

The achievements of two Jurassiens

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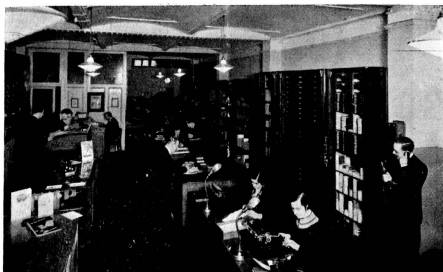
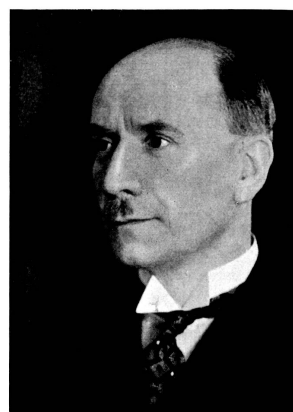
THE ACHIEVEMENTS OF TWO JURASSIENS



René Marchand.

A few years ago the "Swiss Observer" made an appeal to Swiss firms in London, and in the United Kingdom, to supply them with material in order to publish biographical accounts of their achievements.

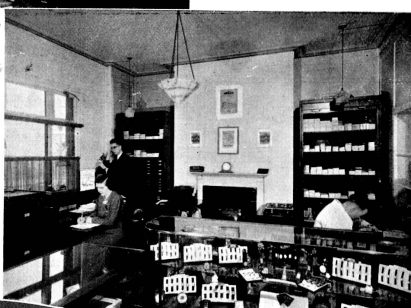
Our endeavours unfortunately met with only partial success, although we were able to review the history of such famous firms, as Kunzle's in Birmingham, Nestlé's, Bally's, Volkart Bros., Pagani's, etc., etc.

London
Head
Office

Léon Jobin.



Glasgow Office.



Birmingham Office.

We were, of course quite aware, that there were a good many more Swiss firms which would be entitled to have their splendid record of achievements brought to the notice of our compatriots living within these hospitable shores, but perhaps a feeling of modesty prevented them from allowing us to publish an account of their laudable efforts.

When, this idea was inaugurated we had two aims in view, firstly we thought it would be a befitting occasion to relate the successful endeavours of some of our countrymen, who have through sheer hard work and tenacity built up a business or organisation, and thus added new lustre to the name of our country; and secondly, we intended to show an oncoming generation, what the spirit of enterprise of some of their compatriots has achieved, in spite of often almost unsurmountable obstacles.

We wished to keep this wonderful spirit alive, thus giving the younger ones an encouragement to follow in the same footsteps. These accounts are not, and were not meant to be an advertisement, we gladly leave this to the Daily Press with their experienced staff of publicity experts. —

From time to time, we have approached firms to furnish us with material with which to relate their history. Some took no notice of our appeal, others again made some vague promises for the future. Undaunted, however, we made up our mind to persevere, and as luck, or was it providence?, would have it, we came across an article in the "Watchmaker and Jeweller," the official Journal of the National Association of Goldsmiths, acquainting the trade of the 21st birthday anniversary of the firm of *Marchand and Jobin Ltd.*, 100, Hatton Garden, E.C.1. As both partners happen to be very good friends of ours, we "pounced" on them, and simply refused to leave their premises before they gave us an account of their twenty-one years trading.

We are glad to say that after a great deal of gentle persuasion, we succeeded in being granted an interview, and before we relate their business achievements, we should like to give a short biography of the two partners, who are both well-known and popular personalities in the Swiss Colony in London. That the twenty-one years collaboration has not aged them prematurely, can be gathered from the accompanying portraits.

René Marchand, was born in the year 1892 at Bienne, (Ct. Berne) where he received his schooling; like so many of his compatriots, he was anxious to gain more experience, and to extend his knowledge abroad. The way took him to Pforzheim, where he attended school, and later he studied at the commercial school in Karlsruhe. Leaving school, he was apprenticed in Geneva,

thereafter a year was spent at Belgrade, (Servia), which was followed by a spell in his father's factory at Bienne.

In 1910, M. Marchand came to London, where he entered the firm which represented, amongst others, the house of Marchand-Monnier & Co., watch manufacturers in Switzerland, with them he remained three years. During that time he had the good fortune to meet Mr. Jobin, who was staying at the same Boarding-House, and there started the friendship which has produced such splendid results, the two enthusiasts soon understood each other.

In January 1914, René Marchand and Léon Jobin commenced business at Gamage Buildings, 118, High Holborn, London, E.C.1. During the war M. Marchand was busily engaged in the production of munitions of war, he was in charge of a factory at Chiswick. The following excerpt from an official letter signed by Lord Torphichen will show the appreciation in which he was held, therein the noble lord "desires to place on record the great services you have rendered to this section of the Ministry and the unfailing courtesy and energetic assistance you have displayed." — In 1919 he went to America and opened a branch on behalf of Marchand and Jobin Ltd.

