

Paul Walser

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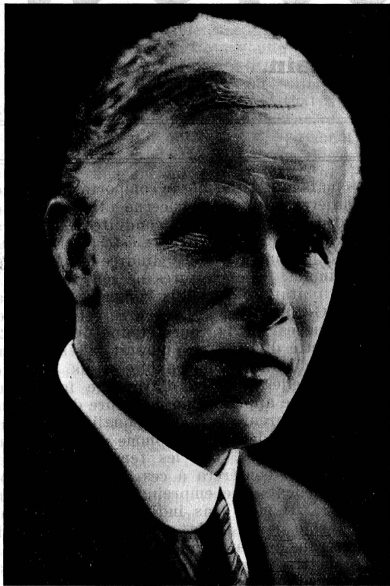
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PAUL WALSER.
70th Birthday Anniversary.



On the 31st of this month, our compatriot, Mr. Paul Walser, is celebrating his 70th birthday anniversary, and we are delighted to tender to him, on behalf of our readers and the entire Swiss Colony, "many happy returns of the day." —

It is a custom in the journalistic profession, that whenever a well-known person celebrates a jubilee or anniversary, and this comes to the knowledge of an editor, he will poste-haste send a reporter to interview (or what some people would term, to annoy) this celebrity.

For once we have dispensed with this procedure, because we had the feeling we should have been told (politely, of course), "to mind our own business."

The writer has been fortunate enough to know the "Jubilant" for a good many years, and what has always struck him, was the fact, that, although Paul Walser was one of the leading men in the commercial world, he hated any publicity and whatever service he had rendered to the Swiss Colony (and his services have been innumerable) he never expected to be made, what is commonly called "a fuss of."

He knew his responsibility towards his compatriots and in a larger sense also towards our country and this country, and in doing his duty he required no extra acknowledgement nor cheap glorification. Knowing his "point de vue" we thought it would be futile to ask for the favour of an interview, and yet we would have been sorry not to mention in our columns the birthday of a man, who enjoys a name, which makes every Swiss proud to claim him as a compatriot.

We have therefore tried, and not without success, we are glad to say, to get in at the "back door" to report the fine career of a man who deserves well to be mentioned in the columns of this paper. —

Paul Walser attended the school in his native town of Wohlen and later on went to the Commercial School at Neuchâtel.

At the early age of 18, he took over the business of his father (Straw Goods Manufacturers) in Wohlen, which he carried on, together with his brother, under the name of Paul Walser & Co. Within a short time of this association he opened branches in all of the more important cities abroad.

With a keen eye for business, he extended his connection with the country for which from the earliest days of his business career he had had a "sneaking regard" for. Shortly before the year 1906 he "packed his bag" and came over to London where he founded the firm of Paul Walser & Co., Ltd.; apart from straw goods plaits he started manufacturing finished Ladies Hats.

This latter undertaking met at once with a keen opposition from old established English houses which formerly supplied him with plaits, and being a foreigner in addition, untold difficulties were put in his way.

Undaunted by these obstacles and with great perseverance, coupled with sound business ability, he succeeded in establishing a large concern, and to-day the "Reslaw" hats enjoy not only a splendid reputation in this country but all over the world.

The firm of Paul Walser & Co., Ltd., to-day occupies their own premises consisting of nine floors in one of the great fashion centres of London, with additional work rooms nearby, they own a large factory at Luton (Bedfordshire) employing altogether over a thousand workhands. In all the various branches of this large undertaking there exists a friendly spirit, no doubt inspired by the head of the firm, and on more than one occasion we were told that both management and staff enjoy the friendly name of "Reslaw family."

Although, Paul Walser has spent the greater part of his life far from our country he has not forgotten the land of his birth, he has remained a true and faithful Swiss. His great responsibilities have unfortunately not allowed him to take an active part in the work of the Colony, but whenever his help or services were required he was ready to play his part.

Some of his utterances at meetings might have sometimes sounded strange, he called a "spade a spade," and he had no patience with those who were "beating about the bush." In his inner self he remained a simple and unassuming Swiss and he stuck with an admirable tenacity to his democratic principles.

Our country is the richer for this man, who has added to the good name which our homeland enjoys in this hospitable land, and on his 70th birthday anniversary we honour him sincerely for a life full of success and hard work which we hope will not come to an end for many more years to come.

