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UNIONE TICINESE.
ANNUAL BANQUET AND BALL.

In spite of the inclement weather then prevailing, over 270 guests, members and friends attended the 57th Annual Banquet and Ball of this Society, held on the 10th inst. at Monico's Restaurant, Piccadilly Circus. In the unavoidable absence of the Swiss Minister, Monsieur C. R. Paravicini, the Chair was taken by Monsieur L. Micheli, First Secretary of Legation, who proposed the traditional toasts; and presented Madame Meschini, wife of our Hon. Vice-President, with a lovely bouquet.

A tremendous welcome greeted Mr. W. Notari when, as President of the Society, he rose to propose "The Unione Ticinese—The Ladies and Guests" and said:

"For a number of years I have been longing for the day when I should be in a position to sit at this table and enjoy to its full extent the pleasures which this night of nights provides for us. Alas the Fates have decreed otherwise, for once again it falls to my lot for the 13th consecutive occasion to be compelled to sit here in agony for a couple of hours waiting for the dreaded moment when at the command of the stentorian voice of the Toast Master, I should have to rise and face this ordeal of proposing the principal toast of the evening.

I am naturally extremely sorry that illness should have prevented the presence of our esteemed Minister Monsieur Paravicini. I fully sympathize with him for up to a late hour I was also listed amongst the doubtful starters for this evening's festival.

However I extend a warm welcome to you Mr. Micheli for stepping into the breach and would ask you to tell the Minister upon his return to headquarters that we Ticinesi admire him for his great personal charm, we admire him for his unflinching consideration to all who in any capacity come in contact with him, but above all we admire him for the unrivalled tact and skill with which he manages our country's affairs in this great Kingdom.

I am equally happy to welcome in our midst a distinguished compatriot in the person of Sig. Clemente Rezzonico 1st Secretary of Legation. We Ticinesi are proud of you, we wish you every luck and pray that the future may have good things in store for you.

I think I will now add a few words for the Ladies; and here I would say, being one of those few—a rare exception nowadays—who has been fortunate enough to escape the rigours of feminine domination...I know you will not expect much of me on this subject.

However, in the presence of these bright eyes, rosy cheeks and warm red lips which focused in my direction at this moment I feel I can do no greater justice to this subject and pay no greater tribute to you Ladies than by saying that you are the most delightful of God's creatures, Heaven's best gift, man's joy and pride in prosperity and man's support and comfort in affliction.

Most of you will remember that in order to give impetus to the G. Dimier Fund from which it is intended, in time, to provide for the establishment of a much needed central home for aged and infirm Swiss Citizens in the U.K., the U.T. undertook to give a donation of £1,000 on condition that within 12 months a similar sum was forthcoming from amongst the remaining Swiss Societies and that a further £1,000 was raised by public subscription amongst the Colony and its friends.

Well Ladies and Gentlemen, these conditions have been more than fulfilled, as you will be glad to hear from the letter I am about to read to you which has been handed to me from the Pres. of the Swiss Benevolent Society.

Mr. W. Notari, President of the Unione Ticinese.

For your guidance I have much pleasure in informing you that the appeal made on your initiative for the Fonds Dimier has brought in:—

From the various societies.....£999 15
to which is to be added a further..... 50
voted by the Société de Secours
Mutuels and payable in 1931/2 and
Promised by the Swiss Mercantile
Society..... 100

So that the total received from the societies will ultimately reach.....£1149 15

The appeal made to private subscribers and Swiss Firms has brought in...£1793 12 4

As you will see the task set by you has been duly carried out and I shall be delighted to receive to-morrow the cheque for £1,000—which you so generously promised.

