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A DELIGHTFUL OCCASION

As a most pleasant surprise came to the decimated ranks of the Ticinese colony of the London area the invitation from the newly elected Committee of the "UNIONE TICINESE" to a *cena familiare* at the Hostel for Swiss Girls at Belsize Grove, N.W.3 on Sunday evening, 30th March. It was to meet the *Presidente del Consiglio di Stato del Canton Ticino*, on. avv. Arturo Lafranchi, who was on a short visit to London. The surprise was all the greater when one considers that in its 95 years of existence the Society of the London Ticinese had never had the opportunity of greeting a member of the Cantonal government of the Canton of Ticino; during all this long period the citizens of the southernmost state of our homeland had only been able to shake by the hand three Federal Councillors: Motta, Celio Enrico, and Lepori; two National Councillors: Celio E. and Pini, and one Councillor of States and Federal Judge Plinio Bolla.

The response was overwhelming and Miss Siegrist had difficulty in seating all the participants in the main dining room of her hostel. She is to be congratulated on the excellent meal provided, and her young ladies for the efficient service given.

On rising to greet his guests, the youthful new President of the Unione, Mr. Frank De Maria, began with some effort in the Italian idiom to give a welcome to the principal guest and, continuing in English, he extended cordial greetings to Counsellor of Embassy, Monsieur Iselin, representing our Ambassador, absent in Scotland, and said how glad he was to greet also so many past presidents at one meeting, namely, immediate P.P. Virgil Berti; Peter Jacomelli, for many years at the head of the society; Giuseppe Eusebio, now a *socio benemerito*; and Signora Berti who, for many years, had let the *Sezione Femminile* before the amalgamation.

Signor Lafranchi, in the most fluent Italian rhetoric, brought greetings from the home Government and, by means of well prepared statistics, as befits a Cantonal Minister for Public Economy, gave an extensive *aperçu* of the main changes and present developments in the economy of the Canton Ticino, culminating in an unexpected surplus of the cantonal finances for the year 1968, instead of the budgeted deficit. He ended by an eloquent appeal to all the Ticinesi resident in Great Britain to remain faithful to the land of their ancestors, to visit the homeland often, and to cultivate the Italian language.

The series of speeches was concluded by Vice-President Jacomelli (a confirmed bachelor no longer, as he was escorting his charming fiancée) who asked all present to stand for one minute in silence to honour the memory of Dr. Lafranchi's mother-in-law, of Mrs. Ida Cameron-Morosi and of Celestino Donati, who had all passed away in the last few days; Mrs. Cameron a founder member of the Corale and sister to the more famous Sylvia; and sig. Donati who had acquired fame in the Colony as the consistent winner of the Marathon run in the Swiss Sports before and immediately after the last War. Sig. Jacomelli, gave a very brief *résumé* of the history of the Unione Ticinese and asked our principal guest whether a small sum out of the aforementioned surplus could possibly be set aside to help the society to a permanent home.

This most delightful of patriotic evenings was concluded by a few of the popular songs sung by the "Corale" who demonstrated how skilful they really are, even in the absence of their *maestro* and accompanist, thanks no doubt to some enthusiastic assistance from their audience!

J.E.

INTERESTING TALK ON EUROPEAN INTEGRATION

The Nouvelle Société Helvétique is one of the most active societies within the London Swiss community. Their successful annual film show was followed by an informal dinner early in February, when Mr. Balz Hatt, Director of the Society for the Promotion of Swiss Economy, gave an interesting talk on the work of his organisation to a small group of members at the Montana Hotel.

On 20th March, Dr. Jürg Iselin, until recently Head of the Federal Integration Office at Berne, who has just joined the Embassy as Counsellor in succession to Monsieur J. D. Grandjean, gave a most interesting talk in German on "Switzerland and the European Integration". An animated discussion in English followed.

The Society was honoured by the presence of the Swiss Ambassador and Madame Keller and many prominent members of the Embassy.

J.S.

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It is with great pleasure that we announce the 80th birthday on 23rd April of Mr. J. B. Brutsch, of "Courtfield", 17 Melvin Shaw, Leatherhead, Surrey. He was born in Schaffhausen where he had his schooling and training with the Cantonal Bank. In 1908 he went to Paris and two years later he came to London, to the same bank, the "Russian Bank of Foreign Trade", where he rose to Chief Accountant. In 1917, he joined the old-established Army Bankers Cox & Co., whose Assistant Manager (Foreign Branch) he became in due course.

The firm was taken over by Lloyds Bank Ltd., in 1923, and Mr. Brutsch was appointed Assistant Manager of the Foreign Department in 1935 and a year later Manager, a post he held with distinction until his retirement in 1949.

Mr. Brutsch has been a member of many years' standing of the City Swiss Club, and he is also one of the oldest subscribers to the "Swiss Observer". He still enjoys excellent health, takes a keen interest in all financial and political news, as well as in gardening.

We wish him a happy birthday and many more years of sunny retirement.

S.O.'s TELEPHONE NUMBER

The Clerkenwell number of the "Swiss Observer" will in future be known as 01-253 2321. Unfortunately, there is a mistake in the new telephone directory in which our number appears as 235 2321. This is, of course, a Belgravia number. We have reported the mistake to the Telephone Manager, and it is possible that the calls may be diverted. We apologise to any caller who will be put to a lot of trouble trying to get through to us, especially as this will go on for at least another year, i.e. until the new edition of that particular section of the telephone directory is published.

The Telephone Manager has expressed his department's regret at this unfortunate error.

Please : At the moment of going to press, about 100 subscriptions are outstanding. We should appreciate it if all readers who have not yet paid up would kindly do so immediately. Thank you!