

News from the colony

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Looking upon this loveliness, I cannot but come to the conclusion that the Ticinese must be a man of good taste, and knowing my southern compatriot as I do, I must also come to the conclusion that the charming ladies who seek his company also show undoubted good taste and wisdom.

I am sure I am voicing the feelings of all the ladies and of my fellow guests, in telling you how much we appreciate the privilege of sharing these happy hours with you to-night, and we thank you for your welcome. We all agree in saying that we really love the Unione Ticinese and the Ticinese himself in particular. You people are the enfants gâtés of Switzerland and of the Federal Authorities. You have, I was going to say, the most beautiful Canton, but on second thoughts I think mine is just as beautiful as yours so we will say a beautiful Canton. You have more sun than any other Swiss, you have Guiseppe Motta and you have your melodious language. Being of unselfish disposition I hear that you have been good enough lately to take legal steps so that your compatriots of the other side of the Gotthard, living in your country, be compelled to adopt their guttural vocal chords to your home tongue. Wasn't that thoughtful of you, enough said.

I now would ask the ladies and guests to be upstanding and drink to the happiness and prosperity of our old friends the Unione Ticinese."

As no Banquet of the Unione Ticinese would be complete without at least a few words from the Hon. Vice-President, M. Meschini yielded to insistent calls, and concluded the official part of the evening with a brilliant, and witty speech which was loudly applauded.

During the dinner a small orchestra rendered most appropriate music, and when *f.i.*, they started their musical programme with that, unfortunately much hackneyed tune: O Sole mio, I could see the faces of our Ticinese brighten up; no doubt they were thinking of that glorious sun which is shining over their beautiful canton, over those lovely lakes, those gorgeous valleys of which they are so proud. It brought back to me too, sweet memories of long ago, when, as a young man, I spent my first holiday at Lugano. Well do I remember, how I passed one evening in that lovely little place called Gandria, writing my first love letter, kindling my inspiration with a bottle of Asti spumante, and how I got into trouble over it, as this letter somehow came into wrong hands and all those beautiful words about star-lit nights, eyes of heaven and all that love-sick sentimentality were wasted.— I was still deeply engaged in meditation when the Blue Danube Valse nearly made me swallow the *Bombe Monico* whole from sheer excitement, and my vis-à-vis, a sweet little Lady, from somewhere near Locarno, sent me such a sweet longing and tempting little look, which made me nearly forget that I made a resolution beforehand, not to be lured to the dancing floor, but like a good little boy and dutiful husband to listen to the Cabaret Entertainment instead, which under the direction of M. Claude Chandler, provided such a fine and splendid diversion for the less athletically-minded section of the gathering.

Needless to say, that I got tempted and slipped, how can a poor mortal like myself resist the sunny smile, the dreaming and yet sparkling eyes of a Tessinoise. Never have I seen, at the many functions which I have the privilege of attending such an array of lovely ladies, all my good resolutions and promises were forgotten, Eve had called and Adam took a big bite from the apple. (I have since confessed, so no copy of the S.O. need be sent to my private address).

To my great joy I met again many old faces, oh, what a happy family our Brethren from beyond the Gotthard are, their melodious lingua, their smiling faces was a wonderful stimulant, and many a care worn heart found a beneficial respite from the turmoil of an anxious time through which we are all passing. Thanks, Members of the Unione Ticinese for those golden hours, they have once again brought us nearer to each other, they have once again filled us with pride that we are all children of the same country, the country which we proudly call "La Patrie."

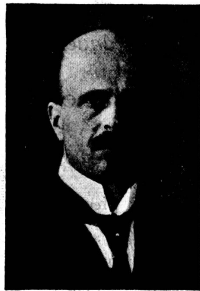
ST.

PERSONAL.

We have great pleasure to acquaint our readers and friends of the engagement of Miss Ruth Bertschinger, daughter of Mr. Charles Bertschinger, a popular member of the London Colony, with M. Marcel Pradervand, Pasteur-Suffragant of the Eglise Suisse.

