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FREDERICK GERBER IS 80!

One of our compatriots will be celebrating his 80th birthday between 28th February and 1st March! Mr. Frederick Gerber of Chatsworth Private Hotel, Salisbury Road, Hove, Sussex, was born on 29th February 1892. So last year, he was able to celebrate his birthday on the actual date for the 21st time only. Nevertheless, we wish him a happy birthday and many equally happy returns of it.

Mr. Gerber arrived in London in April 1913. He spent his early days at a guest house in South Kensington — 5/- a week and English lessons in the evening. In the summer of 1914 whilst working at the Norfolk Hotel in Margate, he was ordered by telegram to assemble in Regent's Park under military orders. The journey to Geneva was long and eventful. After military service during a very cold winter, he got back to London where he worked at various hotels until 1922 when he took over Ilchester Mansions Hotel which he ran with an elderly partner for four years.

In 1927, Mr. Gerber acquired Leinster House Hotel, a favourite place for retired civil servants from the East. The hotel was very badly bombed in the war, and later Polish officers made it their headquarters. In 1945, he was injured when a flying bomb exploded outside. More troubles beset him, and in 1959 he decided to settle at Hove.

During his time in London, Mr. Gerber was a member of the Hotels' and Restaurants' Association, and also of the Swiss Rifle Association.

He married rather late in life. He lost his wife two years ago. He has a married daughter in Canada, a son in the ambulance service and the elder son running the hotel at which Mr. Gerber is spending his retirement.

We wish him many more years of good health and happiness.

MM

I TICINESI GET TOGETHER AGAIN

Il Fornello restaurant in London's Southampton Row provided not only the venue but also the splendid food and ambience for the annual Christmas dinner of the Unione Ticinese, London's second oldest Swiss Society.

Guests of honour included the Swiss Ambassador and Madame Thalmann as well as the presidents of various other Swiss societies.

In his address the president Mr. F. A. De Maria payed tribute to his guests who were too numerous to list in detail. One however who must be mentioned was Mrs. Bruni who celebrated her 84th birthday on the night.

Paying tribute to the Ambassador, Mr. de Maria said that although the "Messiah" was not yet amongst us His Excellency had indeed chosen a good place to be born — Bellinzona. Indeed, he could best be described as a true blooded Ticinese.

Turning to the fact that two years have already elapsed since the Unione Ticinese celebrated its centenary, Mr. de Maria recalled that in the past the Society had always held its celebrations in the Swiss Hostel. The time had come for a change, he went on, because of all the work the members had to put into preparing for the events. Now they too could relax a little. The new venue, "discovered" by Charles de Maria, had certainly lived up to its expectations with its high standard of catering and service.

Mr. de Maria closed his address appropriately with thanks to La Fornella and a toast to "La Nostra Società". He then had formal welcome to Dr. Ernest Thalmann.

Our Ambassador, not unnaturally, felt at home in this gathering. Not unnaturally because, as he himself pointed out, his Christian names are Ernesto Agostino Ulderico.

He went on to say that in his 35 years of Federal service he had come to learn the value of the Ticinese without whom Switzerland and all that it stood for would be incomplete. Our country

would lack many of the things which make her unique — those qualities of charm, sensibility, warmth and spontaneity.

Dr Thalmann also offered those gathered some consolation for the fact that there has not been a Ticinese Federal Councillor for some three years. "One of our most famous sons, Borromini, is to appear on the new Swiss 100 Franc note and to those who ask what a Roman church is doing on a Swiss banknote I can only point out that Ticinese architects have built palaces and churches not only in Italy but as far afield as Moscow and Leningrad."

Our Ambassador added that the presence of the Ticineses in London has a special significance because of the hard work and skill of the people involved and all they have achieved in their various fields of activity. There was, he added, a sense of "lavoro ben fatto" — of work well done.

He concluded by raising his glass to the Canton Ticino and quoted his old friend Consigliere Federale Nello Celio: "I ticinesi hanno sempre dato in ogni della nostra gente; e questa garanzia perchè il governo della cosa pubblica sia umano e giusto e valido."

WGS

Promotions announced at Swiss bank

Swiss Bank Corporation, London
Senior promotions per 1st January 1977.

Mr. A. K. Taylor is appointed Sub-Manager. (Responsible for the Operations Division.)

and
Mr. R. L. Petchey is appointed Sub-Manager. (Responsible for Staff and Management Services Division.)

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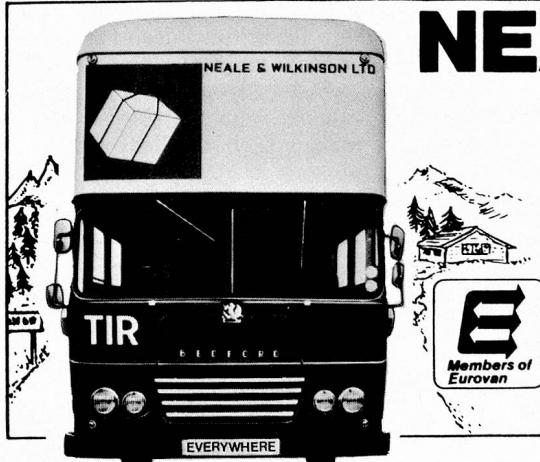
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