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NEWS FROM THE COLONY



ROBERT DUPRAZ †

It is with deep regret that we announce the passing away, on Saturday, 16th February, of Mr. Robert Dupraz, of 47 Pickwick Road, London S.E.21, at the age of 76.

Once again death has taken from us one of the "Old Guard" — a lovable man, who at one time played a conspicuous part in the London Swiss Colony.

The deceased was born at Clos du Lac, Clarens (Ct. Vaud), in 1887, the son of Colonel Adolphe Dupraz, Notary Public, at one time president of the Grand Council of the canton of Vaud. He received his schooling at Clarens, after which he served a three-year apprenticeship in a Bank in Vevey.

In 1905 Robert Dupraz came to London, entering the London Office of the Swiss Bank Corporation, with which concern he spent twenty years (including three years at the Head Office in Basle). In 1926 he joined the firm of G. Dimier & Co. Ltd., where he held a leading position until a few years ago, when he went into retirement.

Robert, as we all affectionately called him, rendered many services to the Swiss Colony. In 1912 he was elected a member of the General Committee of the Swiss Benevolent Society, where he held the post of Hon. Treasurer from 1914 to 1924, and that of President from 1925 to 1938. To this work, which was so dear to him, he devoted a great deal of time and thought; and many compatriots who — often through no fault of their own — had fallen on evil days received proof of his kindness and understanding. For his outstanding services rendered to the Society he was nominated in 1938 Honorary Vice-President. He occupied many other posts at one time or another in the Colony, such as president of the City Swiss Club (1950), president of the Swiss Sports Com-

mittee, president of the 1st of August Committee. He was also a member of the Nouvelle Société Helvétique, the Schweizerbund, and the Confrérie Vaudoise.

Robert was an enthusiastic mountaineer (he served as a gunner in the mountain artillery during the frontier occupation 1914-18). The writer has often listened to him relating his interesting experiences in conquering some of the highest peaks in our country.

Unfortunately the last years of his life were marred by ill-health.

He was a great lover of the mountains as well as of humanity. We shall miss you, dear friend!

Robert Dupraz leaves a widow and three married daughters, to whom we express our deep sympathy in their sad loss.

ST.

UNIONE TICINESE

The first General Meeting of 1963 was held on Sunday, 10th February, at the Swiss Hostel for Girls. The attendance was rather poor, but this was understandable, as, in keeping with this unusual winter, snow had been falling most of the morning; so that undoubtedly the inclemency of the weather and seasonal maladies contributed to a below-average attendance.

Apart from the normal items on the Agenda the Meeting approved unanimously two proposals put forward by the Committee.

1. That a sum of £250 be set aside in the accounts of the Society, to be known as the Carlo Berti Memorial Fund, for the purpose of fostering among the members of the Society a closer understanding of the Ticino.
2. That the Society join the Solidarity Fund in favour of an unknown Ticinese.

The meeting was followed by a "Cena Familiare" at which we were happy to welcome as our guests the Consul, Mr. Tosio, accompanied by Mrs. Tosio, and Mr. and Mrs. Z. Bianda. After an excellent meal, our President, Mr. P. Jacomelli, welcomed the presence of some fifteen young Ticinesi here as students, many of whom had made such a great contribution to the revival of our "Corale". He thanked Mr. Bianda for his services to the Society as a Committee Member during his five years here at the Consulate, and wished him and his wife a happy return to Switzerland as a result of his recall to Berne.

Mr. Tosio in reply delighted us by also speaking in Italian, and in the course of an inspiring address referred to the need to ensure that Italian-speaking Switzerland maintained its language and traditions. Neither speaker, however, was able to deliver his words without frequent interruption; as every time something was said of which our young compatriots approved, they went through a noisy ritual which raised happy laughter all round the room.

Naturally, the whole evening was interspersed with song, as Ticinesi can seldom gather together without breaking out into their traditional melodies; all of which explains the smile on everyone's face when the time came to go home.

V.B.