

# Unione Ticinese

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# UNIONE TICINESE

## ANNUAL BANQUET & BALL

at "PAGANI'S" on Monday, April 4th 1938.

G. EUSEBIO, President.



"All's well, that ends well" — this may be truly said of the very successful Annual Banquet of the Unione Ticinese, which was the last big function of the Colony's social season.

For the past few years, the Secretary of this Society has kindly consented to report about this annual function, thus giving me an opportunity to really enjoy myself without having to make copious notes about the proceedings.

This year, however, I have to be in harness again, because the one-time Secretary has become the President of to-day, and it is hardly to be expected that he is going to "blow his own trumpet."

Before I go any further into details about the proceedings, I should like to heartily congratulate the Unione Ticinese for having put at their helm one of the "youngsters." There are few Societies which can afford this luxury; if enthusiasm and good will, count for anything in these grey days, then Mr. Eusebio will make a splendid President. —

A Ticinesi evening is always a jolly affair, because our brethren beyond the Gothard have the happy knack of making their visitors and guests feel at home; the sun which so brightly shines over their little homeland seems to be reflected again in their own sunny countenances despite their sojourn under grey and cloudy skies.

To be amongst them always brings happy memories back to me; only six months ago I visited the beautiful canton of Ticino, unfortunately the sun, which usually shines on the righteous people in that corner of our homeland, treated me very sparingly, but the few hours it made its appearance made me forget the rain which so unceasingly fell from a dull sky. —

After the reception, which was held by the Swiss Minister, accompanied by Madame Paravicini, the company sat down to an excellent dinner; I need hardly say that the renowned *cuisine* of Pagani's lived up to its reputation, and it would have been quite in order to include a further toast on the list, the one to the master of his craft, "Monsieur le chef."

The toasts to "H.M. the King" and to the "Swiss Confederation" were proposed by the Chairman, Monsieur C. R. Paravicini.

The next toast was the one to "The Unione Ticinese and the Guests," its proposer was the President, Mr. Eusebio, who on rising received a hearty ovation from the numerous company. He said:

It is with all the anxiety of the novice that I rise this evening to propose the main toast, for it is my first serious attempt at public speaking. Therefore do not spare me your criticisms, I am always ready to learn, and I am quite prepared besides for your registering disapproval at my shortcomings.

First of all let me bid you all welcome and thank you most heartily for your never failing support.

It is for the first time also that I have the privilege of extending a particularly warm welcome to our Minister, Monsieur Paravicini and to Mme. Paravicini. I need not assure you, Sir, that the "Unione Ticinese" is proud of the honour you have done us by accepting our invitation to take the Chair here this evening. The last time you were here, referring to the frequency with which you had attended our functions, you said we may come to look upon you as a pillar-box. But, rather than comparing you with that useful medium, and particularly in view of the fact that official duties have deprived us of your presence at our last three annual banquets, I think we would be right in comparing you with the brightest of the stars, the sun, which we always greet warmly when it reappears in the sky after a long absence. May I also assure you, Monsieur le Ministre, of our whole-hearted loyalty to you, and to your Legation. We are very sensitive to the honour of entertaining Mme. Paravicini after a lapse of many years.

We feel highly honoured by the company of distinguished guests to-night; I refer to His Worship the Mayor and Mayoress of the Metro-

politan Borough St. Pancras. Councillor John Sporni, I am glad to say, is almost one of us; he knows the Cantone Ticino, where some of his ancestors lived, and speaks our native language as well as, or even better than, some of us. —

The "Unione Ticinese" entertain the friendliest relations with our sister Societies in the Colony, and we are happy indeed to welcome here to-night the Representatives they have sent us:

Mr. A. Nussbaumer, of the "Fonds de Secours," with Mrs. Nussbaumer;

Mr. P. F. Boehringer, of the City Swiss Club, with Mrs. Boehringer;

Mr. H. Caluori, of the "Schweizerbund," and Mrs. Caluori;

Mr. A. Steinmann, of the Swiss Mercantile Society;

Mr. and Mrs. Bleiker, Société de Secours Mutuels;

Mr. O. Wetzler, Nouvelle Société Helvétique;

Mr. and Mrs. E. P. Dick, Swiss Orchestral Society;

Mr. Gandon, Swiss Accordeon Club.

