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"SERATA INTIMA."

History has a way of directing her searchlight at unexpected moments on small, peace-loving communities. Recently developments in the international, political sphere have brought the Italian-speaking population of Switzerland into prominence. No attempt will be made here to give rise to another spate of correspondence as lively, and even as interesting, as that which appeared in these columns setting forth pros and cons on the attitude taken up by our Home Government towards the Sanctions, which have been adopted by an overwhelming majority of States members of the League of Nations against a great and friendly, yet alas! Covenant-breaking, neighbour of our Homeland. That attitude will doubtless inspire confidence in all true Swiss. And no small factor of that confidence should be the fact that at this grave juncture our Country can call upon the services of Dr. Giuseppe Motta, who hails from the largest, though not the only, of Switzerland's Italian-speaking regions, for his warm patriotism enhances rather than tempers his zeal for the League, as London Swiss may perhaps recall.

More for his sterling qualities, rather than for his impressively long term of office, is the "doyen" of the Federal Council popular amongst his fellow "ticinesi." If ever a proof of this were needed, one had but to attend the 33rd Annual Concert and Ball of the *Unione Ticinese*, held at the Swiss Club (Schweizerbund), 74, Charlotte Street, W.1, on Thursday evening, 28th November, an informal and most pleasant function.

It used to be said, rather maliciously and way North of the St. Gotthard range, of course, that where "ticinesi" forgathered a riot would in all certainty ensue. A reflection, no doubt, on their fiery temperaments. Yet the saying would not be misleading in the sense that the evening was a riot of merriment.

The first or musical part of the proceedings left the breathless from the start. A short, varied programme had as snappy and as slick an execution as more pretentious performances. From the moment the audience welcomed back, at the piano, Mr. Charles Valchera, who by the way is himself a "ticinese," art, mimicry, burlesque and art again followed on the platform in rapid succession. What mere amateurs we really are at cards was ably demonstrated by Mr. Lionel King; among his daring feats, his faultless prompting of a game of nap whilst standing at a distance from the players evoked especial admiration. Carlos and Mandy in tuneful bother were uproariously funny, crooning withal. Enough words have appeared in these columns in praise of Miss Eva Cattaneo's art, yet with but scant justice being done here. Here is an accomplished artiste, whose contribution alone lifts a musical evening out of the rut of mediocrity. Both the classic aria "Un bel di vedremo" from Puccini's "Madame Butterfly," and the now popular "Ciribiribin" she sang to perfection, with exquisite gusto, and an enraptured audience clapped furiously. The youthful Mr. C. Katz too earned a large measure of applause by the conscientious execution of three pieces on the violin, the first of which was of classic composition.

The Society's President, Mr. Oscar Gambazzi, during a short halt in the programme appealed to the generosity of his "conterranei" on behalf of the "Fonds de Secours," to whose benefit the evening's proceedings will accrue; he did not confine his appeal to money contributions alone, which are needless to say the primary scope of all charitable activities, but also deftly drew his hearers' attention to the need for furniture of the recently purchased Home for Swiss Aged and Poor. He wished — and may his wish come true — that the "ticinesi" would give the lead also in adding to the comforts of the Home which they had assisted in bringing into being.

Next on the platform appeared Mr. G. Berni. His voice seems to have acquired greater range and power. His Neapolitan songs never fail to charm. Excellent burlesque sketches of Messrs. Rob Wilkin and Bert Pully, well sprinkled with rich Cockney humour, fittingly wound up a commendable programme.

Dancing until in the small hours, at the behest of an untiring orchestra, and that atmosphere of genial informality so characteristic of *Unione Ticinese* functions combined to make the evening a pleasantly memorable one.

eujs.

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REMINISCENCES.

"Disastrous consequences of my first ball."
By ST.

Owing to lack of space the conclusion of the article published in the last number will appear next week.

Annual Dinner of the Assc. of British Members of the Swiss Alpine Club.

The Association of British Members of the Swiss Alpine Club held its Annual General Meeting on Wednesday, November 27th, at the Hotel Great Central, which are the Association's headquarters where they have a large Club Room and Library. As this Club Room is always open to members it provides a very useful additional attraction for Swiss Climbers who can find all works of reference which they require without running round to various Travel Agencies, Libraries, etc.

The Chair was taken by the President, Mr. A. N. Andrews, who was re-elected to the Presidency, as were all the other officials of the Club, Sir William Ellis, G.B.E., being also elected a Vice-President.