Looking forward to to-morrow's most enjoyable evening, and with kind regards,

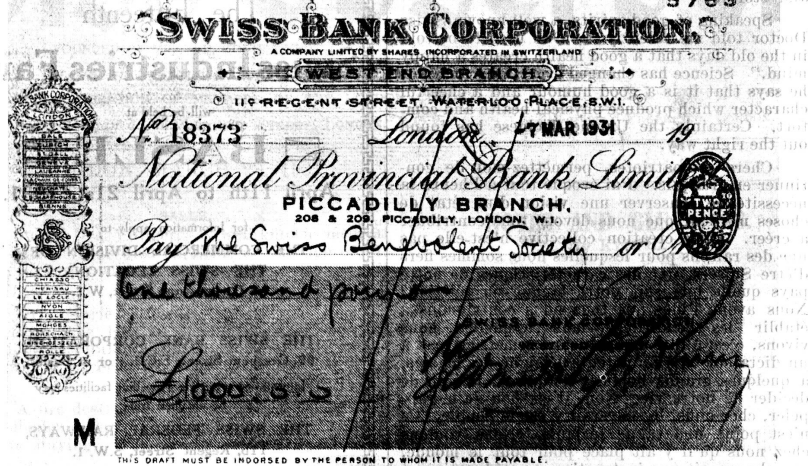
Yours sincerely,

R. Dupraz,

President Swiss Benevolent Society.

Really a prodigious effort in the hard times through which we are all passing.

The conditions which we set down being duly fulfilled it gives me great pleasure herewith to hand over to the President of the Swiss Benevolent Society the Unione Ticinese's cheque for



The above is a reproduction of the cheque of £1,000 which was presented to the FONDS DE SECOURS by the UNIONE TICINESE on the occasion of the Annual Banquet.

£1,000 in discharge of the obligation we then undertook, and in so doing I venture to express the hope that before very long sufficient funds will be made available to bring to fruition a scheme which is so eagerly awaited by us all.

I am now coming back to that part of the Toast which deals with our Guests:

I extend a brotherly welcome to the representatives of all the Swiss Societies represented here to-night, viz:—

Soc. Secours Mutuels, Mr. and Mrs. Campart; Fonds de Secours, Mr. and Mrs. Dupraz; City Swiss Club, Mr. and Mrs. Chapuis; Schweizerbund, Mr. and Mrs. Christen; Union Helvetia, Mr. Finger Sec. and Mr. Gall; Swiss Mercantile, Mr. and Mrs. Stahelin; N. S. H. Mr. and Mrs. Suter; Swiss Choral Soc. Mr. and Mrs. Conrad; Swiss Rifle Assoc., Mr. and Mrs. C. O. Brullhard; Swiss Gym. Soc., Mr. Humbel; Swiss Observer, Mr. and Mrs. Stauffer; and I feel that in spite of the select grudge they may bear me for attempting to bankrupt them all, yet in their own hearts they cannot but admire the boldness of our adventure, dictated not as a result of passion or grandeur, but of deliberation and reason.

It gives me great pleasure of welcoming here to-night Mr. Golay, General Manager of the Swiss Bank Corporation, as well as our old friend Mr. G. Marchand and the many others who have favoured us with their presence.

Whilst 1931 will for ever remain a red letter year in the annals of the Unione Ticinese, yet it is marked with a certain tinge of regret for it registers the retirement from active service of Mr. O. Gambazzi, who for 31 years, has unselfishly served us faithfully and well in the capacity of Secretary of the Society. The Unione Ticinese owes to him a tremendous debt of gratitude and I hope I shall be given the opportunity upon some future occasion to pay tribute to one who has deserved well of us.

In conclusion let me say that the U. T. of 1931 possesses more vigour, more consideration, more influence not only amongst its members but amongst the Swiss Colony as a whole than it has ever done at any previous period of its eventful career. To what do I attribute this:

Mainly to the inspiration of that warm hearted and large minded man to whose personality and energy so much of our success is due, I refer to our Hon. Vice Pres. Mr. A. Meschini. His wholehearted devotion to the welfare of the Society is a great example of what can be done by a soul imbued with patriotic fervour such as that of our Hon. Vice Pres., may we hope that what he has done in the past he will continue to do in the future.

With these few words I will ask you to be upstanding and drink the health of the Unione Ticinese to which I have coupled the toast of the Ladies and Our Guests."

Loud applause greeted the conclusion of our President's speech which he smilingly rose to acknowledge and the familiar tune of He's a jolly good fellow, soon re-echoed in the Hall.

It was Mr. R. Dupraz, President of the Swiss Benevolent Society, who responded to this toast in the following terms:

"There is more joy in giving than receiving" they say, and looking at the joyful expression on your President's face when he handed me his cheque just now I should have been inclined to agree with this maxim were it not for the overwhelming gratitude which I feel for all you members of the Unione Ticinese.

