The Unione Ticinese ninety years old

Autor(en): **J.E.**

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NEWS FROM THE COLONY

THE UNIONE TICINESE NINETY YEARS OLD

There was no denying the quiet appeal of the large size invitation card that dropped through the letterbox a few days ago: a cask (on the wrong incline) complete with tap, resting under the Cantonal colours said: "You are cordially invited . . ." These days for an ancient monument to go to a "festa" of the Unione Ticinese, even when it is enticingly named "Cena alla nostrana", is somewhat of an ordeal, as one cannot prevent memories of past glories, and especially a legion of absent familiar faces from crowding in upon one. Still when the U.T. Committee says: "You are cordially invited" one would be too much of a boor to refuse. Incidentally there was no "R.S.V.P.", so perhaps it was not a question of exercising free will in any case.

So off we made to Valchera's at Richmond Sunday evening, 2nd February, to be received by the charming proprietress, Mrs. Jacomelli, her family, with members of the "direzione" as a long lost "uncle".

Some business, however, had to precede the "Cena", namely the Annual General Meeting; punctually at 5 p.m. the President, Mr. Peter Jacomelli, opened the proceedings by calling upon Miss Bozzini, the assistant secretary, to read the minutes of the previous A.G.M., which were unanimously approved, as was the auditor's report presented by Mr. Louis Jacomelli. The Secretary, Mr. Frank De Maria, then reviewed the activities of the society during the past year and the accounts thereof. This was likewise accepted with one amendment.

No better proof of the popularity of the Committee could be given than their re-election "en bloc" on the proposal of the chairman "pro tem.", Mr. G. Eusebio, seconded by Miss Silvia Morosi. The Committee was then charged to report on the possibility of raising the sickness benefit, which however for the current year was left unchanged. The admission of a new member was approved and also the usual donations. There followed a lengthy discussion on how the newly constituted Carlo Berti Fund could be used for the sending of members' children to the Sorengo holiday home. The participation of the Unione Ticinese in the Swiss Centre scheme was also mentioned.

By this time members being thoroughly exhausted, their thoughts were turning longingly to the cask pictured on the invite. But what a disappointment awaited them. When at last at the invitation of the President the company adjourned to the dining room, next to a sumptuous cold buffet, there was no cask for the "vino Merlot" had arrived from the Canton Ticino in demijohns. No matter, committee members were soon at work pouring the precious liquid into carafes to place on the tables. The menu itself had been chosen with an historical background as befitted the occasion. There was "salame di Milano" and also "panettone di Milano": the milanese Dukes at one time ruled over the greater part of the home Canton; that is, until Giornico (A.D. 1478). The "mortadella di Bologna" reminded us that Swiss prowess at arms once extended our influence into the neighbouring peninsula as far as Emilia — the Russian salad, that Ticinese architects built in St. Petersburg (now Leningrad) — the potato salad that this useful tuber, when it arrived in the Ticino in the early part of the 18th century it did not wholly displace the ubiquitous sweet chestnut (at present much attacked by the "cancro") as a staple food; the latter, served hot, duly followed to "help" with the wine! To end there was cheese "Bel Paese" . . . (no comment).

Having feasted on so much "history" the company duly endorsed our genial Vice-President's remarks regarding Mrs. Jacomelli with a full throated "for she's a jolly good fellow". Her elder son, Peter, then explained in Italian the difficulty under present circumstances for the Unione Ticinese to be true to its aims and to provide a rallying point both socially and culturally for the Ticinesi in Great Britain. Our Consul, Mr. Tosio, himself a "svizzero italiano" brought greetings from our Chargé d'Affaires, Mr. de Stoutz and other colleagues at the Embassy. The series of speeches was concluded by "socio benemerito" Giuseppe Eusebio, who gave a very brief survey of the past history of the Society.

Under the unofficial leadership of "Corale" members and Louis Bruni's accordion all present joined in singing a few canzonette with much gusto. In spite of the restricted space some of the younger members found room for the traditional "quattro salti in famiglia" before leaving.

J.E.

WIGMORE HALL
Saturday, 14th March 1964, 7.30 p.m.
PIANO RECITAL
by
RUTH HUGGENBERG
Works by Beethoven, Schubert, (Fantasy Op. 17)
Debussy and Brahms.

ACKNOWLEDGMENT

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