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UNIONE TICINESE
Grand Dance in Aid of the Swiss Benevolent Society
on Thursday, 10th March 1960 at the
"Schweizerbund"

Who amongst my compatriots has not heard or sung at one time or another, the well-known song "I Ticinese son bravi soldati"? We know of course that they fought bravely on many a battlefield, but their last encounters were over one hundred and fifty years ago, which is a long time ago, but we can only assume, that should the country be imperilled, they would again fight as bravely as their ancestors did. Of one thing, however, we are certain, they are generous, patriotic, and jolly good company, as could be witnessed on this happy evening at the "Schweizerbund".

If last year's Dance — for the same purpose — was not wholly successful owing to a certain lack of interest on the part of the Colony, this year — as the President in his short address rightly said — was a splendid success; not the least due to the presence of a large party from the Swiss Embassy.

Right from the start of the evening there was a happy and carefree atmosphere prevalent. The dance band was indefatigable, and so were the revellers, and the space allotted for dancing soon became too small so that a certain "elbowing" was unavoidable. Everywhere one looked there were smiling faces, and when a Ticinese *signorina* smiles, it looks as if the sun which shines in such abundance over her native canton is lighting up her face. Dance after dance followed with hardly any interval.

In order to give the hard worked dance band a little rest, two cabaret turns were introduced. There appeared "Ming Chow", the "lightfingered one", in Chinese costume complete with pig-tail and fan. I do not know whether he has ever been to China, hailing as I was told from somewhere north of the Gotthard, but he was successful in creating an atmosphere of this strange country. With an amazing swiftness, he managed to make watches and bracelets vanish from wrists, and wallets, cheque-books and cigarette cases left the pockets of their owners who were quite unaware that they had been "tampered" with. All sorts of articles vanished apparently in "thin air", and were found in the pockets of members of the audience. Of the many things which came out of the hat of "Ming Chow" was a Christmas turkey ready to be cooked. It is only fair to say that all "extracted" objects were returned to their rightful owners.

The second turn was the appearance of the "Corale" of the Unione Ticinese. They are by now so well-known that any lengthy introduction is superfluous. Dressed in their becoming national costume they rendered with great vivacity many of the songs, which always awake in their hearers treasured memories of happy days spent in that lovely corner of our homeland. One could lately read in the "Swiss Observer" that the canton of Ticino is becoming invaded not only by Swiss from the "other side of the Gotthard", but also by foreigners; I have noticed that this "penetration" — this time by Swiss only — has spread to the "Corale", a young and pretty lady from one of the three original cantons of the Confederation, gave a couple of yodelling songs, which were acknowledged with thunderous applause. I feel sure that the "Corale" do not mind this charming in-

vasion. They finished their performance with their signature thune "Ciau, Ciau, Ciau!", leaving the Hall arm-in-arm amidst great applause.

Dancing then was resumed in an almost tropical heat — not only hearts melted, but also collars became "soft" — the only beneficiary of these climatic conditions, was the wine-cellar of the "Schweizerbund".

In order to swell the funds of the Swiss Benevolent Society a number of attractive ladies invaded the audience in order to sell tickets for a tombola. As the prizes, offered generously by a number of Swiss firms, were almost as attractive as the ladies — who managed to extract with the greatest of ease the money especially from the pockets of the male section — they went like "hot cakes". The winners seemed to be highly delighted with their prizes, whilst those who were out of luck took it with good grace, after all it was for a good cause.

Towards the end of the evening, the vivacious President of the Unione Ticinese, Mr. Peter Jacomelli, with a few words expressed his pleasure at seeing such a large attendance. He especially welcomed the members of the diplomatic and consular staff of the Swiss Embassy, singling out Consul E. Ribi for his always ready support; he greeted the members present from the Swiss Benevolent Society, Messrs R. de Cintra, J. Zimmermann, and M. A. Rothlisberger, as well as Mr. A. Stauffer, editor of the "Swiss Observer". In concluding Mr. Jacomelli announced that a Gentleman present — who wished to remain anonymous — had generously offered to double the profit which had been made that evening. This piece of good news was loudly cheered.

Sharply at midnight the band played "God Save the Queen", and an agreeable and lively evening came to a close. The Unione Ticinese deserves not only the thanks of the Swiss Benevolent Society for their generosity in arranging this Dance for their benefit, but the thanks of the entire Colony for this "beau gaste". They are indeed "bravi soldati".

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The Unione Ticinese wishes to thank the following for their help, by either purchasing tickets or by giving prizes for the tombola: F. S. Matta Ltd., Muller & Co., Bosch Limited, Mr. J. Bonvin, Kettners Wine Shop, Swiss National Tourist Office, Swiss Benevolent Society, Dimier Brothers, Mr. M. Zublin, A. Wander Limited, Sandoz Products Limited, Suchard Chocolate Limited, Lindt Chocolate Manufacturers and Swissair.

The Dance appears to be an even greater success than last year, for at the moment it appears that the profit will be between £50 and £55 as against £37 last year.

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At the Annual General Meeting held at the Schweizerbund on Sunday, 28th February 1960 the following were elected to form the Committee of the Unione Ticinese for 1960:— *President*: Mr. P. Jacomelli; *Vice-Presidents*: Mrs. L. Bozzini, Mr. C. Berti; *Secretary*: Mr. F. A. De Maria; *Assistant Secretary*: Miss A. Bozzini; *Treasurer*: Mr. V. Berti; *Collector*: Mr. F. Bassi; *Members*: Mrs. L. Bruni, Messrs. Z. Bianda, J. Diviani, L. Bruni, J. De Maria, F. Allegranza, C. Roselli, J. Pedretti.