in London Mr. Borsinger has endeared himself to us all by his never-failing kindness and consideration, as well as by his constant cheerfulness and goodfellowship, qualities which will make him friends wherever he goes.

He will take with him our best wishes and when he returns we shall be ready to welcome him.

Gentlemen, raise your glasses and drink the best of luck, good health and prosperity to Mr. Borsinger.

Mr. Werner finished by reading out two telegrams from absent friends. One, from Monsieur and Madame Paravicini, read as follows:

"Kindly express to departing colleague and assembled compatriots Madame Paravicini's and my most cordial thoughts.—Paravicini."

The other telegram was sent by M. Golay, of the Swiss Bank Corporation.

Mr. Borsinger, true to his quietly humorous and somewhat sarcastic disposition, replied in the following words, which frequently produced roars of laughter:

I hardly know how to express to you my feelings as regards the farewell which you are giving me.

When I first heard of your intention, to give me a dinner before my departure from England, I was genuinely surprised and asked those, who meant so well, not to realise their plan as, after all, one does not give a farewell party to every Swiss leaving the British capital. I did, therefore, hardly think that an exception should be made in my case as, after all is said and done, I am merely the servant of our Government, the Swiss Government, which, according to our constitution, is elected to manage the affairs of the Sovereign, that is, the people to which we all belong. I therefore am your servant as well, paid out of your pockets, and no special representative of Switzerland at all, that qualification applying rather to those who, through independent toil and individual uprightness, make the reputation of our countrymen at home and abroad.

But when you insisted to see me once more amongst you, I again was surprised and somewhat bewildered because, being a part of the Government machine, I have almost lost the belief in individual friendliness the moment I am appearing anywhere in my official capacity. If one leads a private life things are different, as one has certain office hours during which one is in the City, or wherever it may be, and hours of leisure when one tries to put aside everything connected with one's work. In my and my colleagues' case one is always functioning in one manner or another, whether one works at the Legation, lunches at some acquaintances' house, walks up Bond Street or down Piccadilly, dines at the Club, sleeps anywhere. One develops that mentality all the more as, being a State employee, one exists, is promoted or transferred, quite independently from one's individuality or capacity. Whether one is full of enterprise or sleepy, silly and rich or clever and poor, one is treated in the same manner, a state of things which bowls one over if one has no conscience to remind one of what I said above, that one is a servant of one's fellow-citizens.

You may, therefore, well imagine that I had to rub my eyes when I was told that this farewell gathering was organised out of sheer friendliness, and you will perhaps understand how much I am touched by your kindness and sympathy. I do not mean to say that I have not always been, still am and always shall be aware of some individual acts of quite exceptional friendship from some of you who are present to-night and from others who are prevented from being here, but from those with whom I have not entered into intimate personal contact, I hardly could expect such a manifestation, and I can even now explain it with the fact only that some subconscious waves of sympathy must have communicated themselves to my countrymen in London. That sympathy is based on experience gained in life, because the more one sees of the world the more one comes to the conclusion that the only thing that really matters is love of one's soil, out of which we have all grown like plants.

The Romans used to say: *Ubi bene ibi patria*. It may seem presumptuous of me to contradict this saying, but I most emphatically do so. I am thinking in this connection of some of my Russian friends whose parents have been killed, whose property has been confiscated, whose sisters have been outraged, who have been betrayed by their best friends and who still think that there is only one place in the world, Russia. Things are not quite so bad in Switzerland but, allowances made for an older civilisation and a different development, they are often pretty bad and they manifest themselves in all sorts of ways. Nevertheless, there is only one country in the world whether we are happy there or unhappy, and whether we are more comfortable there or abroad. It is all the more sacred because it is misunderstood by almost everybody who has not grown on her soil, there being such great differences of race and character and landscape that an outsider has to be content with calling it a "beautiful playground"; but we know better. We know better like a certain boy I have come across who, like all boys—and grown-ups for that—was worried about the presumed smallness of

our country in spite of all that had been told about our glorious past, the beauty of our land, the achievements of our fellow citizens. Being keen on geography and mathematics, he began to make deep calculations and came to me one day spreading out his large handkerchief. "You see," he said, "this is France"; then he crumpled it up into a small heap and continued, "now this is Switzerland; the surface is the same, whether spread over plains or deep valleys and high mountains." A subsequent verification of his calculations proved them to be well near right.