We are delighted to greet the Editor of the "Swiss Observer," Mr. Stauffer. Had it not been for his prompt intervention our function this year might have clashed with that of another sister Society; I would propose, therefore, that the Editor of our popular paper be unanimously elected Minister for the Co-ordination of the Colony's functions.

To all our guests and friends I renew the Society's thanks for their presence; we hope that you will take away with you the memory of happy hours spent in our midst.

The past year has been for the Society a fortunate, rather than a successful one in as much as we should not hope to see repeated the same fortunate coincidences. Indeed, taking a long view, I think we shall have to worry, sooner rather than later, over the want of new members. The average age of members is rising steadily and new admissions are few and far between. To prevent, or rather to counteract, this tendency will be our task in the next few years. Two remedies would appear to suggest themselves. One is the relaxation of the present immigration restrictions; this, however, is a matter we can safely leave in the hands of our diplomatists. The other, is the one which at present looks the more feasible. If we are to increase our membership without relying on migration from our Homeland, we should make an honest effort to attract to our ranks the younger generation of "Ticinesi." I mean the English-born sons of our members and late members. Very few of these "Ticinesi" of the second and third generation, as we might call them, speak our native language "l'idioma gentil sonante e puro." They have gone to school here, all their friends and interests are English, so much so that at first it would appear there is very little we can offer them. Some it is true have already come to us, either because of the wish to follow in the "old man's" footsteps, or because they have had the opportunity, which the majority lack, of spending some time in the Cantone Ticino. Therefore in order to encourage these youngsters to come to us, I think that it would be well to make available to them facilities for getting to know our Mother Country, to learn our native language, our history and geography, thus adding to the excellent education they have received in the English schools.

Their outlook on life will thus be broadened, and they will come to appreciate — maybe love — the land whence their people came. Much is already being done in this respect by some of our sister societies; whatever we shall do we shall strive to collaborate with them. If some such programme can be made to materialize, our Society will have no

misgivings for the future. Nevertheless, we were born in optimism; we have been tempered by adversity; and so we look forward with smiling faces.

Before ending, I wish to pay a generous tribute to our Honorary Vice-President, Signor Arturo Meschini and his family for the ever increasing support they afford the "Unione Ticinese." There is also another tribute I have to pay, and that it to my predecessor in office, Signor Oscar Gambazzi. There are not words that can adequately express the gratitude the Society feels towards Signor Gambazzi, who for forty consecutive years has served on our Committee, thirty-five as Secretary. You Gambazzi have set an example of strenuous devotion to duty that is unequalled in the records of the Society; we are proud of you. I am glad to announce that the Committee have decided to present Sig. Gambazzi with a small token of our deep appreciation, and later this evening I shall ask our Chairman to do the needful.

I now call on you to charge your glasses and drink to the prosperity and future of the "Unione Ticinese" and of our Guests.

Loud and long applause greeted the President on resuming his seat, and having by now gathered some experience in this line, I must confess that as a maiden speech Mr. Eusebio has done "jolly well." —

This speech was followed by the one of the Minister, who, much to the delight of our Italian-speaking compatriots, started his address in Dante's beautiful language.

Monsieur Paravicini expressed his great pleasure at having, after an absence of three years, been able to attend this friendly gathering in the company of Mme. Paravicini. Continuing in English he paid a great tribute to the patriotism of our Italian-speaking brethren, he also mentioned the great services rendered for the last 40 years to the Society by Mr. O. Gambazzi, the late President. Amongst enthusiastic applause he presented Mr. Gambazzi, on behalf of the Unione Ticinese, with a silver tray suitably engraved.

The oration of the Swiss Minister adorned with many a "bon mot," was acknowledged with much cheering.

M. P. F. Boehringer, President of the City Swiss Club, in a very witty speech, expressed the thanks of the guests for the generous hospitality they had enjoyed, the speaker also congratulated, Mr. A. Meschini, Honorary Vice-President of the Unione Ticinese, for the great services which he had rendered to the Society for so many years. That the company agreed with the speaker, was proved by the applause which he received on resuming his seat.

