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THE ELECTIONS IN THE TICINO

Last Saturday and Sunday were very busy days in the Ticino, owing to the election of the Legislative Council and of the Cantonal Government. Radicals, clerical-conservatives and socialists had been preparing for it for months past and the great question was whether the socialists would lose their one seat in the Cantonal Government and thereby the liberal-radicals regain the clear majority in that Council.

From 1890 till 1922 the Ticino had 32 years of uninterrupted liberal rule, but the introduction of the proportional system of election of the Cantonal Government and the growth of the socialist party, as well as an unnatural alliance between clerical-conservatives and socialists, compelled the liberal-radicals to form the opposition, although they are by far the strongest individual party in the Canton. As the friendship between socialists and conservatives had become almost purely nominal suggestions of a rapprochement between socialists and liberals had been current during the past twelve months, but then a substantial section among the liberals was of opinion that it was much better to have no entanglements and that by fighting single-handed they would eventually stand a better chance of attaining a clear majority over all the other parties combined.

The attempt of the liberals to gain three of the five seats in the Cantonal Government failed, but they increased their poll by 2115 votes over the results of 1927. The conservatives polled 53 votes more, the socialists 1496 more and the agrarians 785 less than in 1927. The strength of the parties is: liberals 14,491, conservatives 11,074, socialists 5,459 and agrarians 1,520. The substantial advance made by the liberal-radicals is undoubtedly due to a great extent to the untiring efforts of the Federation of Young-Liberal-Radical Societies, with a membership of over 3,000, under the leadership of the young lawyer, Dr. G. Guglielmetti.

The socialist party appears to have polled more votes than there are socialists in the Ticino, and there is no doubt that perhaps a few hundred radicals voted for the socialist candidate, either as a protest at certain tactics within their own party, or in the hope that, after the election, a basis of co-operation between liberals and socialists may be found. The socialists appear to have benefitted also from the conservative side. According to the news published by liberal papers a few days before the election, the leadership of the conservative party had given instructions to all their local delegates (800 in number) that while they were to impress upon the rank and file the need to vote solidly for the conservative list, they themselves were to vote for the socialist candidate, in order to prevent the liberals from gaining the majority in the Cantonal Government.

All the sitting members offered themselves for re-election and they were all successful, with the exception of Councillor of State Martignoni (conservative). Head of the Department of Finance, whose methods are not unknown to a number of the military taxpayers. National Councillor Dollfus headed the conservative list for the Southern Ticino, but as he is supposed to be fully occupied in Berne and is also spoken of by some papers as the most likely choice for the post of Swiss Minister in Rome, when it becomes vacant, or some other important post of the kind, it is thought he will resign in favour of Mr. Martignoni.

The attendance at the polls was a satisfactory one and the parties may be assumed to have voted full strength. About 32,600 citizens cast their vote and the Swiss population of the Ticino is less than 130,000. A large proportion of the Ticinese seasonal workmen in the German and French speaking parts of Switzerland went to the Ticino for the week-end to vote, and Saturday and Sunday morning almost all trains from northern Switzerland carried additional carriages and one fast train had to be run in duplicate to give accommodation to the many hundreds of Ticinesi going home to vote. The parties even drew upon some of their reserves abroad. Well over 6,000 Ticinese permanently domiciled abroad are included in the active voters' lists and can vote the day they reach home. A good many left France and Italy to go to the Ticino to vote, but the days appear to be gone when a special train was run from Paris to Bellinzona and a number of special trains used to run into Chiasso from the various centres of Northern Italy on the day of hotly contested elections in the Ticino. It may appear sheer waste of money, but it does keep patriotism alive far better than scores of fine speeches on August 1st.

One might ask whether there are no communists in the Ticino, and I must say I have never come across one. I think there are supposed to be a dozen or two, but very likely they are not Ticinese at all, and one never hears of them. O.B.

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FEBRUARY 19th, 1931.

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6.30 h.—M. R. Hoffmann-de Visme, Culte de Ste Cène.
7.30 h.—Répétition du Chœur.

BAPTEME.

Mary Christine Wetter, née le 25. Décembre 1930, fille de John Conrad et d'Edith née Dauermann de Gais (Appenzell)—le 25. Janvier, 1931.

Pour tous renseignements concernant actes pastoraux, etc., prière de s'adresser à M. R. Hoffmann-de Visme, 102, Hornsey Lane, N.6. (Téléphone: Archway 1798).—Heure de réception à l'église: Mercredi de 10.30—12 h.

SCHWEIZERKIRCHE

(Deutschschweizerische Gemeinde)

St. Anne's Church, 9, Gresham Street, E.C.2.
(near General Post Office.)

Sonntag, den 1 Februar 1931.

11 Uhr vorm.: Gottesdienst und Sonntagsschule.

7 Uhr abends: Gottesdienst.

8 Uhr abends: Chorprobe.

Dienstag, den 3 Februar, nachmittags 3 Uhr Näverein im Foyer Suisse.

Sprechstunden: Dienstag 12 1/2 Uhr in der Kirche. Mittwoch 5-6 Uhr im "Foyer Suisse."

FORTHCOMING EVENTS.

Wednesday, February 4th, at 7.30 p.m.—SOCIÉTÉ DE SECOURS MUTUELS: Monthly Meeting, at 74, Charlotte Street, W.1.

Saturday, February 7th, from 7 p.m. to 1 a.m. SWISS MERCANTILE SOCIETY: Annual Banquet and Ball, at the Midland Grand Hotel, St. Pancras, N.W.1.

Wednesday, February 18th at 8 p.m.—NOUVELLE SOCIÉTÉ HELVÉTIQUE: Annual General Meeting of the London Group at Swiss House, 34/35, Fitzroy Square, W.1.

Thursday, February 19th.—SWISS INSTITUTE ORCHESTRAL SOCIETY: Concert at Conway Hall, Red Lion Square, W.6.

Saturday, February 21st.—CITY SWISS CLUB: Last Cinderella Dance of the season at the May Fair Hotel, Berkeley Square, W.1. (From 6.45 p.m. to midnight.)

Saturday, February 21st.—CITY SWISS CLUB: Last Cinderella Dance of the season at the May Fair Hotel, Berkeley Square, W.1. (From 7 p.m. to midnight.)

Wednesday, February 25th, at 8 p.m.—SWISS MERCANTILE SOCIETY: Annual General Meeting at "Swiss House," 34/35, Fitzroy Square, W.1.

Tuesday, March 10th.—UNIONE TICINESE: Annual Banquet, Ball and Cabaret, at the Monico Restaurant, Piccadilly, W.