

E. Neuschwander

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E. NEUSCHWANDER.

Twice, within the last six months two prominent members of the Swiss Colony, have celebrated their 85th birthday.

Our most sincere congratulations are due today, to M. E. Neuschwander, who attained his four score and five years a few weeks ago, and his numerous friends both in his profession and in all walks of life in this great city of London will gladly unite themselves with us in wishing him many happy and sunny days to come; may the eventide of a successful life be blessed with good health and may he, surrounded by his devoted family and life-long friends, remain with us for many more years.

M. E. Neuschwander was born at Ouchy in the year 1846, and like his parents, he chose the Hotel profession for his career. After an apprenticeship, and subsequent employment in various hotels in Switzerland, the young and ambitious man decided to say valet to the country of his birth, in order to see the world and seek further experience. It was a momentous decision for a man who deeply loved his native country, as travelling in those far away days was a far bigger undertaking than it is now. There were no "Golden Arrow Expresses" and no "Trains de Luxe," but to young Neuschwander discomfort or fatigue meant nothing, before him lay God's wide world open, golden opportunities waited to be gathered, and that he did not let them pass by will be proved by this short resumé.

His journey took him to the sunny south and at the French Riviera he started his career abroad. Those were happy years for our friend he was fortunate in finding amongst his employers men of intellect and human understanding, and although he had to work hard, these years left happy memories behind. At that time the family of a Cabinet Minister of Her Majesty Queen Victoria's Government were spending their vacation at the hotel of M. Neuschwander's parents in Switzerland, and he was induced by correspondence which took place, to change his abode and come to Albion's shores in their service.

Was it the change of environment, the difference between the happy always smiling southerner and the grave and conventional Englishmen of Victorian days which created in the young man a longing for his country, with its silvery mountains, its lakes and its hamlets? He did not feel happy in private service, there was not enough scope for a man full of enterprise, so the day came, when the box was packed and the wanderer returned to the home of his fathers. But not for long, the "Wanderlust" was awakened, the fire of seeing foreign lands was kindled, and again his way took him to the great Metropolis of a great Empire, but this time to seek a position in a hotel.

It was on May 15th, 1870, that he arrived in London, where, a position at the Charing Cross Hotel was offered to him and which he accepted; hardly could he know then, that this would be his home for the next 52 years. With great zeal and enthusiasm he fulfilled his duty; these were hard days, and but little time for recreation was available, but the award for devotion to work did not fail to appear. In 1885 the Directors of the then South Eastern and Chatham Railway Company appointed him Manager of the Charing Cross Hotel. The reminiscences and experiences during the 37 years of Management (M. Neuschwander retired in 1922) would fill pages of the Swiss Observer, but we can but mention only a few of the most conspicuous events, amongst which is no doubt the marriage to an English lady, who was through many years a never-failing true companion and helpmate to him; she presented him with five children, three daughters and two sons, all of whom are married and happily still alive. In 1920, shortly before his retirement, the loss of his wife cast a cloud over the many years of happy companionship; but the devotion of one of his daughters, with whom he subsequently made his home, lessened the grievous loss sustained.

As will be remembered, in previous days the trains for France departed from Charing Cross Station and the hotel was greatly frequented by the French. On the occasion of the funeral of Napoleon III, which took place at Chislehurst, where the Empress Eugenie had built a Mausoleum, a great array of the French nobility travelled to this country, and were entertained to a dinner at the Charing Cross Hotel. This proved to be one of the finest functions which was held during the long reign of Queen Victoria, not only were all the great noble houses of France represented, but also many illustrious names of the English aristocracy were amongst the participants. The Empress of the French was a regular visitor and amongst other crowned and uncrowned heads who stayed at the hotel were: Alphonse XII. (Father of the present King of Spain), the Comte de Paris, the Prince Imperial (son of Napoleon III), the ill-fated Ferdinand of Austria and his wife (who were murdered at Sarajevo in 1914) and many more. Prominent business men, politicians, princes of industry and finance made it their meeting place, and amongst all of them, dwelled our com-



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patriot. In a quiet and unobstructive way, he accomplished his heavy and not always enviable task, loved and respected by all who came in touch with him; to his subordinates he was at all times a most considerate master. On his retirement, a banquet in his honour was held at Frascati's Restaurant, which was attended by a great number of hotel managers and was a striking proof in what great esteem he was held in his profession. Amongst his many friends was M. Ritz, our famous compatriot of Ritz Hotels fame.

Alas, many of those who have witnessed this splendid and well-merited career have joined the great army beyond, and many a good friend has left on the way to the Elysian fields; and with it that loneliness, which unfortunately is an unavoidable consequence to those who are privileged to attain a great age, has made itself felt, but let us assure our friend that he has still many admirers young and old, and his name is mentioned with affection wherever Swiss meet.

Although a true and faithful son of his country, his position did not allow M. Neuschwander to take a leading part in the affairs of our colony, as mentioned before, time for social recreation was but scarce and for twenty consecutive years, he had to go without a holiday and a further ten years elapsed before a second holiday came his way; but for many years M. Neuschwander was a member of the City Swiss Club and a regular attendant at its functions.

