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UNIONE TICINESE TEA-DANCE.

On Sunday, 14th May, 1950, the Unione Ticinese held another most successful Tea Dance, at the Dorchester Hotel, Park Lane, W.1, at which approximately 500 people were present.

The festivities commenced at 4 p.m., an excellent tea being served an hour later, then after a suitable interval in which we had time to sit back and contemplate the enjoyable fare of which we had partaken, Mr. Carlo Berti, the popular President of the Unione Ticinese, addressed the gathering. He extended a sincere welcome to all present, and most especially to the Secretary of the Legation, Dott. Guido Lepori, and his charming wife, who attended on behalf of the Swiss Minister. Mr. Berti ended his address by wishing everyone a most enjoyable evening, and (amidst much laughter) with the reminder that if anyone present voiced a complaint at 10 p.m. that the evening had passed too quickly, they should only blame themselves for not arriving at 4 o'clock promptly!

Signor Lepori, who then took Mr. Berti's place on the platform, replied with true eloquence — thanking the President and Unione Ticinese for welcoming him and Signora Lepori, in their midst. He gave a special message to the younger members of the many Ticinese in London, telling them that they should learn to love their mother country, its valleys, its lakes, its alps — the Canton of Ticino — from whence in days gone by, originated famous architects, and in the present time, skilled administrators, men with initiative — then could it truly be said that even amongst the Ticinese in Great Britain this wonderful tradition will always be upheld. Signor Lepori's words of address were received with long and loud applause.

The Cabaret which followed, proved to be an admirable choice, the commencing artiste being a young Neapolitan singer from the Opera St. Carlo, Signorina Adele Solitri, who rendered three delightful songs. The first was an aria from *Cavalleria Rusticana*. "Cuore Ingrato" which she chose for her next song, was executed with great feeling and quality, and was warmly applauded, as also her finale, a Neapolitan aria, "Il Pescatore di Posillipo".

The next item on the Cabaret was Billy Ellis, the Blind Boy, already well known for his broadcasts on

Radio Luxembourg, who gave an excellent performance on his Accordion. He chose for his first piece, "Trieste Overture", followed by "Dizzy Fingers" and finally a delightful rendering of "Dark Eyes".

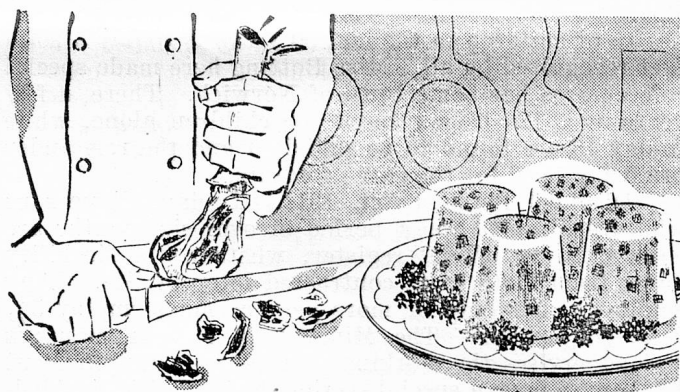
Last, but by no means least, the Corale Ticinese, under their conductor Mr. P. De Maria. They made a charming group in their colourful costumes, and their lively singing of various Ticinese songs, including "Lassé passà la Leva", "Il Cacciatore del Bosco", "Cuccù", all recalled nostalgic memories for those of us living so far from our beloved Ticino! Few could resist joining in their last number, "O Ticino, dolcissimo giardino . . ."

After the Cabaret the more energetic of us again joined the merry throng on the dance floor, and either leisurely waltzed, or with more gusto, whirled to the Rumba or the Samba to our heart's content — thanks to the artistry of Mr. Harry Vardon and his Band.

A beautiful China tea set (export only?) was raffled during the evening, and how I envied the very lucky Gentleman who won this lovely prize!

All too soon the evening drew to a close — but we had all thoroughly enjoyed every moment, and it was with happy memories of a day well spent, in the company of old friends and compatriots, that we reluctantly made our farewells. Incidentally, Mr. Berti tells me that it is hoped to hold the next dance on the 1st October, 1950 — so take due note of the date!

I.B.



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