

Unione Ticinese - tea dance

Objektyp: **Group**

Zeitschrift: **The Swiss observer : the journal of the Federation of Swiss Societies in the UK**

Band (Jahr): - **(1950)**

Heft 1129

PDF erstellt am: **08.08.2024**

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UNIONE TICINESE — TEA DANCE.

If we wanted a sure sign that the piping days of peace, alas without plenty, are just round the corner again for us London Swiss it suffices that we cast our glance down the list of the Forthcoming Events in the Colony during the present fortnight: no less than four major functions! And each one mind you deserving of our support, even in these hard times when we are told that on an average 40 per cent of what we earn is taken from us by H.M. Chancellor of the Exchequer. And even the weather has not been kind, but the coldest of cold spells only served as a contrast to the warm reception we received at the Philatelists' luncheon, and yet again in the spacious Dorchester Hotel ballroom, in which Sunday afternoon, January 29th, the "Unione Ticinese" staged their latest Tea Dance. Despite a spirit most willing we did not make the Annual Dinner and Dance of our "Kaufleuten" or the Bal et Banquet de l'Indépendence of our Vaudois. But time marching on most inexorably, and with a General Election in the offing, who knows that next year we may attain our ambition and complete the round, partaking of "Rippli und Sauerkraut" with our "Schwyzer" on their formal (and less formal) occasions, imbibing generous Dôle with our "Romands", and singing the nostalgic "Canzonette" with the colourful Corale dell'Unione Ticinese.

Better pens than mine have now sung the praises of this brave group of "signorine e giovani ticinesi" who provide such an enjoyable feature of the "feste" organized by the Ticinese Society. On this occasion they sang in accomplished style a number of folk-songs (we noticed a few additions to the repertoire) with many among the audience joining in instinctively. It was evident, watching elderly "Ticinesi" in the room that the cherished arias transported them across the Channel, over the Alps, to their "villaggio", to their "monti". Humble reporter also remembered . . . Comprovasco . . . a whitewashed schoolroom in an ancient stone-built house . . . fifteen schoolchildren singing discordantly under the patient tuition of Sig. na maestra Ida Fumasoli (a sister of our new Buenos Aires Minister) the songs: "Dimmi o giovin Ticinese . . .", "Guarda che bianca luna . . ."

Thus we remembered and were grateful to the young ladies and gentlemen who had given up some of their leisure so that we might have this pleasant moment.

But while praising the "Corale", who with their maestro, Mr. Pietro De Maria, received thunderous recognition by an enraptured audience, we wish to mark our enjoyment of the other cabaret turns. Wally Fryer and Violet Barnes, British Triple ballroom champions, gave a graceful exhibition of a few modern dances. Miss Colleen Clifford of Variety Bandbox fame kept us rocking with laughter with witty sallies while impersonating international musical and variety artists. She surprised committee members whose names she had borrowed for her gags.

During a break in the dance prizes were distributed to holders of winning raffle tickets.

After tea had been served the genial President of the Unione Ticinese, "socio benemerito" Carlo Berti in the shortest of short addresses welcomed the Swiss Minister and Mme. de Torrenté, other guests and members, while thanking for the marvellous response (over 600 were present).

It being but a week from the 23rd January, when Switzerland and in particular the Canton Ticino commemorated Dr. Giuseppe Motta on the occasion of the 10th anniversary of his death, Mr. Giuseppe Eusebio recalled briefly to the assembled company Signor Motta's brilliant political career, his kindly and modest personality, his warm love of country.

Before closing we would like to compliment Harry Vardon's band for the excellent music, and award the "stick" to M.C. Virgilio Berti for a perfect turn-out and faultless performance.

J.E.

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