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SWISS CHILDREN'S ANNUAL CHRISTMAS PARTY.

On the afternoon of January 1st Mr. Campart welcomed 160 children to the "Victoria Halls" for the Colony's first Swiss Childrens' Christmas Party since 1938.

The party began with the carol "The First Noel," followed by the story of the nativity read by one of the boys. Rev. H. Blum, of the Swiss Church, then told the story of Sepp, the little Swiss goatherd, who celebrated Christmas alone in his hut in the mountains, and saved the life of the lost traveller who saw the light of his Christmas candles shining across the snow.

After this story, there was Swiss music played by Mr. Gandon and his accordionists in National Costume. The children loved the merry tunes and were especially delighted to see Mr. Gandon's little boy playing the cowbells, as well as his daughter and three little friends all playing accordions.

Now came the time for fun: Freddie the Clown made the children laugh and shout and sing till tea time. Several children went on to the stage "to help him," and what a time they had! James dressed up as a Chinese magician, Anne did a paper-tearing trick, and Malcolm won a sixpence. Then Heidi was a princess and made a cake by a recipe unknown even to Swiss cookery books. Freddie's little marionette brother and his Jack-in-the-Box came too, and we wished they could have stayed longer.

Father Christmas came in during tea carrying a birch for the bad boys, which he assured us, he did not need to use! His jovial talk endeared him to all, and many of the little ones shook hands with him. This brought the party to an end, and before going home, the children all received presents including chocolates, kindly given by Mr. Kunzle of Birmingham.

It was a great pleasure to see his Excellency, the Swiss Minister and Madame de Torrenté with their little girl, and we thank them for honouring the party with their presence.

The Committee is very grateful to all those who made donations to the Childrens' Christmas Party Fund, and thus made it possible to revive this old custom in our colony. To several onlookers this brought back happy memories of pre-war Christmas parties, when they themselves had been children!

This year's expenses have been rather heavy, so Mr. Campart will still be glad to receive contributions

from any who may have missed the "Little Black Book."

Very hearty thanks to Miss Ida Matthey for all the trouble she has taken to find the addresses of the parents of over 200 children, to send them their invitations; and also to the members of the Committee for their untiring co-operation.

A.L.B.

SWISS ECONOMIC COUNCIL.

The above Council, which was hitherto known under the name of "Council for the Study of Swiss Problems" held a meeting, followed by a dinner, on Wednesday, December 29th, 1948, at the Dorchester Hotel, Park Lane, W.1.

Mr. E. Steiner was in the Chair, and there were fifty members and guests present.

The President welcomed the members and the guests, amongst whom were: Dr. V. Umbricht, Swiss Legation, H. Bähler, Swiss Legation, C. Kunzle, O. Ernst, Manager Swiss Federal Railways, G. A. Ronus, General Manager, Dorchester Hotel, and A. Stauffer, Editor, *Swiss Observer*.

After the minutes of the last meeting were read by the Honorary Secretary, Mr. A. Renou, a very interesting *exposé* on the forthcoming Anglo-Swiss financial pourparlers in Berne, and "Swiss Trade Problems," was given by Dr. V. Umbricht, Secretary of Legation, who deputised for Monsieur E. de Graffenried, who was unable to attend.

Messrs. R. de Cintra, E. Sommer and Gautier spoke on the conditions in their respective trades and Mr. C. Kunzle (Birmingham) expressed his pleasure at being able to attend, for the first time, a meeting of the Council, an institution which he termed as of major importance to the commercial community of the Swiss Colony in Great Britain.

On the conclusion of the meeting, an excellent dinner was served, which was attended by Monsieur Henry de Torrenté, Swiss Minister.

Mr. E. Steiner, President of the Council extended a hearty welcome to the latter, who in return addressed the company, congratulating them on their useful work.

The gathering, which was a very pleasant affair came to a close shortly after 10 p.m.

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