

Zeitschrift: The Swiss observer : the journal of the Federation of Swiss Societies in the UK
Herausgeber: Federation of Swiss Societies in the United Kingdom
Band: - (1951)
Heft: 1151

Rubrik: Unione Ticinese

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UNIONE TICINESE — TEA DANCE. December 10th, 1951, Dorchester Hotel.

"And what about you, are you coming to our Tea Dance? Naturally you are, and you will be my guest." That was Mr. Carlo Berti's kind voice and how could I have resisted such an invitation, especially as I had already attended one of these Dances some time ago.

It was one of these wet and dull December days, this Sunday 10th, and it was just the right thing to do "on such a miserable day, to join this party" as a friend of mine said. And really nothing more cheerful could have been found than to go to the Dorchester Hotel and catch some of the sun and warmth of the Ticino. Because wherever the Ticinesi assemble you can feel something of it, they carry it in their hearts and know how to let others enjoy it as well.

When we entered the ballroom shortly after 4 o'clock some very eager couples were already dancing and enjoying the space of the floor which soon became scarce. The hall quickly filled and well over 500 guests were welcomed in a short speech by the President. Mr. Berti thanked his guests for having come in such a great number, especially as the whole benefit is going to the Swiss Benevolent Society. He expressed the wish that they may again enjoy this evening as many had done on previous dances. Thanks went not only to the guests but also to the many who helped to make the event a success like the artists and last but not least the employees of the Dorchester. (And I, as a guest should like to express our thanks not only to Mr. C. Berti, but also to Mrs. Berti on whose shoulder, no doubt, a good deal of the burden rested as well as

Mr. Vittorio Berti, who so very efficiently acted as M. C.) Mr. Berti welcomed the very faithful and old friends of the Unione Ticinese, Mr. and Mrs. A. F. Suter, and Mr. Lepori, who brought the Minister's and Mme. de Torrenté's warm greetings. He pointed out what selfless work Mr. Berti and his collaborators do for the Colony. Mr. Lepori then mentioned the importance for the Ticino of the recent elections of MM. Pini and Bossi as President of the National Council and Vice-President of the Council of States. He said: "it is a sign of well merited confidence shown by the Government to the people of the Ticino." Mr. Lepori closed with best wishes for a happy Christmas from the Minister, the Legation and himself. There was hardly time left to enjoy tea before the programme of the Cabaret started.

In swept Carmen Miranda, a dream of green and blue and purple, of flowers, veil and glittering sparkles, whirling round the dance floor in exotic excitement. And before one had realized it, he had gone and left piles of laughter among the guests. You must not think I made a mistake in writing "he" but it was not Carmen Miranda at all, but John Ray, "the well-known Female Impersonator". One really could have been deceived if it had not been for the waist...! After him Rooty Ditch brought memories back of Al Jolson with his negro songs which sound so sad. But this sadness soon changed when the "Corale Ticinese" started to sing all the songs we know and love and never get tired of hearing: "Marcia degli Scarponi," "La Barchetta in mezzo al mare," "I campan da Bellinzona," "Zoccolette" only to mention a few of them. I am rather a modest person but when I hear the Ticinesi sing I feel I am getting greedy. I want to hear more and more and am sure the others felt the same way. Surely you will join me when I say a special "thank you, to Mr. de Maria and the Corale as well as the Musians."

Everybody was longing to know, who was going to win the three fine bottles of port, gin and whisky in the tombola. The lucky winner, a gentleman, was received with great enthusiasm at his table, and I am sure he did not carry home three full bottles!

When we left at about 9.30 dancing was in full swing and it did not look as if the party would break up very soon. This Tea Dance was a most enjoyable event and I heartily advise you: Don't miss the next one, which will take place in May. So A rivederci in Maggio!

G.

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