After the General Meeting a reception was held in the Winter Garden of the Hotel, where the President received the numerous guests who included His Excellency the Swiss Minister, Sir Claud Schuster, G.C.B., C.V.O., Hussein Bey, distinguished Libyan explorer, G. K. Rose, Esq., M.C., J. C. B. Gamlen, Esq., M.C., Solicitor to Oxford University, J. Billeter, Esq., the President of the City Swiss Club, L. A. Godfrey, Esq. — as well as many guests of private members.

Captain Andrews, having recovered from the indisposition which unfortunately kept him from the City Swiss Club Banquet last week was able to take the Chair at the excellent dinner which followed.

Hors d'Oeuvres de Choix
Coupe de Grape Fruit

Consommé à l'ancienne
Crème d'Asperges

Filet de Sole aux Raisins d'Espagne

Bouchée Feuilletée à la Toulouse
Jardinière de Légumes

Sorbet Grand Marnier

Poularde en Casserole aux Bouts du Champêtre
Lard grillé
Salade d'Endives

Poire glaciée Mont Blanc
Friandise

Café

and, as one of the guests remarked at the conclusion of the dinner, he got nearer to Mont Blanc than he had ever been in his life.

As usual, the speeches which followed the banquet were of a high standard of excellence. Mr. W. M. Roberts, O.B.E., an ex-President of the Club, proposed the health of the Swiss Confederation which traditionally immediately follows the toast of The King. He regretted that an apparently misspent youth at school had left him with very indefinite knowledge of Swiss history but fortunately appreciated the fact that his audience were not particularly in a mood for historical lecture and would infinitely prefer warm eulogy of Switzerland, its traditions and its present hospitality, and made reference to the diverting speech which he felt sure would follow from the distinguished representative of Switzerland. His Excellency, Monsieur Paravicini had, as he reminded us, attended many of our banquets, had had to reply every year to the same toast and had never yet repeated himself.

Monsieur Paravicini did not disappoint us, and, if his speech was in a more serious vein than we have been accustomed to, it was because, one felt, that the national and international difficulties confronting all countries at the present time were such, that a person in his responsible position could not fail to be impressed by them. He concluded on a note of optimism, pointing out that as Great Britain had largely recovered from

the depression so there was every indication that Switzerland would do the same.

Next followed Mr. G. C. Bramley, a relatively new member of the Club, who had the always difficult task of singing the praises of the Alpine Club and kindred societies — not difficult because of any failing in these societies themselves, but because the toast is proposed so many times every year by so many different clubs, and that so many members of the one are also members of the others that to find something new is difficult, and he achieved his object with a modesty and competence which must have been as gratifying to him as they were to his audience.

Mr. E. S. Herbert, Hon. Secretary of the Alpine Club, admitted that his task was simplified by the fact that he did not belong to any of the kindred societies, except the A.B.M.S.A.C., which had been his foster parent for the Alpine Club. Mr. Herbert's guileless mien and genial appearance always lend a delightful saunce to the witty remarks which he makes in such easy conversational style, and his reply was warmly applauded.

Then the President, Mr. Andrews, proposed the health of his guests, including particularly the Swiss Minister, Sir Claud Schuster, Clerk to the Lord Chancellor, Dr. Longstaff, representing the Climbers' Club. He drew particular attention to the fact that among the guests to-night who were to speak was G. K. Rose, Esq., one of the magistrates of Lambeth Police Court. We have had, as our guest, he said, the Lord Chief Justice, Judges from the King's Bench and Chancery Courts, but never a London Police Magistrate. He refrained from saying, but doubtless meant, that it was just as well for us all to be acquainted with one before whom any one of us may appear some day or the other, so that he could see for himself that all climbers were not necessarily cat burglars.

Sir Claud Schuster replied for the guests, and immediately informed us that, while remembering the date of the Dinner, he had completely forgotten he had been asked to make a speech and had therefore come without having had time to pursue his collection of epigrams, and that the various speakers who preceded him had snapped up various ideas which had run through his brain during the course of the evening.

Sir Claud's forgetfulness does not appear in any way to have affected his ability to delight his audience, and the impromptu epigrams were probably more refreshing than those which he may have stored in the recesses of his writing desk.

Finally Mr. Rose proposed the health of the Association, which was suitably replied to by the President.

The Company broke up just before 11 o'clock, having, we trust, thoroughly enjoyed the evening, and many hoping to come again next year.

C.T.L.

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Gerne bereit zu unverbindlichem Besuch.

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