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ERMANN0 BERNER,
President, Swiss Club, Manchester.

At the recently held Annual General Meeting of the Swiss Club, Manchester, Mr. Ermanno Berner, was elected President of the Swiss Club, Manchester, in succession to Mr. G. Senn, who had so efficiently and congenially presided over the Centenary Banquet, which took place on Saturday, November 11th, 1950, at the Midland Hotel, Manchester.

It was our good fortune to make the acquaintance of both the new and old Presidents of this Swiss Society, which enjoys the rare distinction of having passed the 100th mile post. These two gentlemen impressed me by their sincere patriotism, and their keen endeavours to promulgate the good name which our homeland enjoys in this country; in these efforts, they have been loyally supported by a Committee which is imbued with, what one may call, a 100 per cent. team spirit.

Our friends in the Midlands are indeed lucky to be able to call upon men, who, at all times, are prepared to put their services and experiences at the disposal of their countrymen.

We extend to the new head of this active and patriotic Society our very best wishes for a successful and fruitful year of office.

Mr. E. Berner was born in 1903 at Cene (Bergamo, Italy), and received his schooling at the "Kantonschule" in Aarau and the "Ecole Supérieure de Commerce" at Neuchâtel. Later on he attended the "Preussische Höhere Fachschule für Textil Industrie" in Krefeld, and subsequently joined the I.G. Farben Industrie, A.G. Leverkusen (Cologne).

In 1925, he joined the Società Italiana Industria Velluti, in Bergamo, a subsidiary of the firm of Johs. Girmes & Co., A.G., Oedt, nr. Krefeld, velvet and plush weavers, dyers and finishers, of which firm he became Managing-Director and a member of the Board until 1936.

Mr. Berner came to this country in 1937 and entered the firm of Messrs. Giron Frères (Great Britain) Ltd., of Accrington, French velvet weavers, dyers and finishers, in which concern he holds the position of Managing-Director and a member of the Board.

He has always taken a keen interest in the Swiss Colonies abroad. He was, for many years a member of

the Swiss Club, Bergamo and became a member of the Swiss Club, Manchester in 1937, and was elected Vice-President in 1950.

ST.

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING OF THE UNIONE TICINESE, LADIES' SECTION.

The Annual General Meeting of the Unione Ticinese, Ladies' Section, took place on Sunday, the 11th February, 1951, at Swiss House.

Mrs. Berti reported on the activities of the Society during 1950 and upon the favourable position shown by the Accounts, and expressed the general satisfaction felt amongst all members that one of the main aims of the Society, *i.e.*, the operation of a scheme of Mutual Benefit grants, has now become a reality.

Under the Chairmanship of Mrs. Rina Tobin, who thanked the retiring Committee for their work, the new Committee for 1951 was then elected, as follows:—

President: Mrs. A. Berti, who was loudly acclaimed on resuming her former seat as President. *Vice-President*: Mrs. D. Diviani. *Secretary*: Mrs. Rina Eusebio. *Vice-Secretary*: Mrs. F. McKenna, *Treasurer*: Miss Silvia Morosi. *Committee Members*: Mrs. L. Bruni, Mrs. K. Ratti, Mrs. I. DeMaria, Mrs. L. Berti, Miss I. Abate, Miss L. Bonetti.

Mrs. Berti was warmly supported in her expression of gratitude to Miss Irma Abate for her efficient and devoted work as Secretary for the past two years, and a sincere vote of thanks was also expressed to Mrs. L. Bruni and to her assistants, Mrs. Allegranza and Mrs. Bassi, for their willing work as "the Catering Department".

The Society warmly welcomed the introduction of three new members, the Misses Lina, Ida and Emilia Pedretti, of Woolwich.

A keen discussion then followed on new ideas put forward for fresh, social activities during 1951, and finally, all business having been dispensed with, the members settled down to a chat, and a "scopa", interspersed with light refreshments, in true "ticinese" style.

R.E.

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PETER DE MARIA,
President, *Unione Ticinese*.

On the occasion of the Annual General Meeting of the *Unione Ticinese*, which was held on Sunday, February 11th, 1951, at "Swiss House", 35, Fitzroy Square, W.1, Mr. Peter De Maria was elected President. He is succeeding Mr. Carlo Berti, who for the last four years has guided the destiny of this Society with great enthusiasm.

