

Swiss Choral Society

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ful members and better leadership. In conclusion, I call upon my fellow guests to drink a bumper to the future of the Unione Ticinese on her sixtieth birthday, and wish her many happy returns.

And now Monsieur De Bourg's pleasant little speech in the "idioma gentil, sonante e puro" — (Dante) :—

Signor Presidente, Signore e Signori,

Come ha ben detto l'onorevole Ministro, pare strano che ad una festa puramente ticinese, i discorsi finora siano tutti in inglese, benché gli oratori siano o ticinesi o di nome italiano.

Spetta quindi ad uno Svizzero tedesco di Solothurn, città che i compatrioti al di là del Gottardo chiamano in italiano, Soletta, l'onore di parlare a questa distinta assemblea in italiano. Mi sento stasera veramente privilegiato per due ragioni. In primo luogo, per essere stato invitato a questa festa anniversaria della Colonia Ticinese, e secondariamente per avere studiato anni fa all'università di Roma, ciò che mi pone in grado di dire due parole nella bella lingua di Dante et di Francesco Chiesa. Gli oratori che mi hanno preceduto già hanno sotto ogni aspetto illustrato l'importanza nonché l'attività di questo simpatico Circolo Ticinese e dei suoi membri. Anche il significato del sessantesimo anno di fondazione dell'Unione Ticinese è vivissimamente impresso in ognuno. Mi rimangono perciò poche parole. Tutto è già stato detto, ma sono persuaso che tutti coloro i quali conoscono il Ticino, questa gemma della Confederazione Elvetica, risentiranno questa sera la lontananza di quel pezzo di paradiso in terra, all'ora attuale in pieno risveglio primaverile. Anche per noi altri Svizzeri, tedeschi e francesi, il Ticino, con la sua lingua esercita un'attrazione irresistibile e siamo altamente fieri dei ticinesi, della loro cultura così come del loro aiuto tanto nella vita artistica quanto nella vita economica, industriale e politica.

Sapendo che tutti aspettano con impazienza la seconda parte della festa devo terminare. Lo considero però mio dovere di porgere le mie vive congratulazioni all'Unione Ticinese, compiente oggi sessant'anni di esistenza, che tanto si è occupata durante questo periodo di tempo del benessere dei Ticinesi a Londra.

Congratulo e ringrazio inoltre il Signor Presidente, i signori del Comitato dell'Unione e li prego di gradire i miei auguri più sinceri per la prosperità futura dell'Unione Ticinese e dei suoi membri. Evviva il Ticino. Evviva l'Unione Ticinese di Londra.

Mr. Oscar Gambazzi, a former secretary, who will now no doubt be known as the historian of the Unione Ticinese, was next called upon to address the diners.

The task of shaping into a harmonious whole the graphical, if at times ungrammatical, accounts of the notable events in the Society's life did not lack difficulty, but he had been fortunate to find ready collaboration from a colleague on the Committee, as well as valuable expert ad-

vice from Mr. Joe Delmué, who, as head of the Archer Press, was the brains behind the successful race against time in putting the much advertised opus through the printing press. After that evening, copies can be obtained on application to members of the Executive Committee and on payment of the excessively light "fine" of one shilling, which will accrue to the Fonds de Secours, on whose behalf Mr. Gambazzi made a moving appeal. Alluding to the fact that he had served under twelve of the twenty-one Presidents of the Unione Ticinese, he paid a generous, and I may add thoroughly deserved, tribute, to Mr. Willie Notari, under whose inspiring leadership the Society had prospered in the last fifteen years as never before in its history. He was happy to greet Mr. Alpino Bolla, one of the three former Presidents present, who had steered the ship through impetuous weather; Mr. Arthur Meschini, also a former President, and Mr. H. Jemini, the son of one of the founders and first trustees of the Society.

Mr. Meschini was in his happiest vein when winding up the evening's bout of eloquence. His mention of the fact that Monsieur Paravicini was "the most popular diplomat at the Court of St. James's," evoked spontaneous and enthusiastic approval, as also his description of Mr. Notari as "the President who has been in office the longest and has worked the hardest," and who, he ventured to hope, will in due course celebrate his silver jubilee as President.

