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UNIONE TICINESE.

**Thé-Dansant at the Dorchester Hotel, Park Lane,
Sunday, 3rd November, 1946.**

What is it that makes the Unione Ticinese Thé-Dansants so popular, that people rush to get tickets, and that so many are turned away disappointed, in view of the fact that even the Dorchester ballroom has its four walls and its limitations of space? This popularity, I suppose, is due to several good reasons — to the elegance of the ballroom itself, to the superb dancing floor, to the very fine dance music provided by the band, to the admirable cabaret items, to the grand opportunity afforded of renewing old friendships and making new ones — but over and above to the wonderful and infectious atmosphere of festivity, care-free enjoyment and Ticinese gaiety that pervades the whole dance from the moment the band first strikes up until the last bar of the last waltz. Certainly it does one's heart good to look around on these occasions and to see everywhere a happy and smiling face.

The Tea Dance held on the 3rd November excelled all its forerunners in every way. 690 people were present, and the dance was voted a huge success by all. The one regret was that because of the enormity of the gathering, some of the tables could not possibly be placed as near to the dance floor as would have been wished, and in this connection I have been requested by the organising committee to state that they are very sorry this was the case and that some people were disappointed, but that there was no alternative.

The "Spitfire Band" was, as always, in grand form, giving of its best, and playing with such an amazing air of liveliness that few, young or old, could resist joining in the inexhaustible supply of waltzes, foxtrots, quicksteps, tangos and rumbas — not to mention the "Conga" and the "Hula Hula"!

The cabaret show was excellent — in fact, perhaps the best that we have so far seen at these dances.

Firstly, there was Miss Sandra Roberts, soprano, who sang a very charming group of songs and whose sweet and melodious voice was much appreciated and applauded by all.

She was followed by the exhibition ballroom dancers, Miss Doreen Freeman and Mr. Victor Barrett, who aroused great admiration by the exquisitely graceful and rhythmic intricacies of their steps and movements.

But the highlight of the show was when the Unione Ticinese Corale appeared, dressed in their picturesque costumes, accompanied by piano, accordion and violin, and under the able direction of Mr. Carlo Valchera. They gave a selection of popular Ticinese "cazonette," new and old, including "La Ticinella," "Il Ventinove Luglio," "Il Cacciatore del Bosco" and "Picchia, Picchia, la Porticella." These were sung so delightfully, in the pleasing, unaffected and harmonious manner so typical of these folk songs, that with only the minimum of effort could the listener imagine himself to be not in Park Lane but in one of the sunny valleys of the Ticino. The abounding enthusiasm of the audience was evidenced in the rounds of applause and cheers which followed the Corale's performance, and they and their leader are to be heartily congratulated.

There were "spot" prizes and also, of course, a raffle, tickets for which were sold by a number of attractive girls in Ticinese costume, as well as by a most earnest and insistent lad of about ten summers,

who has all the makings of a very successful salesman! The draw took place amid great excitement, and fortunate indeed were those who won the prizes.

Just before the close of the dance, Mr. C. Ferrari, the President, announced that Mr. R. Mordasini, Chancellor and Vice-Consul at the Swiss Legation, who was also present that evening, would shortly be leaving London to take up a new consular post in Naples. Mr. Ferrari said he wished to express to Mr. Mordasini, on behalf of the Society, sincerest wishes for every happiness and success in his new appointment. With Mr. Mordasini's transfer the Ticinesi in London will certainly lose a very valuable adviser and friend.

All too early did ten o'clock come, and with the many "arrivederci" exchanged in anticipation of the next dance — and make it soon, please!

And as a last word — on behalf of all those who participated in such a very enjoyable function — a big thank you to the organising committee, through whose hard endeavours the dance was such a great success.

Eviva i Ticinesi!

R.A.

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