I now say farewell to you, hoping that some day I shall come across all of you again. I am so fortunate as to have a house not far from the centre of Switzerland, and if ever any of you cross on your wanderings from the Seetal into the Reusstal over the Lindenberg, where the frontiers of Aargovie and Lucerne meet, I shall only be too happy to shake your hand and give you a schnapps and look down with you into the valley where our Confederation was born.

The moving and candid speech was greeted with prolonged applause.

Then a long series of speeches was delivered by the representatives of the various societies and clubs and by one diplomatic colleague of Mr. Borsinger. The salient points of these speeches, all of which expressed the friendliest feelings towards the guest of honour, may be summarised as follows:

M. Campart, speaking on behalf of the *Swiss Benevolent Society*, said:

Puisque le grand honneur est accordé en premier lieu au représentant de la plus vieille Société Suisse de Londres, la Société de Secours Mutuels, qui compte 226 ans d'existence, de s'adresser à vous, Monsieur le Conseiller, je dois être bref, car il y a ici toute une pléiade de mes Collègues qui tiennent à vous remercier pour la Colonie. Cependant permettez-moi de vous adresser les remerciements très personnels de la Société de Secours Mutuels. Comme je viens de le dire, cette Société a une longue histoire. Non seulement vous connaissez son histoire, mais vous y avez participé. Permettez-moi de citer quelques faits connus de beaucoup. En 1749 le Roi George II a donné un drapeau aux Suisses de Londres pour avoir en 1746 ou peu après levé un contingent de 500 hommes pour aider à Sa Majesté à combattre l'insurrection de Bonnie Charles of Scotland. Ce drapeau fut exhibé chaque année à la S. de S.M. Lors du 6ème centenaire de la Confédération, en 1891, à Richmond, le drapeau fut tant admiré qu'il revint en lambeaux. Il fut gardé pendant quelques années à l'Eglise Suisse, et alors la Légation s'est chargée d'en prendre la garde. Ce drapeau est préservé sous verre à la Légation et c'est à ce titre que je me permets, au nom de la S. de S.M. de vous remercier, Monsieur le Conseiller, d'avoir participé à la garde de ce drapeau.

Encore un fois merci et recevez de la S. de S.M. tous ses meilleurs vœux pour votre avenir.

Mr. Pache, on behalf of the *Schweizerbund*, said:

A man has generally during his life many surprises, and one of mine was when I heard that our friend Mr. Borsinger was leaving the Legation, and I think all Swiss were surprised too when they heard this. Nevertheless, M. Borsinger will depart from the Swiss Colony with our best wishes, and on behalf of the *Schweizerbund* I thank him for all his favours to us. Those who know him always appreciated him to his full value. We will wish him the best of health and the best for his future career.

Mr. Indermaur, on behalf of the *Union Helvétique*, said:

Au nom de l'Union Helvétique je tiens à remercier vivement M. Borsinger pour les grands services qu'il a rendus pendant dix ans surtout pendant ces dernières années. C'est grâce au grand travail de M. Borsinger que la Légation est arrivée à faire un échange avec l'Angleterre pour le personnel d'hôtel. Aussitôt qu'on s'adressait à M. Borsinger, il prenait la chose en mains, tout par hasard il rencontrait le Ministre du travail et l'affaire était réglée.

Quand des Sociétés suisses ont donné une fête à l'Union Helvétique, M. Borsinger a souvent remplacé M. Paravicini et le seul reproche que

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nous ayons à lui faire c'est que, le banquet fini, débarrassait les tables, la danse commençait et toutes les dames demandaient après M. Borsinger qui, alors était déjà à mi-chemin entre Londres et Brighton!