M. Marchand is a member of the City Swiss Club, he is a keen Freemason, being a Past Master of the Brondesbury and the Helvetia Lodges. His hobbies are swimming and squash rackets. —

Léon Jobin, first saw the light of day in Tramelan (Ct. Berne) in the year 1890, in which village he received his schooling. At the age of 15 he entered the firm of A. Reymond, S.A., watch manufacturers in Tramelan; after three years of apprenticeship, he remained a further two years with the same firm, and although he was then only just twenty years of age he was put in charge of about 250 work-hands, which was a splendid testimony of the confidence, which his superiors had in this young man.

But like his partner, M. Jobin felt the "Wanderlust" taking hold of him, and one fine day he left his parental home, and went to Berlin, where he entered a firm of watch importers. After a stay of nearly two years, he left the German capital to accept a post with the watch firm Abel & Katz in London in the year of 1911. He eventually became Manager of the firm and remained with this concern until the beginning of 1914, when he entered into partnership with M. René Marchand.

M. Jobin has, during the many years of his *sojourn* in London, taken an active part in the life of the Swiss Colony. In 1927 he was elected President of the City Swiss Club, where, during his year of office he made many friends. For a considerable span of time he has been an active

worker in the committees of the "Fête Suisse" and the Swiss Sports, he is also a member of the Swiss Mercantile Society and the "Foyer Suisse". His hobbies are "Winter Sports and golf. —

And now let us review the business activities of these two young men, their methods of business were to plan with audacity and execute with vigor, they sketched out a map of possibilities, and then treated them as probabilities.

In January 1914, soon after the partnership was established, they were honoured by being appointed Agents for two prominent Swiss Watch Manufacturers, namely Messrs. Marchand-Monnier & Co., of Bienne, (The Elem Watch Co.) and the Minerva Watch Co., of Villeret, (Robert Frères).

The business was a success from its inception, and with the expert knowledge and technical ability available, rapidly flourished until expansion became a necessity. After several years of successful trading, and being anxious to exploit their opportunities in broader fashion, Marchand & Jobin Ltd., founded the Simplex Watch Case Co., in Birmingham, for the manufacture of gold watch cases. In 1919 the Platinum Watch Case Co., of Hatton Garden, was formed for the sole purpose of manufacturing diamond-set watches. (This concern they subsequently sold). In the same year, the business was further extended across the Atlantic, and a Branch office was established in New York. Additional interest were also secured in Swiss Watch Factories, and later in several Watch Houses in Great Britain.

From 1921-1924 they were the sole distributors in Great Britain of "Omega Watches;" and materially helped to popularize the sale of this brand during that period.

The business continued to grow, until in 1929 it was decided to open branches in Birmingham and Glasgow.

Then followed the founding of two new concerns in London, in which René Marchand and Léon Jobin are Directors at the present day:—

1931: The British Watch Case Co. Ltd., manufacturing gold, silver, rolled gold and chromium watch cases and

1932: The Wyler Unbreakable Watch Co. Ltd.

To-day, Marchand & Jobin Ltd., do a large turnover for each of the under-mentioned firms, for which they are sole agents or distributors:—

Recta S. A. (Bienne and Geneva) Admitted in Switzerland as the Manufacturers of one of the finest watches produced in the whole world.

The Era Watch Co., Ltd. (C. Rneffi-Flury & Cie), Bienne, who are the manufacturers of the

well-known Majex, Super Majex, Majorex and Era Watches.

Léon Levy & Frères, S.A., Biemme, the makers of the Tivoli, Jomax and various types of medium grade watches.

The Wyler Watch Co., Basle, La Chaux-de-Fonds, and Biemme. This firm are the Patentees and Manufacturers of the first Wyler Unbreakable Watch.

Waltham Watches. Principal Agency.

The firm of Marchand & Jobin occupies large business premises in Hatton Garden, with branch offices at Glasgow and Birmingham and employs a staff of 30.

One of the main endeavours of the two partners has always been, to pass as much work as possible on to the Swiss Factories which they represent, and thus they were able to curb to a

certain extent the unemployment figures in the Watch Industry in Switzerland, which have unfortunately, during the last few years attained such alarming proportions. This is no small undertaking when one considers, what great difficulties beset importers of Swiss goods under present conditions.

These then are the successful achievements of a firm which started in a very small way; great ability, a keen sense of business instinct and responsibility, and a good deal of hard work has secured the firm of Marchand & Jobin Ltd., an honoured name in the profession, and has added to the good name with which Swiss business people have always been regarded in this country.

