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A FAITHFUL SERVANT TO THE COLONY.



JULES ZIMMERMANN

Looking through some old records of our paper we find that Mr. Jules Zimmermann, of 3 Walsingham Road, Enfield, Middlesex, has become — similarly with a few others — one of the oldest subscribers to the "Swiss Observer", having been faithful to the Colony's official organ for close on forty years.

This might perhaps not be an outstanding achievement, but it gives us a *raison d'être*, and an opportunity — long overdue — to voice our appreciation and pay a tribute to a man who has, for nearly half a century, rendered innumerable services to the Swiss Colony in a quiet and unostentatious manner, fighting shy of any publicity, and not seeking to be ever in the limelight.

Jules Zimmermann has, in the real sense of the word, been "a faithful servant to the London Swiss Colony".

With a sadly dwindling Colony, lacking rejuvenescence, many members who well deserve a rest are still giving their services freely and unselfishly in order to keep the flag flying, not the least so our friend.

In recent years the Colony has suffered grievous losses, either through death or departure from this country, of many who have at one time or another rendered great service to the Swiss community.

Not infrequently one hears people speaking of a "dying Colony"; whilst we do, as yet, not take a too gloomy view, we nevertheless must admit that the future of our Colony gives cause for alarm for many reasons, the two principal ones being, first and foremost, the lack of new blood, and secondly that so many who could still play an active and useful part are showing a regrettable indifference towards the well-being of the Colony.

In these times of uncertainty, pregnant with evil forebodings, it is more than ever essential and necessary that the Colony should be kept going, if only as a useful connecting link between the two countries.

It is an undisputable fact, well proved, that our Colony is the most active of all foreign Colonies in this country, enjoying no mean reputation, both for its generosity and for its *esprit de corps*. This reputation, in spite of many difficulties, we are determined to maintain at whatever cost, and we dare

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to hope that men of vision, imbued with a spirit of patriotism, are still to be found in times of need to keep our centuries-old Colony alive.

* * *

Jules Zimmermann was born in Vevey in 1890, and originates from Schwändi (Ct. Glarus). He received his schooling at Vevey (Primary and Secondary Schools) and in Lausanne (Ecole Supérieure de Commerce).

In 1907 he entered a three-year apprenticeship with the "Bank of Winterthur" (now the "Schweizerische Bankgesellschaft"), and at its conclusion he obtained the diploma of the "Schweiz. Kaufmännischen Vereins", and completed his "Rekrutenschule".

Three years later (1910) he left for Milan, where he obtained a post as foreign correspondent with the Banca Commerciale Italiana; from there he was transferred in 1913 to their London Office, where he remained for twenty-seven years (eleven years in the Secretary's office and sixteen years as chief of the Correspondence Department). In 1929 Mr. Zimmermann became a signature-holder with additional power, a few years later, to sign as Manager of their West End and Soho agencies.

Being on holiday in Switzerland in 1914, when the First World-War broke out, he served in the Swiss army as an Infantry corporal until January 1915, when he resumed his post with the Banca Commerciale Italiana in London.

With the outbreak of the Second World-War the Bank went into liquidation after having been taken over by the Custodian of Enemy Property, and the promising and distinguished career of our friend came to a halt.

In 1941 he joined the London Delegation of the International Red Cross of Geneva, serving as assistant Delegate until 1945, and from then until 1948, when the London Office closed, as sole Delegate.

Once more, Mr. Zimmermann, owing to circumstances over which he had no control, had to look out for other employment. He took up a position in 1949 as Assistant Manager with the Employment Department of the Swiss Mercantile Society, becoming its Manager in 1951, on the death of Mr. J. Pfändler. This post he held until 1955, when the Employment Department by order of the S.K.V. authorities in Zurich was discontinued.

Since 1952, he had also acted — on part-time duty — as Secretary of the Swiss Benevolent Society, in succession to Mr. Th. Ritter, retired, until in 1956 he was appointed full-time Secretary, a post which he still occupies with great efficiency.

So much as to his business activities. With the same competence, and with no less ardour, he took up, right from the beginning of his arrival in London, his voluntary work in the London Colony, where he has held the following posts: 1914 to 1920, Hon. Assistant Secretary of the City Swiss Club; 1915 to 1918, member and then Hon. Secretary of the "Comité d'Etude pour la création d'une Chambre de Commerce Suisse à Londres", sponsored jointly by the City Swiss Club and the Swiss Mercantile Society; 1918 to 1943, Hon. Secretary of the "Swiss Commission in London for the study of Economic Questions" (When the Swiss authorities decided against a Swiss Chamber of Commerce, but created instead the new post of Commercial Attaché to the Swiss Legation, the Swiss

Commission was formed as an independent advisory body); 1928 to 1929, Hon. Assistant Treasurer of the City Swiss Club; 1929 to 1933, Hon. Secretary of the City Swiss Club; 1939 to 1952, Hon. Treasurer of the "Comité de la Fête Suisse"; 1940, up to the present time, Hon. Treasurer of the "Home for aged Swiss"; 1943 to 1950, a member of the "Council for the study of Swiss problems"; 1945 to 1947, Hon. Treasurer and Secretary of the "1st of August Committee"; 1949 to 1952, Hon. Assistant Secretary of the Swiss Benevolent Society; 1950, up to the present time, Hon. Secretary of the "Swiss Economic Council".

He is a member of the City Swiss Club, Nouvelle Société Helvétique, Swiss Mercantile Society and Swiss Male Choir.

This is surely a splendid record of much work done in a voluntary capacity in the interests of the Colony, and as far as we are aware has never before been equalled.

Many hours of leisure and recreation must have been sacrificed to look after the interests of the many Societies and Institutions which requested his collaboration, for he did not assume these posts lightly, and whatever task was entrusted to him it was conscientiously and painstakingly executed.

Jules Zimmermann richly deserves the gratitude of the entire Colony for his work and devotion to the welfare of the Swiss community. Although his many services have been, of course, known and appreciated by those circles which are closely connected with the inner working of the Colony, we consider it not only a pleasure, but a duty to acquaint a wider circle of this outstanding record. He deserves, really and truly, to be called

A FAITHFUL SERVANT OF THE COLONY!
ST.

FETE SUISSE.

A full report of the Fête Suisse which took place on Thursday, April 17th, will appear in our next issue.

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