The *Unione Ticinese* enjoys the reputation of one of the most patriotic Swiss Societies in the London Colony, and their always willing and helpful collaboration in matters which concern the Colony as a whole, has been and is always much appreciated.

Many of our readers will, no doubt, recall the splendid Banquet which was held at the Dorchester Hotel, Park Lane, on Sunday, October 23rd, 1949, under the Presidency of the Swiss Minister, Monsieur Henry de Torrenté, when the Society celebrated their 75th anniversary in the presence of the former Federal Councillor, Dr. E. Celio, at present Swiss Minister in Rome.

To succeed such a popular President, as Mr. C. Berti was, is no easy task, but we feel sure, that the *Unione Ticinese* has chosen the right man for the job, in the person of Mr. De Maria.

He was born in London in the year 1898, of Swiss parents. They came from Leventina and had emigrated from their native Ticino in their teens, they met in London and subsequently married.

At the age of ten, Mr. De Maria, was sent to Switzerland for his schooling which he received at the "Collegio Francesco Soave" in Bellinzona. Later on he entered the "Scuola Cantonale di Commercio" where in 1918 he obtained the diploma of "Licenziato in Scienze Commerciali".

On his return to London, he joined his father at The Walbrook Restaurant of which he was the owner. In 1936, Mr. De Maria left the catering trade to take up a position as foreign correspondent with the firm of Messrs. H. R. Munns & Co., Ltd., textile agents and shippers, of which concern he is now a Director of their associated company, Messrs. H. R. Munns (Overseas), Ltd.

Mr. De Maria joined the *Unione Ticinese* in 1924, and subsequently held the following appointments: 1925, Member of the committee; 1927: Assistant Secretary; 1931: Secretary, 1951, President.

In the twenties he acted for seven years as Secretary of the Swiss Sports, and three years ago he took over the leadership of the "Corale" of the *Unione Ticinese*.

On the occasion of the 75th anniversary of the Society in 1949, Mr. De Maria was nominated an Honorary Member for the long and faithful services he had rendered.

We extend to him our best wishes for a successful year of office.

ST.

"SCHWEIZERBUND" (SWISS CLUB).

The Annual General Meeting of the "Schweizerbund" (Swiss Club) took place on Thursday, February 22nd, 1951, at 74, Charlotte Street, W.1.

Mr. W. Schneeberger was in the Chair, and there were about 60 members present.

The President reported about the activities of the Club during the last six months. According to his *exposé* the Club has once again made progress, and although the position has considerably and steadily improved since 1949, a more active collaboration on the part of the Colony is greatly desired. Mr. Schneeberger, said, that the Committee is exercising a strict control over the social functions held at 74, Charlotte Street, so as to keep out any undesirable elements, "it is our intention", he said "to make this Club a place fit for decent people."

Mr. E. Ritzmann, Hon. Treasurer of the "Schweizerbund", explained the various items in the Balance Sheet, and it is greatly due to his hard and conscientious work, that the financial position of the Club has vastly improved.

The catering which is in the capable hands of Mr. and Mrs. L. Portman shows actually a profit, and once the loans made, at the time, by various members, are repaid, the Club should prove to be a profitable undertaking.

As in other Swiss Societies in London, considerable difficulties were encountered in finding members to fill the various offices in the committee, owing to the scarcity of new and younger arrivals in this country.

Mr. W. Meier, who acted as President *pro tem.*, was, however, able to announce that Mr. Schneeberger was unanimously elected for a new term of office, Mr. Ritzmann, Hon. Treasurer, declined to retain his office, owing to his approaching departure to Switzerland, the meeting elected Mr. A. Finger to this post. The Secretaryship which was held by Mr. E. Schorno will also change hands in the near future. The assembly was unable to fill all the posts in the Committee, and it was left to the latter to find suitable candidates.

Before the conclusion of the Meeting, appreciation for services rendered to the Club were voiced with reference to Messrs. Schneeberger, E. Ritzmann, Mrs. Schneeberger, Mrs. Ellenberger and Mr. and Mrs. L. Portmann.

ST.