ST.

LEMBO TICINESE.

Misticamente cinto da un nebuloso velo; irrorato dalla rugiada che posandosi dolcemente sulle piante e sui fiori, li faceva scintillare come fossero gemme preziose; illuminato dal sole nascente, gagliardo e benefico, il monte si destò dal suo sonno notturno e sorrise tutto, nella sua maestosa bellezza. Il suo giorno di festa quello era! e a festa voleva pararsi onde soddisfare la numerosa schiera di gente che sino alla sua cima sarebbe salita a salutarlo, ed in esso salutare la natura sempre preziosa di ricchezze fatte di cosette semplici ... fiorellini montani, felci odorose, sentieri ombreggiati, ruscelli cantanti una canzone cristallina come le loro acque.

La sagra del monte San Salvatore. Squillo dolce della campana dell'umile chiesetta. Gente raccolta a pregare. Bisbiglio di fervide preghiere. Laudi sincere sgorganti dall'animo commosso. La vera fede questa. Non nelle sontuose cattedrali riccamente addobbate da pregevoli capolavori, da statue preziose, si può raccogliersi a preghiera, come in queste chiesette dall'altare nitido ma modesto e contornato da tanti "ex voto," che sono altrettanti "grazie ricevute."

Poi fuori, all'aperto, nello spiazzo davanti alla chiesa, banchi di dolci, di regalucci. Finite le Sacre Funzioni, alle campane che lanciano, libere, verso il cielo, il loro canto melodioso, rispondono voci nostrane. Canzoni montane. Quasi sempre nostalgiche, eppure vogliono essere l'espressione della felicità! Perché chi canta, in queste occasioni, è sempre felice.

E il San Salvatore offre, generoso, il suo particolare fiore leggiadro, il gentile "fiore del monte." Peccato che diventi sempre più raro, nonostante una norma di legge vigili sulla sua protezione. Purtroppo la legge non è osservata, non per dispetto o cattiveria, ma così per spensierata noncuranza. Invece di cogliere il fiore, staccandolo attentamente dal suo gambo, si strappa addirittura anche la radice ... e il "fiore del monte" si fa sempre più raro. Olocausto di fiore gentile alla maestosa grazia montana.

Cielo corrusco. Nuvoloni neri. Minacciosi. Il San Salvatore ha ripreso il suo sonno. Solo chiarore la scia luminosa della sua funicolare. Lassù, in alto, sull'albergo della cima, sventola nella sua più completa libertà, il simbolo della nostra libertà: la nostra bandiera rosso crociata.

Sventola la nostra bandiera rosso crociata sulla prua dell'agile imbarcazione che taglia silente, rapida, le acque dei laghi ticinesi, e porta, il suo saluto. Saluto d'un popolo laborioso, fiero del nome che sa onorare, sempre, in patria, come all'estero: Svizzera!

Fischio di battello, sventolio di bandiera, la passerella si toglie, e il piroscalo lascia il debarcadere centrale, via verso quei numerosi ameni paesini sparsi lungo le sponde, del Ceresio, del Verbano. Paesini graziosi che sembrano ricamati su quelle rive. Quasi tutti patria di artisti: Melide. Morcote. Bissone. Ascona. Brissago. Scherzi di bagliori, di ombre, la sera. Giuoco tra le acque e le luci. E quiete ovunque. Silenzio interrotto solo dal cadenzato sbattere delle onde che s'infrangono contro le sponde. Flusso e riflusso continuo, che mai non cessa.

Come mai non cessa l'attaccamento dei figli svizzeri alla loro patria.

S'innalzi la limpida canzone dell'usignuolo nella purezza d'una natura bella, bellissima. S'innalzi limpido, ardente, il "Ci chiami o Patria" ovunque si trovi un figlio elvetico. Tra le austere montagne, nelle romiti vallate, nelle lontane metropoli.

E.G.L.

PERSONAL.

We deeply regret to announce the death of Mr. Rudolf, Ulrich Schwartz, he passed away recently after a long illness, at the age of 54.

Mr. Schwartz was, for several years, book-keeper with the firm Moise Dreyfuss Ltd. (Watch Manufacturers).

We extend to the widow and the two sons our sincere sympathy in their loss.

SWISS Y.M.C.A.

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