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AN HISTORIC CELEBRATION.

Whit Sunday 1953 saw at Bellinzona the climax of the functions held in the Canton of Ticino to celebrate the 150th anniversary of the State's entry into the Swiss Confederation as a sovereign republic, the 18th, in fulfilment of the Act of Mediation given by Napoleon Bonaparte to the "Consulte helvétique" on 19th February 1803. The diminutive First Consul had told the Swiss delegates; "Les circonstances avaient établi chez vous des peuples souverains et des peuples sujets. L'esprit d'un siècle nouveau, d'accord avec la justice et la raison, a rétabli l'égalité de droits entre toutes les portions de votre territoire. . . ." Following elections, the first "Gran Consiglio" met at Bellinzona on 20th May 1803, and for the first time for centuries the peoples in the valleys South of the St. Gothard had become masters over their destinies. The anniversary of such an event pregnant with fate could not be let pass unnoticed. Hence the celebrations.

The London "Ticinesi" also decided to mark the event. Whereas 50 years ago, in the gay Edwardian era the "Unione Ticinese" had pioneered a Banquet and Ball at Monico's not only for its own compatriots but also for the Swiss hailing from the other 5 Cantons that joined the Confederation simultaneously with its own, this time a more modest yet dignified function was decided upon. Whilst the impressive "corteggio" was slowly unwinding itself in the streets of the Cantonal Capital, the "Ticinesi" in the London area met at Swiss House at 5 p.m. some 50 strong for an extraordinary General Meeting of the Unione Ticinese.

Opening the proceedings, Mr. P. De Maria, president, explained the historic date, and then read the "messaggio del Consiglio di Stato", just as was done on the same day in each "Comune" at home done on the same day in each "Comune" at home by the mayor.

The meeting then listened to an interesting talk given by Secretary of Legation, Mr. G. Lepori, an hon. member, in which conditions in the Cantone Ticino 150 years ago were compared with those prevailing at present, and which gave the speaker ample scope in illustrating the achievements attained during 15 decades of self-rule.

On behalf of the Committee, the Vice President, Mr. P. Jacomelli, invited all present to partake of some refreshments. It was not long before everybody joined in a bout of community singing under the leadership of members of the "Corale".

We are grateful to the Committee, and to Dr. Lepori for having afforded us a most enjoyable afternoon in homage of the distant homeland. J.E.

PERSONAL.

We tender our deepest sympathy to Mr. J. Zimmerman of 3, Walsingham Road, Enfield, on the passing away of his brother, Charles Zimmermann, in Berne.

We extend heartiest congratulations to Mr. & Mrs. Ernest Brullhard of Hotel Park, 117-120, Bayswater Road, London, on the arrival of a daughter Pamela, Jane.

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