Notwithstanding the special character of the occasion, stark austerity was conspicuous by its absence. It was as delightful, and at the same time as informal, an evening as one could have wished for; it kept intact that atmosphere of familiarity which is the keynote of all the Unione Ticinese functions; yet it was not devoid of brilliance.

The quiet performing by Mr. Gino Berni's Lazzaroni band of classical Italian pieces during the dinner, and of toe-teasing tunes during the dance; Miss Cattaneo's and Mr. Dini's generally warm duets, and Mr. Eric Ross's cabaret, all contributed to give the gathering an air of exclusiveness.

"Great," exclaimed my charming table companion, her slightly flushed features lit up by a most disarming smile, when I enquired after her opinion on the evening's proceedings and . . . well, need one enlarge upon such categoric appreciation?

Old and young alike enjoyed the clever numbers of Mr. Ross's clever dancers — my alert ears caught an elderly gentleman's hushed whisper of admiration when one muscular exponent of femininity was "doing the splits."

In another break of the dance, Mr. Berni's Neapolitan arias completed a commendable programme in a note of harmonious ardour.

As yet I have said nothing of the ladies; but what is there left to say, except that they were all lovely and charming in their attractive toilettes, as well as the indispensable element of the general gaiety?

The end, the fatal hour of 2 a.m., arrived all too soon, but, indeed, would all good things really be so had they no end?

Before terminating, I wish the Unione Ticinese, from the bottom of my heart, a long and happy existence of undiminished prosperity. Supposing you, kind readers, after perusing these notes, should feel magnanimously inclined towards the humble reporter, he begs he may be spared for further four decades, so that he may attend the Centenary celebration of the Unione Ticinese, if only a decrepit sexagenarian.

eusj.

Letter of M. G. Motta, Federal Councillor, to M. Notari, President of the Unione Ticinese: Preg. o signor presidente,

Le sono assai grato del telegramma da Lei indirizzatomi ieri, in unione al ministro signor Paravicini, a nome dei ticinesi di Londra. Ieri ho pure ricevuto, per posta aerea, due esemplari della pubblicazione contenente lo studio storico preparato dal sig. Gambazzi per commemorare il primo sessantennio della "Unione Ticinese." La ringrazio di cuore di questo invio. Ho dovuto ammirare la sollecitudine posta nell'inserirvi anche la lettera d'augurio da me indirizzata il 19 andante al sig. Gambazzi.

Poiché l'occasione mi è offerta, permetta ch'io rinnovi a Lei, quale presidente dell'Unione Ticinese, i migliori auguri per l'avvenire del sodalizio e per la prosperità di tutti i suoi soci, e Le rinnovi pure l'espressione della mia gratitudine per la benevolenza dimostratami.

Gradesca, signor presidente, coi miei più cordiali saluti, i sensi della mia schietta considerazione e stima.

f.to MOTTA.

ANNUAL CONCERT.

Swiss Choral Society and

Swiss Orchestral Society.

As reported in our last issue, the Annual Concert of the Swiss Choral Society is taking place on Thursday next, May the 10th, at Conway Hall, Red Lion Square, W.C.1.

We learn that the Societies have been fortunate enough in engaging Mademoiselle Nellie Palliser, who is no stranger to the Swiss Colony. Her beautiful voice and the charming way of rendering her songs have endeared her to no small number of concert and theatre goers.

The charge for admittance has been kept very low, and we hope that this will be a further inducement to go to Conway Hall on Thursday, the 10th of May.

Drink delicious "Ovaltine" at every meal - for Health!

THE HISTORICAL RELATIONS OF ENGLAND AND SWITZERLAND.

(Translation from a Pamphlet which appeared in the *N.Z.Z.* in March, 1919, and published in Oechsli's "History of Switzerland." — Cambridge University Press.

(Continued from Previous Number.)