The handing over of your generous contribution closed a year which will always be full of

happy memories for all those connected with the Swiss Benevolent Society. Thanks to your generous initiative our Dimier Fund will be richer by £3950. Up to a year ago we were content to carry on dutifully the trust left us by our regretted late President, knowing that its aim, which as you know is the building of a home for aged Swiss in England, would be realised some day. Since then, thanks to you, this realisation has been brought considerably nearer, so much nearer in fact, that I catch myself sometimes visualising some or other of our pensioners transported from their miserable and sordid surroundings to a beautiful mansion somewhere in the country, and resting on a summers day on the cool shade of an oak tree. What a change. Some of our old people have not seen the country for over 25 years, and we, who realise under what conditions they have to live, can appreciate all the more all that we owe your society for what they have just done, and I wish to thank you once more from the bottom of my heart for this great step forward in a cause which is mutually dear to us.

It is now my privilege to thank you also on behalf of my fellow guests for your hospitality to-night. You know my feelings towards the Ticinese in general and the Unione Ticinese in particular. As I have said on previous occasions you are the Swissesst of the Swiss and your canton is the gem of a country which abounds in beautiful scenery. The sun shines upon you Ticinese more than it does upon any other Swiss. All these favourable circumstances contribute to the making of the perfect Swiss you are.

The ladies have come here to dance so the briefer I am the better they will be pleased and I therefore ask the Ladies and other guests to rise and drink to the prosperity of the generous and live society the Unione Ticinese."

When the hearty applause which greeted Mr. Dupraz's speech had given place to quiet and silence, it was the awaited moment for our Chairman, received with a hearty welcome, to give his address, and Monsieur Micheli said, among other things:

"Signor Presidente, Ladies and Gentlemen, It is a great privilege for me to be in this place to-night, but I regret as deeply as you that it should not be somebody more worthy of this honour, I mean our esteemed Minister, occupying this chair. You will all be sorry to hear that Monsieur Paravicini is detained at home for the last days by a bad cold and temperature. He has entrusted me with a specially cordial message for his friends of the Ticino gathered here to-night.

I wished particularly our Minister had been here to-night to witness the splendid result of the initiative taken by the Unione Ticinese, initiative which has enabled our Colony to bring together nearly £4,000 for the Dimier Fund Asile des Vieillards. I wish he could have shaken hands with you, Signor Notari, on this occasion.

In these days of frost and snowstorms, we have all been looking forward to this evening, knowing that with the friends of the Unione Ticinese, we would find a warm corner and feel really comfortable, inside and outside. And this warmth is not only produced by first class heating and by the excellent drinks put before us! No, the whole Swiss Colony and the Legation know that whenever you look for a cordial and hearty reception, a pleasant milieu, a strong feeling of patriotism and solidarity, and readiness for generous actions, the Unione Ticinese ranks first.

Unione Ticinese, already the name sounds like the first sign of Spring, in these days of ice and storm.

Speaking of good spirits, a well-known Swiss Doctor told me recently: "One used to be told in the old days that a good health creates a happy mind." Science has changed everything and now he says that it is a good humour and a cheerful character which produce physical health and comfort. Certainly the Unione Ticinese has found out the right way.

Chers compatriotes, permettez-moi de continuer en français. J'ai évoqué tout à l'heure la nécessité de conserver une vision d'un état de choses meilleur que nous devons tous contribuer à créer. Cette création collective n'est-elle pas une des raisons pour lesquelles nous sommes fiers d'être Suisses, une des caractéristiques de notre pays quelle que soit notre langue ou religion? Nous avons l'idée que tous nous contribuons à établir les conditions dans lesquelles nous vivons, c'est-à-dire que nous ne remettons pas à un dictateur ou à un potentat éloigné des masses, à quelques grands hommes d'affaires, le soin de décider de notre vie. Non, il est bon de le rappeler, chez nous, le souverain c'est le peuple. Ce n'est point une vague formule. Nous voulons chez nous qu'il y ait place pour tout le monde, que chacun ait une instruction, une éducation et des moyens suffisants pour lui permettre de jouir des œuvres de la Nature et des bienfaits de la civilisation. Nous voulons que chaque maison, si modestes soit-elle, puisse abriter décemment ses habitants. Il est important d'aider aux élites à se créer et se développer, mais nous n'admettons pas, chez nous, que tous les biens et privilèges soient réservés à une seule petite groupe, alors qu'une grande masse vit dans l'ignorance et l'indigence. Ce sont là nos caractéristiques dont nous sommes fiers et qui nous différencient d'autres pays. Apprécions les avantages des grands États, admirons leurs proportions majestueuses, leur force; n'oublions pas ce qui fait notre force, notre idéal.

