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UNIONE TICINESE TEA DANCE.

In this overcrowded island one has perforce to arrange social functions a long time ahead. Fate smiled on our "Ticinesi" by making their autumn Tea Dance on Sunday, October 21st, fall on the eve of the General Election not only, but also on the weekend preceding the Parliamentary elections at home. Thus as the dust settles here after one of the tamest parliamentary polls, our compatriots at home next Sunday will make their way to their voting stations fortified in the knowledge that the sister democracy across the Channel, having seen the red light, have dumped the red flag.

Gone for a moment was the noise and the excitement of the hustings as we crossed the threshold into the sumptuous foyer and ballroom of the Dorchester to be met by the friendliest of handshakes from President, Peter De Maria, and his charming lady. A number of couples were already gliding effortlessly across the floor to the toe-teasing tunes of Harry Vardon's band.

Everybody rose to receive Dr. Guido and Mrs. Lepori representing our Minister. Tea was served. Thereupon the President, in an impromptu speech welcomed the guests, mentioned the presence of veteran member Domenico Lunghi on a brief visit from the Cantone Ticino, where he has retired, and thanked all present for the unfailing support given to the Society.

We fully subscribed to the compliment which Mr. De Maria paid to the Organizing Committee, not least for having this time provided an almost wholly home-made cabaret.

Owing to accordeonist Luigi Bruni being unexpectedly taken ill, the turn billed "Ticinese trio" had become a 'duo', but they acquitted themselves quite creditably; Mr. Plinio Morosi providing accordeon accompaniment to Mr. Oscar Nation's simultaneous playing on the mandolin and mouth organ, of "Ticinese" folk tunes. Thus Mr. Nation was able to do thanks to a self-devised contraption that held the mouth organ before his mouth.

Just to show that talent is not a monopoly of the compatriots in the metropolitan area, the Portsmouth "Ticinesi" sent mezzo-soprano Marietta Albertolli, who charmingly rendered the English aria "The Swiss Boy", then in Italian "Ciribirribin", and again in English "Funiculi, funiculà".

We overlooked to mention that the cabaret was ably compered by Mr. Bradley Harris, whose turn it

now was to provoke 'mirthquakes' by playing invisible instruments, such as the harmonium, the harp, the flute, the violin by making the most comical gestures and appropriate sounds from nose and mouth. He concluded with an excellent rendering of Sousa's Triumphant March by an imaginary village band.

There could be no doubt where the three-hundred strong audience bestowed their favour when the Corale dell'Unione Ticinese appeared on the platform. They were in very good voice and sang two new popular songs which they have added to their repertoire, following them up with a 'pot-pourri' of the more common 'Canzonette' that we all know so well and that never fail to fill us with nostalgic longing for our lovely homeland.

The dances which then resumed and lasted until 10.30 p.m. were enlivened with prize-competitions, under the vigilant eye of MC. Virgilio Berti. The holder of the ticket lucky number received an attractive cocktail set.

There can be no doubt this was a most enjoyable occasion.

J.E.

XMAS GREETINGS.

We wish to direct the attention of our readers to the announcement in this issue.

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