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"SERATA TICINESE."

The Unione Ticinese were fortunate indeed in securing the modern Portland Hall, in Little Titchfield Street, W.1 (a stone's throw from the bombed site of Pagani's), for their "Serata Ticinese" on Friday evening, 20th January last. The Swiss Minister, M. Armin Daeniker, with the Legation Staff was present when the President, Mr. Pietro Jacomelli, welcomed a gathering of some 200 people to this novel form of entertainment in the Colony, a film and song evening. Besides Members of the Unione Ticinese, the Swiss Colony at large was well represented and there was a fair sprinkling of English friends.

Proceedings opened with a silent film in colour, a documentary, made under the auspices of the Swiss Post Office. It took the onlooker on an extended tour of the Canton of Ticino, from the towns to the villages in the valleys, and further up to mountainside hamlets. It showed us the people at work and at play. We particularly enjoyed an elderly parish priest handling his bees without a face-net, but using the smoke from his "toscano". We saw schools, churches, historic monuments and many places of interest, ending with the very colourful cortège on the last official day of a recent "Fiera Svizzera" at Lugano. The film gave us an idea of the products from the Ticinese soil, from chestnuts to sub-tropical fruits, such as oranges and lemons, from charcoal to zoccoli. For some obscure reason, wine-making was omitted, except for the picking of the grapes.

During the interval, the Corale of the Unione Ticinese, dressed in their costumes, sang a few "canzonette", under the leadership of Mr. Louis Bruni. The audience showed their appreciation by calling for an encore. Many a heart was touched with nostalgia by the familiar arias.

Finally, after a short presentation speech by M. Alberto Albertini, First Secretary of Legation, we enjoyed the main feature of the evening, the first Ticinese sound, colour film, under the title, "Ticino — Caro Paese". This is an official record made in 1953 on the occasion of the celebrations in our southern Canton of the 150th anniversary of its entry into the Swiss Confederation as an autonomous state, on an equal footing with the other Cantons. Again, we were conducted on a tour of town and country, and shown the natural beauties of the landscape, from alpine flora in the North to tobacco growing in the South. Then, pages of Ticinese history were quickly

turned and the cultural and economic evolution of the Ticinese people was ably illustrated. To close, we saw the pageantry with which the actual celebrations ended. We watched the procession of people and authorities move through the streets of the Cantonal capital, Bellinzona, followed by gigantic floats portraying episodes from Ticinese history and demonstrating local arts and crafts.

While we congratulate the organisers on their enterprise, we express the wish that this may not be an isolated incident and that it will be followed by several such entertaining evenings.

J.E.

SWISS ECONOMIC COUNCIL.

The President of the Swiss Economic Council and the Committee gave a cocktail party at The Dorchester, Park Lane, W.1, on Friday, January 27th, in honour of the members of the Swiss Delegation then in London for negotiating new Trade agreements. From the Delegation were present: Minister H. Schaffner, Dr. Buehler, Dr. Rothenbühler, Mr. Schwarz and Mr. Bolli. The Swiss Minister, Dr. Armin Daeniker was also present.

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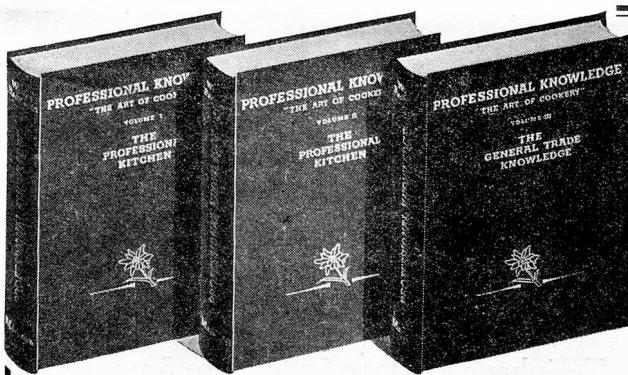
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