Although not on the Toast list, it was announced that Councillor John Sporni, Mayor of St. Pancras, wished to say a few words, this announcement brought forth a salvo of applause, and in an eloquent manner the Mayor of St. Pancras eulogized the work of our Minister during his many years of residence in the Metropolis of the British Empire. The charming compliments which he paid to our country and to the canton of Ticino in particular, made many of us blush, we really hardly knew that we were such famous specimens of the human race. His Worship bears a warm corner in his heart for the land of his ancestors, and Switzerland has surely no better friend than Councillor Sporni, who finished his speech in Italian. The warm and sincere applause which he received was well merited.

In the meantime an old friend of the Unione Ticinese, Councillor Styles-Allen, Mayor of Marylebone, arrived, also accompanied by the Mayoress, and he was promptly "condemned" to make a speech. He mentioned, with much hilarity, that he had become a member of the Unione Ticinese by "absorption" and related the many happy hours he had spent in the midst of our compatriots from the sunny Ticino; he paid a very humorous tribute to his old friend Mr. A. Meschini.

It is undoubtedly a great compliment to the Swiss Colony in general, and to the Unione

Ticinese in particular, to have at their Annual Dinner the Mayors of two of London's biggest Boroughs.

Mr. Meschini, Hon. Vice-President of the Society yielded to demands for a speech which came from all corners of the Banqueting Hall, and with his usual fluency he thanked the Minister and Madame Paravicini for the great honour they had bestowed on the Society by their presence; he also expressed his satisfaction that the Mayors of Marylebone and St. Pancras had accepted the invitation, which was not only an honour but gave great pleasure to the Society.

The Unione Ticinese has always been liberal and generous towards all those who have at one time or another rendered services to the Society. I was, however, a little disappointed that one member, who has deserved well of the Society, had been forgotten, I mean Mr. W. Notari, who was for 16 years at the head of the Society, well do I remember how on former occasions my friend was enthusiastically greeted whenever he addressed this annual gathering, with such endearing terms as "good old Willie," and "our Willie," well fame is short lived and glory counts for little nowadays, but I am sure this was an oversight, and will no doubt be "made good." Sixteen years of hard and conscientious work for a Society deserves a better fate. —

The last speaker was Mr. O. Gambazzi, who greatly moved, thanked the Society for the very acceptable acknowledgement of his services, "it is," he said, "one of the proudest days of my life."

I gladly associate myself with what has been said about Mr. Gambazzi, he deserves everything that has been said, he is not only a great Ticinesi, but a good and true Swiss.

Thus the speech-making came to an end, and everyone adjourned to the dancing Hall.

I cannot end this report without mentioning the many charming Ladies who were present; although this remark makes me feel rather uneasy as I have been repeatedly teased about my reports concerning the "sweetest of the sweet." As a matter of fact, whilst composing this report, a friend of mine called, and asked me whether I was again writing about the "beautiful" ladies whom he feels sure, I never see. I felt inclined to be downright rude, but on second thoughts I considered that it would be the better policy to ignore his sarcastic remarks. Braving the consequences, I proudly state that there were many lovely ladies present, and they added greatly to the attractiveness of this function.

It was a merry crowd who danced to the accompaniment of an excellent orchestra, and for those who found dancing too exacting a cabaret provided a welcome diversion.

At 2 a.m. this very enjoyable 64th Banquet came to an end.

ST.

#### LONDON SWISS RIFLE TEAM.

The London Swiss Rifle Team held a meeting at Bisley on April 10th, when the following Committee was elected:—

*President:* M. Henry Senn,

*Secretary:* M. Paul Hilfiker,

*Members:* MM. Alfred Schmid and Willy Fischer.

All the members present regretfully agreed to release M. P. F. Boehringer, better known at Bisley as the "Swiss Admiral," from his duties as Secretary and Treasurer of the Team. They offer him their sincere thanks for the untiring and valuable services rendered during his term of office.

Training has already begun for the next Federal Shooting Competition, which is to be held at Lucerne in August, 1939. The Swiss Colony in Great Britain will certainly wish the Team to be as successful on this occasion as it has been in the past, and new members who are interested in Rifle Shooting, and more especially in taking part in the Federal Shoot at Lucerne, will therefore be heartily welcome.

