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UNIONE TICINESE.

Tea Dance.

The Ticinese are lucky people, once again they held their Tea Dance under favourable weather conditions, which by no means deterred the attendance but seemed to add to it.

Nearly six-hundred of their members and friends assembled on Sunday, September 26th, 1948, at the Dorchester Hotel, Park Lane, W.1, to spend an agreeable and enjoyable afternoon and evening. It was a friendly gathering full of life and gay laughter which stimulated and acted as a tonic to all those who were worried about the uneasy political situation.

The spacious Ball Room of the Dorchester Hotel was gaily decorated with Swiss and English flags and the Unione Ticinese banner. Behind the orchestra platform was written in golden letters the inscription: "LIBERI E SVIZZERI."

Dancing was in full swing, when I arrived. I was greeted by the ever young and vivacious President, Mr. C. Berti, with the words: "To-day we must be young!" This sounded promising, but considering that every joint in my body ached, due to having put in a day's gardening the previous day, I had my "doubts about it." I wondered whether these prophetic words had a deeper meaning, — they had — presently I was offered a cigar, the look of which I did not like; it was not only dark, but almost jet black, and was apparently brought back by the President from his recent visit to his native canton.

I understand that these cigars, are made from plants grown around Faido (Ticino) I accepted the gift and forthwith started "puffing," but I will spare my readers an account of the sensations which I experienced, but if ever again I travel by train through the neighbourhood of Faido, I shall quickly pull the blinds down. However, I finished the "nasty" thing "to the bitter end," and bitter it was. The result was, that I greatly rose in the estimation of the President, so I think it was well worth while a little temporary discomfort.

I have seldom attended a Swiss gathering where no speeches were made, and so as not to cause a precedent, Mr. Berti, in a few well chosen words extended a hearty welcome to all the numerous visitors, especially to Dr. F. Rothenbühler, of the Swiss Legation, who represented the Swiss Minister, who was prevented from being present owing to his absence in Switzerland.

Monsieur Rothenbühler, very charmingly and equally shortly delivered greetings both from the Minister and from the Swiss Legation, wishing everybody an enjoyable time. The applause for both addresses was sincere, because they were "short and sweet."

As this year the 150th anniversary of the entry of the canton Ticino into the Swiss Confederation was

celebrated, it was only right that this event, which is of major interest to our compatriots from beyond the Gotthard, should be mentioned, and Mr. J. Eusebio, a former President of the Unione Ticinese, gave a very interesting and concise *compte-rendu* of the events which led to the incorporation of the canton of Ticino. Mr. Eusebio's address was listened to with great interest and was heartily applauded.

As a concession to those who are not able to indulge in dancing, the usual cabaret was produced which is an additional attraction to the now so popular Tea Dances of this Society.

This comprised firstly Don Carlos who sang with great enthusiasm Neapolitan songs, followed by a couple of dancers (Elvirita and Otero) who gave a display of ballroom and acrobatic dancing, whilst an "eccentric juggler" (Jack Jdento) exhibited a number of clever tricks.

The cabaret came to a close with the appearance of the famous "Corale Unione Ticinese." They sang very heartily a number of the popular Ticinese melodies which always leave in their hearers a host of sweet remembrances. To bring tears to members of the audience, as I witnessed, is perhaps the greatest compliment to their performance and I am sure that the energetic and accomplished conductor of the "Corale", Sig. Carlo Valchera, has been thus richly rewarded for his creditable efforts.

A raffle for most acceptable prizes followed and then more dancing until 10 o'clock, when this really enjoyable afternoon and evening came to a happy conclusion.

ST.

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