When the Nouvelle Société Helvétique was founded, our friend was one of the first to join, truly a striking attest that during all the years, he has lived far away from his country, he has kept a warm corner for the land of his birth. He was also a member of the "Culinaire" since 1888. During the last few years he has paid frequent visits to Switzerland, and these excursions amongst the beauties of our home land, have engraved in this stout heart an evergreen and everlasting memory, he is a great lover of his country and we, of the younger generation can but take our hats off and try to follow in his footsteps. Almost the last words, with which a most pleasant interview was terminated were: "I am proud to be a Swiss," what a glorious example for all of us, and may we, in return convey the message to him, "that we are proud of him as a Swiss." In terminating this, I am afraid, most inadequate biography, the words of a great writer pass through my mind, with which he closed one of his famous poems, and which I consider so admirably fitted to our friend, they are:

Der ist in tiefster Seele treu,
Wer die Heimat liebt wie Du.

St.

BUCHBESPRECHUNG.

DAS WERK. (Monatliche Zeitschrift für Architektur, freie und angewandte Kunst). Verlag Gebr. Fretz, Zürich.

Heft 11 und 12, 1930.—Diese beiden Hefte sind ausserordentlich empfehlenswert. Aus der neueren Architekturgeschichte erfahren wir viel Wissenswertes, illustriert durch Abbildungen von Schweizerischer Architektur. Auf der einen Seite ein Neuklassizismus, auf der anderen ein Arbeiten mit mittelalterlichen Mitteln. Im Novemberheft finden wir ferner Darstellungen der Ausstellung in Barcelona: die Schweizer Abteilung und den deutschen Pavillon.

Im Dezemberheft haben wir zunächst einen herrlich schön illustrierten Artikel über "Toskanische Gärten" von Walter Mertens. Weiterhin eine Darstellung des Hauses Arnold Ruesch in Zürich. Ferner zwei Artikel über die Sammlung Hoepli und Anmerkungen über Ornamente; der 400. Wiederkehr des Todestages von Nik-

laus Manuels wird gedacht. In diesem Dezemberheft finden wir auch knappe Darstellungen von Wettbewerben. Die Berner Bauchronik beansprucht besonders Interesse. Hoffentlich werden wir noch mehr Abbildungen von dem Neubau der Berner Landesbibliothek zu sehen bekommen. Diejenigen, die im Heft 12 geboten werden erlauben bis jetzt nur das Urteil, dass eine reine Zweckbaute erstellt wird, nicht viel anders aussehend als eine grössere Uhrenfabrik im Jura. Vielleicht das wir durch spätere aufnahmen dennoch erfahren, dass nicht nur einem Zweck sondern auch der Kunst Ausdruck gegeben worden ist. Wir begreifen oft nicht diese eitle Angst und Scheu sich an den Klassizismus anzulehnen. Anlehnen muss man sich doch immer wieder, so auch in der Musik. Noch nie Dagewesenes ist zu oft das Motiv mancher Leute. Der Ersteller öffentlicher Bauten sollte wohl daran denken, dass er der Schönheitsempfindung der heimatlichen Bevölkerung Rechnung zu tragen hat. Wer aber Probleme lösen will nur um der Probleme willen, der soll lieber in der Wüste ausprobieren, aber nicht Stadt- und Landschaftsbild brüskieren. Deswegen sind wir sehr dankbar für die weiter oben erwähnten Bauten, die sich an die Bangeschichte anlehnen, so wie sie geschehen ist im eigenen Kulturkreis. Wir weisen gerne auf diese zwei vornehm ausgestatteten Hefte hin; der Verlag macht sich damit alle Ehre.

PERSONAL.

Madame L. Rosselet-Droux et Mademoiselle Thomas ont été profondément touchées par les marques de sympathie qui leur ont été montrées par toutes les personnes de la Colonie Suisse pour la perte de leur cher défunt et elles adressent leurs plus sincères remerciements.

The numerous friends of Mr. & Mrs. F. Zogg, will be sympathising with them in their bereavement, Mr. Zogg's mother having died at St. Gall at the age of 76.

Mr. Charles Studer, who in other sports has already earned top honours, seems to be equally successful on the golf links. On the 11th of January he won the Senior Bogey Competition, and on the 25th of last month he won a medal in a competition, both at Pollards Hill Golf Club.

MARIAGE.

Le samedi 24 janvier en l'Eglise Notre Dame de France, Leicester Place, a eu lieu le mariage religieux du docteur Eckenstein et de Mademoiselle Jeanne Pierrette Languillaire, fille de Monsieur et Madame Henry Languillaire de Toulon et belle-soeur du Professeur Marcel Ruff de l'Institut français de Londres.

Il n'y a pas eu d'invitations et la bénédiction nuptiale leur a été donnée par le R. P. Gay dans la plus stricte intimité.

Le docteur Eckenstein est bien connu des lecteurs du *Swiss Observer* et nous lui présentons, ainsi qu'à Madame Eckenstein nos plus sincères voeux de bonheur et de prospérité.

ANCIENT ORDER OF FROTH BLOWERS. SWISS VAT.

The Committee of the above Vat have chosen February 11th, 1931, to hold a supper and concert, similar to former occasions, at the Swiss Hotel, 53, Old Compton Street. The usual supper with one froth will be provided and an excellent band of artists have promised their services. The Chair will be taken by Councillor F. W. Edwards, assisted by the officers of the Swiss Vat. Tickets 3/6 each including one froth, can be obtained from any officers and at the Swiss Hotel.