On this, their 21st. Birthday-Anniversary, we are wishing them a hearty

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**SOCIETE DE SECOURS MUTUELS DES
SUISSES A LONDRES.**

Annual Dinner.

The oldest Swiss Society in London, which was founded over 200 years ago and devotes itself to the beneficent task of securing its members against the common vicissitudes of sickness, old age and death, held the Annual Dinner at its headquarters, the Swiss Club in Charlotte Street, on Friday, March 29th, in the usual jolly spirit of comradeship and friendliness. Nearly three quarters of the one hundred and odd members were present and a round ten invited guests besides, including Monsieur de Bourg, Counsellor of Legation, Pasteur Hoffmann-de Visme, Mr. George Marchand for the City Swiss Club, Messrs. Gambazzi and Hauswirth for the Unione Ticinese, Mr. Steinmann as president of the Swiss Mercantile Society, Mr. R. Dupraz as president of the Fonds de Secours, Mr. Röthlisberger for the New Helvetic Society, Mr. Hediger as president of the Schweizer Bund and Dr. H. W. Egli for the "Swiss Observer." The club management, Mr. and Mrs. Rossier, did their very best to provide the company an excellent meal which, with the addition of wine and cigars, did not fail to stimulate a highly convivial atmosphere, despite the entire absence of the fair sex.

Under the honorary presidency of Monsieur de Bourg, the evening was passed in a very agreeable manner with a few short speeches, some patriotic songs, plenty of neighbourly talk and an amusing half hour of comic entertainment. The eldest son of Mr. Bosshard, caretaker of the Swiss Mercantile School, who is a very good musician marked the orchestra at the piano during the evening.

Monsieur de Bourg conveyed the compliments and good wishes of our Minister and the Legation for the prosperity and useful function of the society. Mr. Campart spoke with gratification of the continued support the society enjoys amongst its members. He read out greetings from various members and friends who were unable to be present themselves and he dispatched messages of remembrance to some of them. Pasteur Hoffmann spoke vividly about his experiences amongst the Swiss in Naples. Mr. Dupraz congratulated the Société de Secours Mutuels for its highly satisfactory state of affairs,

which society he described as a welcome competitor for his own organisation, the Fonds de Secours, the competition being of such a kind that, contrary to commercial practice, the Fonds de Secours is the more pleased, the more "business" the Secours Mutuels succeeds in taking away from it.

Dr. E.

STEFI GEYER — RECITAL.

Following the concert of the Contemporary Music Centre at our Legation and the performance at our Minister's reception at Grosvenor House, about both which events the "Swiss Observer" published reports in the last issue, Mme. Stefi Geyer, the famous violinist from Zürich, gave a recital of her own on Thursday, 28th March, at the Aeolian Hall. Madame Stefi Geyer has been playing in London before King Edward some thirty years ago as a Hungarian "enfant prodige." During the war she has settled down in Zürich, married the composer and musician Schulthess, a nephew of the Federal Counsellor, and has for many years acted as the principal violin teacher at the Konservatorium of Zürich.

Madame Geyer's international reputation brought a considerable audience to the concert-hall, including several critics who reported very favourably on her performance. Apart from a number of lighter compositions by Elgar, Scott, Dvorak, Brahms and Bartok, the artist played with great virtuosity a violin solo Partita in D minor by Bach and an Adagio and a Rondo by Mozart, accompanied on the piano by Gerald Moore. The wonderfully powerful, yet sweet and sensitive tone of Madame Geysers playing and her spirited interpretation of those great masters carried the audience to rousing applause.

Dr. E.

ICE-HOCKEY.

Davos 7 : Wembley Canadians 7.

The Ice-Hockey Match between Davos and the Wembley Canadians was played on Saturday last at the Wembley Stadium and ended with a draw.

A large contingent of our countrymen, amongst them the Swiss Minister, were present, and when the Davos team entered the rink they were accorded a rousing reception, hundreds of Swiss flags were enthusiastically waved.

Previous to the match M. Meikeler and Mlle. Meerkamper gave an exhibition of free skating, their graceful movements were greatly admired and earned warm applause.

The Swiss team which included several internationals, were leading almost to the last moment, but it was obvious that in the 3rd period they were tired out, no doubt due to conditions to which they were not accustomed to.

On the whole the teams were fairly evenly matched and when, during the last quarter of an hour, the Wembley Canadians made strenuous efforts to even up the score, one felt that the resulting draw was in accordance with the style of play.

The match was played in a true sportsman spirit and both teams received a great ovation at the finish from the large audience numbering several thousands.

PERSONAL.

We extend heartiest congratulations to Mlle. Nellie Meyrat, (professionally known as Nellie Palliser, the singer) on her engagement to Mr. Harry Bryan.

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