We are tendering them our heartiest congratulations, and are wishing them a happy and bright future.

NEWS FROM THE COLONY.



W. LEHMANN,
 PRESIDENT
 and
 CHAIRMAN
 of the Council of the
**SWISS MERCANTILE
 SOCIETY LTD.**

We have great pleasure in publishing the portrait of M. W. Lehmann, the new President and Chairman of the Swiss Mercantile Society Ltd., who was elected on the 9th inst.

The new President is in a responsible position at the Swiss Bank Corporation, London Office; and he came to this country 26 years ago. M. Lehmann hails from the Canton of Berne.

SWISS MERCANTILE SOCIETY LIMITED.

An Extraordinary General Meeting of the Swiss Mercantile Society Ltd. was held in Swiss House, 34/35, Fitzroy Square, W.1., on Wednesday, March 9th. Mr. M. Paschoud (the Chairman) presided. There were present 44 Members and the Meeting was honoured by the attendance of Monsieur Ch. de Jenner, Counsellor of the Swiss Legation, Monsieur W. De Bourg, First Secretary of Legation, Monsieur W. Rufenacht, Secretary of Legation and Monsieur P. Hilfiker, Chancellor of Legation.

The Chairman, in opening the proceedings, explained the reasons for convening an Extraordinary General Meeting. He said he was leaving London shortly to take up an important position in Paris and was therefore reluctantly compelled to relinquish his offices of Chairman of the Council and President of the Society. Mr. Paschoud joined the Society as an Active Member in 1911, was President of the Society in 1914 after having previously served on the Committee. He had to abandon the Presidency during his term of office when being called on business to South America. In 1928, Mr. Paschoud was elected Chairman of the Education Committee and in 1929, President of the Society, and by retaining the former office for another year acted in a dual capacity during a most strenuous period. One of his chief tasks was the reorganisation of the College to which he was deeply attached. In 1931, Mr. Paschoud was elected first Chairman of the Council of the Swiss Mercantile Society Ltd.

Mr. A. C. Stahelin, Vice-Chairman of the Council, proposed that Mr. Paschoud be elected an Honorary Member of the Society. He eulogized the unselfish work done by Mr. Paschoud which would not be forgotten, and he left with the very best wishes of the Society. Mr. P. F. Boehringer, in seconding the Council's motion, related some reminiscences of Mr. Paschoud's earlier activities. The motion was then adopted with rousing cheers.

The Chairman answering in suitable terms, said that this election added to the sadness of having to leave this country in which he has resided for some 26 years and where he left good friends, many of whom he met at the S.M.S.

The Chairman thereupon reported that Mr. C. Chapuis was unable to fill the office of Chairman of the Education Committee. The election was due to a misunderstanding. Mr. Chapuis, who had declared his willingness to serve on the Committee, was abroad at the time when the election took place. Although he would have been very willing to do the work, Mr. Chapuis could not see his way to accept the office.

The Chairman had great pleasure in putting forward the nomination of Mr. W. Lehmann as President of the Society and Chairman of the Council. On being duly seconded the motion was carried unanimously by show of hands and hearty applause. Mr. W. Lehmann therefore succeeded to the vacant offices.

Mr. E. Hardmeier, Vice-Chairman of the Education Committee, was prepared to accept the Chairmanship of the Education Committee. Mr. Hardmeier, who has great experience in the work of the said Committee, was duly elected with acclamation.

It was proposed and seconded that Mr. J. H. Attinger, who was elected as a fifth Member of the General Purposes Committee, four only being required in accordance with the Bye Laws, be transferred to the Education Committee to complete the number of Members (four) being required on that Committee. There was no dissentient.

In order to assure the services of Mr. C. Chapuis, the Chairman proposed that Mr. Chapuis be elected an additional Member of the Council. The motion was carried with acclamation.