Je tiens encore une fois à remercier M. Borsinger pour les grands services qu'il nous a rendus, j'espère qu'il sera bientôt de nouveau parmi nous et que son remplaçant fera autant pour nous que M. Borsinger.

M. Micheli, on behalf of his colleagues at the *Legation*, said:

Je crains que la modestie bien connue de Borsinger n'ait beaucoup souffert et ne souffre encore beaucoup. Lorsqu'on est au Service public on est souvent exposé aux critiques—aux éloges aussi, oh, pas souvent, une fois tous les 20 ou 30 ans! Il faut en prendre son parti. Mais je ne crois pas que Borsinger aura ce soir l'impression que les Républiques sont ingrates. Je ne veux pas vous entretenir des nombreuses qualités de Borsinger au point de vue professionnel, diplomatique, administratif, etc. Ce n'est pas à moi à lui décerner un brevet que vous lui avez du reste depuis longtemps délivré.

M. Micheli raconte quelques anecdotes et incidents de la vie de Borsinger qui prouvent à quel point il a à cœur les intérêts des moins fortunés de l'existence. Il relève ses qualités de compréhension, de bonne humeur et la façon sympathique et réconfortante dont il accueille les nombreuses personnes qui journellement sollicitent d'une manière ou autre l'appui et les conseils de la Légation—le petit employé en quête d'une place, l'institutrice en difficultés avec ses patrons, l'étudiant préparant une thèse, la veuve et l'orphelin. Il mentionne l'hospitalité que les Suisses ont toujours trouvée à Brighton chez M. et Mme Borsinger, et, en terminant, exprime les profonds regrets de tous ses collègues, collaborateurs et collaboratrices à la Légation de voir partir M. et Mme Borsinger, ainsi que les vœux les plus chaleureux pour leur avenir.

M. Paschoud, on behalf of the *Swiss Mercantile Society*, said:

After all the speeches I have heard, I am at a loss what to say. I shall only say how much we thank M. Borsinger for all he has done for the Swiss Mercantile Society. On the numerous occasions we required his services (for permits and other matters) we always found him most helpful. I have myself come for help many times and have always found it. We greatly regret that M. Borsinger is leaving London: he will carry with him our best wishes, and our kind remembrances; we hope to see him with us again soon.

M. Block, on behalf of the *Gymnastic Society*, said in Swiss German how greatly his Society had always appreciated M. Borsinger's ever-present sympathy for their efforts, and how much they regretted his departure.

Mr. Suter, on behalf of the *Nouvelle Société Helvétique*, said:

Nobody has said anything about the ladies! Nobody has mentioned the fact that they left aside their daintiness to show their devotion to M. Borsinger! Would we be prepared to do the same?

M. Borsinger was always ready to help and assist everybody. His great kindness will always be appreciated wherever he goes.

Mr. Schmid, on behalf of the *Swiss Rifle Association*, said:

It is certainly a great pleasure to me to say a few words. I can but endorse all that has been said regarding Mr. Borsinger's kindness. We hope he is leaving us only for a short time. I shall say *au revoir*. We thank him cordially for the support given to our Association, and wish him every success and prosperity and good health.

Mr. Dupraz, on behalf of the *Fonds de Secours*, said:

I am happy that so many members came here to-night to wish Mr. Borsinger god-speed in his new career. As President of the Fonds de Secours I wish to thank him most heartily for all he has done for us during the ten years he has been here. We write to him weekly and his answers are always a model of correspondence, in which the signature alone is illegible! Mr. Borsinger has always worked hard, always had a kind word for everybody. All our best wishes for the years to come.

M. Notari, on behalf of the *Unione Ticinese*, said:

Signor Presidente, Sig. Borsinger, Con-federati di tutte le nostre, stirpe e favelle nazionali.

E nella certezza che ho, che sia consono allo spirito che anima questa adunanza, ed ai nostri costumi nazionali, che io ardisco rivolgervi a Voi nella bella lingua di Dante, che è l'idioma del mio bel Ticino.