Signor Presidente,

Mi è gradita questa occasione di dirle la mia convinzione che questo nostro ideale comune, questa fede di solidarietà in nessuna parte è più viva e ardente che nel Cantone Ticino. Bevo alla salute dell'Unione Ticinese, Viva il Ticino, Viva la Svizzera.

As no Banquet of the Unione Ticinese would be complete without at least a few words from our Hon. Vice-President, yielding to insistent calls, Mr. Meschini concluded the formal part of the evening with a brilliant and witty speech which was loudly applauded.

He said that at the next Meeting of the Society he intended to propose that Mr. W. Notari be made President for life. He paid a compliment to Messrs. Monico for the excellent arrangements made and thanked his many friends, who year after year support this annual festival. He also thanked Mr. Notari for the nice things he had said about him and assured him of his continued wholehearted support.

Sweet music during the dinner only completed the warm and friendly atmosphere and our good friend Mr. G. Marchand did not fail to enliven the interest of the fair sex by presenting a ladies gold wristlet watch, which was drawn and won by a charming lady. The ladies really did deserve some special recompense because they were in such a beautiful array and contributed so much to make the evening truly wonderful.

The banquet over, Mancini's Orchestra delighted the dancers with really excellent music and kept them eager to the very last moment, while Murray Ashford's Entertainers provided a fine and splendid diversion for the less athletically minded section of the gathering. The superb singing of our compatriot Miss Eva Cattaneo certainly delighted everyone who heard her.

The Ticinese again very much appreciated the personal presence of Messrs. Monico and the generous way in which they treat the society, as well as the presence of various parties from the provinces, like Torriani's from Margate, Ferrari's from Southsea, Albrecht-Menegelli's from West-cliff, Veglio's from Maidstone, and others whom we hope to see again on future occasions.

O. B.

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3-6 h.—Club missionnaire des enfants, au
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6.30 h.—Act 4/13: "L'influence de Jesus"
M. Marcel Pradervand.

Jeudi 26 Mars, 8h.—Réunion d'adieux des Mis-
sionnaires suisses (Mlle A. Bory, M. A. Jaques)
au Foyer Suisse, Upper Bedford Place, W.C.
MARRIAGES.

Louis Jeanneret, du Locle, du Pont et de la
Chaux du Milieu (Neuchâtel) et Klara Lucilla
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Pour tous renseignements concernant actes pastoraux,
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Sonntag, den 22 März, 1931.

11 Uhr vorm.: Gottesdienst und Sonntag-
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7 Uhr abends: Gottesdienst.

8 Uhr: Chorprobe.

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Sprechstunden: Dienstag 12.1 Uhr in der Kirche.
Mittwoch 5-6 Uhr im "Foyer Suisse."

FORTHCOMING EVENTS.

Saturday, March 21st, at 5 p.m.—Swiss Y.M.C.A.
social entertainment at 15, Upper Bedford
Place, Russell Square, W.C.

Sunday, March 22nd, at 3.45 p.m.—Swiss Gym-
nastic Society, Grand Display at the Union
Helvetia Club, 1, Gerrard Place, W.

Wednesday, March 25th, at 8 p.m.—Chamber
Music Concert given at the Hall of the Art
Worker's Guild at No. 6, Queen Square,
Bloomsbury, W.C., by Arnold Dolmetsch and
his collaborators.

Friday, March 27, at 8-1 a.m.—Union Helvetia
Students supper and dance at the Union
Helvetia Club, 1, Gerrard place, W.1.

Wednesday, April 1st, at 7.30 p.m.—SOCIETE
DE SECOURS MUTUELS: Annual General
Meeting at 74, Charlotte Street, W.1.

Monday, April 13, at 9-2 a.m.—Union Helvetia
Grand Ball to commemorate the acceptance
of affiliated members into the Union Helvetia
Club, 1, Gerrard Place, W.1.

Saturday, May 30th, at 2.30 p.m.—Swiss Sports
at Herne Hill Athletic Grounds.

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