Mr. Chapuis then informed the Meeting that a farewell party would be held at the Union Helvetia on Tuesday, March 15th, on which

occasion a presentation would be made to Mr. Paschoud. The necessary arrangements for this "Souper dansant" had been completed and Mr. Chapuis exhorted the Members present to make it a point of attending and bring along their friends in order to give Mr. Paschoud a hearty send off.

The proceedings then terminated.

The Extraordinary General Meeting was immediately followed by the Monthly Meeting. W.B.

Owing to lack of space, we are unable to publish the report of the Supper Dance in this issue; a full report will however appear in next week's number.

E. NEUSCHWANDER †

Last Wednesday the funeral service of M. E. Neuschwander, one of the oldest and most lovable Members of the Swiss Colony, took place at the Swiss Church, Endell Street, W.C.2.

M. E. Neuschwander was born at Onchy in the year 1846, and like his parents, he chose the Hotel profession for his career. After an apprenticeship, and subsequent employment in various hotels in Switzerland, the young and ambitious man decided to say valet to the country of his birth, in order to see the world and seek further experience. It was a momentous decision for a man who deeply loved his native country, as travelling in those far away days was a far bigger undertaking than it is now. There were no "Golden Arrow Expresses" and no "Trains de Luxe," but to young Neuschwander discomfort or fatigue meant nothing, before him lay God's wide world open, golden opportunities waited to be gathered, and that he did not let them pass by will be proved by this short biography.

His journey took him to the sunny south and at the French Riviera he started his career abroad. Those were happy years for our late friend, he was fortunate in finding amongst his employers men of intellect and human understanding, and although he had to work hard, these years left happy memories behind. At that time the family of a Cabinet Minister of Her Majesty Queen Victoria's Government were spending their vacation at the hotel of M. Neuschwander's parents in Switzerland, and he was induced by correspondence which took place, to change his abode and come to Albion's shores in their service.

Was it the change of environment, the difference between the happy always smiling southerner and the grave and conventional Englishmen of Victorian days which created in the young man a longing for his country, with its silvery mountains, its lakes and its hamlets? He did not feel happy in private service, there was not enough scope for a man full of enterprise, so the day came, when the box was packed and the wanderer returned to the home of his fathers. But not for long, the "Wanderlust" was awakened, the fire of seeing foreign lands was kindled, and again his way took him to the great Metropolis of a great Empire, but this time to seek a position in a hotel.

It was on May 15th, 1870, that he arrived in London, where, a position at the Charing Cross Hotel was offered to him and which he accepted; hardly could he know then, that this would be his home for the next 52 years. With great zeal and enthusiasm he fulfilled his duty; these were hard days, and but little time for recreation was available, but the award for devotion to work did not fail to appear. In 1885 the Directors of the then South Eastern and Chatham Railway Company appointed him Manager of the Charing Cross Hotel. The reminiscences and experiences, some of which he related to the writer some time ago, during the 37 years of Management (M. Neuschwander retired in 1922) would fill pages of the Swiss Observer, amongst them was no doubt the marriage to an English lady, who was through many years a never-failing true companion and helpmate to him; she presented him with five children, three daughters and two sons, all of whom are married and are to-day mourning their beloved father.

In 1920, shortly before his retirement, the loss of his wife cast a cloud over the many years of happy companionship; but the devotion of one of his daughters, with whom he subsequently made his home, lessened the grievous loss sustained.—

Our departed friend came in contact with people in all walks of life, he rubbed shoulders with crowned heads, princes of Industry and Commerce, Politicians, Diplomates, etc.

In a quiet and unobstructive way, he accomplished his heavy and not always enviable task, loved and respected by all who came in touch with him; to his subordinates he was at all times a most considerable master. On his retirement, a banquet in his honour was held at Frascati's Restaurant, which was attended by a great number of hotel managers and was a striking proof in what great esteem he was held in his profession. Amongst his many friends was the late M. Ritz, our famous compatriot of Ritz Hotels fame.