Come in ogni occasione nella nostra stirpe, le parole sono ispirate dal cuore. E parlo dal cuor mio, non solo come individuo privato, ma sicuro dell'unanime planso della mia Società

Unione Ticinese delle intiera Colonia ticinese in Londra. Nella cerimonia di questa sera vi è per noi Ticinese, un po di mestizia-poiché perdiamo nel festeggiato un amico intimo, e un sincero e generoso simpatizzante.

Ci consola il pensiero che nelle sue nuove sfere di attività vorrà sempre conservarci la sua preziosa deferenza e serbare per noi, in un canticcio del suo cuore, dolce e cortese ricordo, come son certo lo serverà per tutti i ticinesi con cui verrà in contatto nella sua illuminata missione a favore della Patria nostra.

Brindo a lunga e prospera carriera al Sig. Borsinger Viva la Svizzera—Vivano le nostre istituzioni.

To conclude the eulogistic chorus, Mr. Boelinger, in the name of the Colony, presented the souvenir to Mr. Borsinger, with the following words:

There are a few things that may mar the enjoyment and digestion of an otherwise excellent dinner and one of them is the spectre of having to make a speech. One of our learned compatriots has recently informed us that in the course of his medical researches he established the fact, that once upon a time in ancient Rome, when they used to feast the lions with superfluous Christians one of the intended victims prevailed upon the beast, that he would have to make an after-dinner speech, which prospect was sufficient to save his life. I am glad to say that on this occasion I have not been overcome with any such trepidation, for I am performing the delightful though delicate duty of conveying to the guest of the evening a tangible token of the high esteem and sincere affection which he enjoys from each and every one in the Colony.

As no after-dinner speech is complete without the traditional story, I may be permitted to introduce a little anecdote about our distinguished guest. Years ago, when his family lived in the country, his diplomatic duties used to keep him late in town and prevented his returning to the conjugal abode at which we ordinary mortals put in a regular and early appearance to cultivate domestic felicity. However, a small photograph of the pater familias in diplomatic uniform adorned the mantelpiece of his home. We have already been informed of the propensity of young master Borsinger for the science of orography whereby the existing notions about the size of Switzerland may undergo a radical change; he also seems to display a keen interest for the more practical side of life, for when he reached the age when modern boys will become inquisitive about the doings of their parents, he casually asked his mother, pointing to the photograph, "and is this the gentleman who sometimes stays with you over the week-end?" I very much regret that I cannot present you with a full-sized portrait in that stately livery so as to enable Master Borsinger to become thoroughly familiar with the official appearance of his father—and a portrait which I feel sure you, Sir, would contemplate nightly before retiring from your affairs of state in silent and reverent admiration.

The presentation which I am now about to make will, I trust, be acceptable to Monsieur Borsinger. It has been subscribed for in equal parts by the clubs and societies and is meant to convey to you, Sir, in a durable though inadequate manner, our appreciation of the kindheartedness and the rare feeling of fellowship which you have always extended to us. Not all of us have had the privilege to come into personal contact with you, but those who have had that good fortune, amongst whom I include myself, have been overwhelmed by the profundity of your knowledge and singular talent of *savoir faire*, two accomplishments which you have always generously placed at the disposal of your less cultured compatriots. In handing you these candelabra a large part of our heart will go out to you, and may their lights for ever reflect the happiness which is our sincere wish and may they also in moments of gloominess transport you, like Aladdin's lamp, back to us for solace and inspiration.

Mr. Borsinger, who was visibly moved by the numerous expressions of appreciation and sympathy, replied to each of the speakers in the same humorous strain.

Miss Vuffray, of the Legation, added a few words of regret at Mr. Borsinger's departure, skilfully rebutting some teasing remarks about her and her companions' disguise. Mr. Werner wound up the evening with a final hearty good-bye and *au revoir* to Mr. Borsinger.

During the dinner seven members of the Choral Society—Messrs. Weber, Conrad, Suter, Nachbaur, Gerber, Bonner and Titzmann—delighted the company with three well-rendered songs. Further much-appreciated entertainments were given by three professional artists, chosen with a discerning eye by the organising committee, to whom special thanks were given for their excellent arrangements for the evening. After fully five hours the company and, we hope, their chief guest, parted in the best of spirits.