In the autumn of 1814 the centre of gravity, so far as Federal affairs were concerned, was for months transferred to Vienna, so that both Capo d'Istria and Canning had to transfer their residence thither. The Five Great Powers of the Congress of Vienna set up a Swiss Committee, which named both of these statesmen as "consulting members." This Commission, which included all the wisest heads of the Congress, tried with the best intentions and absolute impartiality, to secure the lasting peace of Switzerland by regulating all territorial disputes, and would have been glad to revise the frontiers of the country, so as to assure military security in various directions. The last-named object was championed especially by the representatives of England, Russia and Prussia. A Memorial drawn up for the three Courts by Stratford Canning while still in Zurich advocated the annexation of the Valtelline, of the territories of the bishopric of Basle, and of the city of Constance to Switzerland, as well as the union of Carouge, Faucigny and Chablais with Geneva. As to the return of the Valtelline to Switzerland, all members of the Congress seemed at first to be quite agreed, save the Swiss themselves, who had neglected to come to an understanding at the right moment. The disagreement between Reinhard, the chief of the Swiss Mission in Vienna, who wished to make of the Valtelline a half-Canton of the Grisons, and the

Graubündeners themselves, who desired to include in their Canton only Chiavenna and Bormio, but were against any union with the Valtelline proper, gave Austria the opportunity of dragging out the affair. For a long time, with Russia, England had most decidedly demanded the return of the Valtelline to Switzerland. But the replacement of Castlereagh by Wellington, who, as a soldier, preferred to see this great land of passes in the strong hand of Austria rather than in the weak hand of neutral Switzerland, gave the game to the former power. Again, the Swiss Committee seemed for long to be agreed that Geneva, by the acquisition of the Pays de Gex, should be put into direction communication with Vaud, and that France should be compensated for this loss by double as big a district in the region of Porrentruy. Louis XVIII. had already given his Ambassador in Vienna, Talleyrand, full powers to carry out this exchange. But the Frenchman withdrew from this task, being disgusted by the warm interest which England displayed for Geneva. The Genevese envoys had indeed learnt from Stratford Canning that Talleyrand was secretly negotiating with Sardinia about the cession of Carouge; but they had brought this scheme to naught by invoking the aid of the Tsar Alexander to check by his protest an intrigue so dangerous for the newly-won freedom of their town. Talleyrand informed his king that the reason why he had put on the shelf this business of the exchange of Gex for Porrentruy was the clearly indicated intention of the English to strengthen their influence over Switzerland by favouring Geneva. On March 29th, 1815, Stratford Canning appeared in Zurich, with the double task of pressing, together with the other envoys, on the Diet both the acceptance of the arrangements relating to Switzerland which had been

sanctioned by the Congress, and also the adherence of Switzerland to the coalition against Napoleon, who had just returned from Elba. Canning took into account the opinion of Switzerland and its limited supply of war material, and so contented himself with the agreement of May 20th, 1815, by which Switzerland joined the "system" of the Allies without at first taking an active part in the war.

In apparent contradiction with this attempt to drive Switzerland to break with Napoleon, Canning had at the same time obtained full powers, in union with his colleagues in Zurich, to prepare the document about the permanent neutrality of Switzerland, which had been promised to it by the Congress. But the diplomatists in Zurich had not dared to draw up such a document themselves, for both the Russian and the Austrian Ministers had received from their respective Courts the order to carry out the wishes of Switzerland only when the general amnesty for the disorders of 1814-15 had been completely executed — a measure which the restored patriots of Fribourg had executed in a very cursory manner. The statesmen assembled in Paris after the victory of Waterloo neglected the matter. So Castlereagh and Capo d'Istria secretly invited the representative of Switzerland to the peace negotiations, the Genevese Pictet de Rochemont, to draft himself the aforesaid document, which then, for the sake of settling the question, Capo d'Istria put forth as his own work. So it was the pen of a Swiss which, at the request of the English and Russians, dictated to the Allies the European sanction of the principle of Swiss neutrality, which for three centuries the Swiss themselves had tried to secure.

(To be continued.)