Shooting practice takes place at Bisley Camp once or twice each month on Sundays, and as the London Swiss Rifle Team is affiliated with the Middlesex Rifle Association, the members enjoy the privilege and right of using the latter's most comfortable and homely Pavilion.

Applications for membership should be addressed to the Secretary, M. Paul Hilfiker, at 18, Montagu Place, W.1.

#### LONDON SWISS RIFLE TEAM.



### H. SENN

*President,*

London Swiss Rifle Team



We have great pleasure in publishing here with the portrait of the newly elected President of the London Swiss Rifle Team.

M. Senn has for many years played an important part in the Swiss Colony in London, where he is a popular personality.

Amongst the many offices which he has held during the last thirty years, we might mention the following:

Member of the Committee of the Swiss Mercantile Society, and President of the Sports section of this Society for several years. Member of the Committee of the City Swiss Club and President of the Club in 1933 and 1934. President of the Swiss Rifle Association for two years running, Vice-Chairman of the House Committee of the "Home for Aged Swiss." Member of the "Swiss Sports" Committee and for 15 years its Hon. Treasurer.

In addition M. Senn has been elected a Honorary Member of the "Union Helvetia" and the "Swiss Gymnastic Society."

#### SWISS ORCHESTRAL SOCIETY.

The people of South London were treated to a musical treat on Saturday, April 9th, when the Swiss Orchestral Society, under the conductorship of Mr. E. P. Dick, gave a very fine programme of music from compositions by Mendelssohn, Mozart, Offenbach and Handel.

A most appreciative audience heard these renderings with extreme delight, the programme being of a very high order.

The accompanying of Mr. E. P. Dick for the Solo of Mr. T. Weil was excellent, whilst the playing Violinist, Mr. T. Weil, aroused the audience to heights of rapture and applause which literally "brought the house down."

It is extremely kind of the Orchestral Society to give their time and talents in order to help the friends at Surrey Chapel, Blackfriars Road. Thanks were expressed by the Rev. R. F. Skinner who stated that the Orchestra had come like a lovely patch of blue in a dark sky and it would have the effect of brightening the lives of those who were present. We look forward to another visit from our friends.

*Rev. R. F. Skinner.*

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#### FORTHCOMING EVENTS.

Thursday, April 21st at 8.15 p.m. — Film lecture — by Flight Captain O. Heitmanek, of the Swissair. (Lecture in English) at Conway Hall, Red Lion Square, W.C.1 (Entrance free.)

Friday, April 22nd — Nouvelle Société Helvétique — Monthly Meeting, followed by a lecture by Major Paul de Vallière, further particulars to be announced.

Friday, April 29th, from 8.30 till 2 a.m. — Swiss Accordeon Club — Grand Social Supper Dance, at 74, Charlotte Street, W.1.

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7h. — Culte et Ste. Cène: Mr. Emery.

Pas d'école de Dimanche.

Le Pasteur Emery reçoit le Mercredi de 11 heures à midi 30, à l'église, 79, Endell Street, W.C.2. S'adresser à lui pour tous les actes pastoraux. (téléphone: Museum 3100, domicile: Foyer Suisse, 12, Upper Bedford Place, W.C.1.)

#### SCHWEIZERKIRCHE

(Deutschsprachige Gemeinde).

St. Anne's Church, 9, Gresham Street, E.C.2.

(near General Post Office.)

Karfreitag, den 15. April 1938.

11 Uhr morgens, Gottesdienst und Feier des Heiligen Abendmahls.

Ostersonntag, den 17. April 1938.

11 Uhr morgens, Gottesdienst, Confirmation und Feier des Heiligen Abendmahls.

7 Uhr abends, Gottesdienst und Feier des Heiligen Abendmahls.

Osternmontagsausflug, am 18. April 1938.

Treffpunkt Baker-Street (Metrop. Station). Zeit 10 Uhr 45. Abfahrt um 10 Uhr 55. — Proviant mitnehmen. Thee unterwegs.

Anfragen wegen Religions-bezw. Confirmandenstunden und Amtshandlungen sind erbeten an den Pfarrer der Gemeinde: C. Th. Hahn, 43, Priory Road, Bedford Park, W. 4 (Telephon: Chiswick 4156). Sprechstunden: Dienstag 12-2 Uhr in der Kirche.

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