## TWO NOTABLE SWISS MEMORIALS

Sculpture, during the last hundred years, has been at a low ebb; lower, even, perhaps, than architecture, and with less excuse.

It is true that the architect has for his inspiration the function of his building. His programme to that extent is drawn up; he has a starting point. But in many respects the programme is a hindrance, for there are few architects of standing who could not design finer elevations were all practical restrictions to be removed. So true is this that we even find the case of men who can design really well only in those cases where requirements are sacrificed or over-ridden. The resulting work is not fine in the highest sense; but scenically it may be successful. Plastically, sculpturally, it may be interesting, and so it should be where abstract ideas can govern and composition is untrammelled.

In a sense, the sculptor has the same initial advantage as the few architects who find occasion to work under these unusual conditions. True, he is limited like the architect, by materials and cost. But his monument has no practical requirements of service to perform. The sculptor is expressing a thought, or an ideal, or is working along representational lines; but, in any case, his whole energy can be concentrated on the conception and its expression; there is only one issue involved, and that is concerned with conveying the message of his inspiration through the medium of form.

The memorial to the Reformation movement at Geneva is a work embodying sculpture and architecture on a scale seldom realised in a monument which cannot be in any sense classified, like the Lincoln memorial in Washington, or the Victor Emmanuel monument in Rome, as an actual building. One could scarcely fail to be moved by the dignified simplicity of the conception of a great wall edged with water, against which are aligned static figures, bound by panels of lettering and small bas-reliefs into a continuous motif. In truth, this Geneva monument is one of the finest of modern memorials, conceived with grandeur and simplicity, executed with gravity and restraint, but imbued at the same time with an atmosphere of spiritual fervour.

It is a monument to the leaders of the Reformation movement, and to the movement itself, the force of which is an important factor in the history of Switzerland, and more particularly Geneva.

The Reformation gripped Geneva at a time when political discord ruled, and when Jean Calvin as a refugee from Paris sought shelter there. In company with Farel, the chief protagonist of the new movement in Geneva, he rapidly attained great influence. In 1538 he was banished, but returned three years later to inaugurate an almost sovereign rule of ecclesiastical power, not unaccompanied by tyrannical severity towards his opponents.

Calvin died in 1564, but his doctrines remain firmly rooted in Geneva, and the Reformation monument was inaugurated in 1909, a period of exactly 400 years after his birth, the cost, amounting to £30,000, being met by international subscription.

The site is a public garden of the town, with a broad terrace facing the memorial which acts as a boundary wall to one side of the garden, the long line of warm stone being enhanced by a continuous background of trees. At either end are inscriptions in English recording the ratification of the edict of Reformation on May 21, 1536, and the repulse of the Duke of Savoy in 1602, by which latter feat of arms the political and religious independence of Geneva was assured.

In the centre is a magnificent group of four figures of Calvin, Farel, Beze and Knox, treated with a spiritual sense of dignity that recalls the mediaeval sculpture of Chartres. Against the background is the simple inscription in large letters, "Post Tenebras Lux." The other figures of the memorial represent Frédéric Guillaume, Guillaume le Taciturne, Coligny, Roger Williams, Cromwell and Boesky, and are all finely characterised. The smaller relief panels represent historical incidents, and though in these series of sculpture there are three different scales of figure work, there is very little sense of incongruity, so strongly does the central group of four figures dominate the lesser motifs.

The architectural treatment is faultless, and bears the stamp of modern simplicity. It is the work of two Swiss architects, La Verrière and Talliens, while the sculpture is due to two Frenchmen, Henri Bouchard and P. Landowski. The collaboration of these four designers has produced a work which any country would be proud to claim, and it is a pity that the Reformation monument has achieved such small publicity, for its beauty is an inspiration.

Of quite another order, but of fine quality, is the comparatively unknown monument to the Swiss soldiers who died during the war period, erected in the Swiss Jura mountains at Les Rangiers, on the road between Basle and Geneva.