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undertakings manage to keep open to traffic under the most adverse conditions.

The only normal gauge international main line in Switzerland which is not nationalised is the Berne-Lötschberg-Simplon Railway. It links Northern France and the Swiss capital with the Rhone Valley and Italy. Operating conditions are similar to those on the Gotthard Line. The Lötschberg is a typical alpine railway. It was built between 1906 and 1930 at the cost of about 9 million pounds. The passenger who travels through this enchanting and often awe-inspiring mountain fastness hardly realises that an additional half million pounds were spent on special safety measures and constructions to protect the line against rock falls, avalanches and damage by mountain streams which in early summer when the snow and ice melt turn into raging torrents. There is, above Goppenstein at the northern exit of the main tunnel, a section of the line especially exposed to danger by avalanches. Its length is 443 metres, and the amount spent on constructional work was 650,000 francs or 1,470 francs per metre. Almost for the whole distance of 23 miles from the southern exit of the main tunnel of Brigue, the line is carried high up on the rocky walls of the Lonza and Rhone valleys, where avalanches are frequent. As a result, the train passes through a succession of avalanche galleries. I am almost certain that their number is a record for so short a distance. Curiously enough they hardly interfere with the magnificent view, as most of them are open towards the valleys. Many of these constructions all along this railway are models of their kind and often visited by interested experts from abroad.

(To be concluded in next issue.)



ELSIE ATTENHOFER PERFORMANCE.  
March 27th, Institut Français.

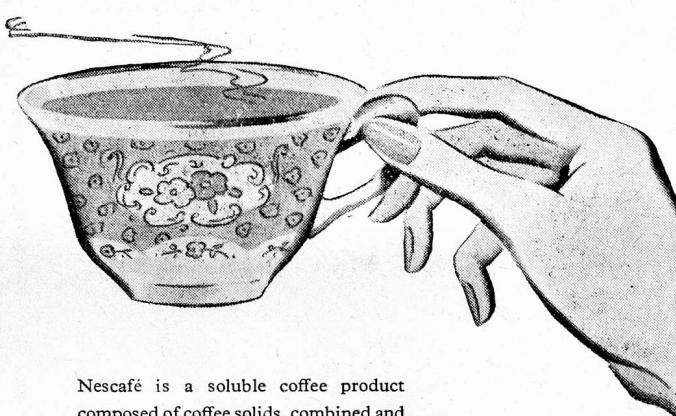
Every seat was sold in advance for this great entertainment — and apparently some more, because extra chairs had to be brought in while the organisers were in despair where to accommodate irate ticket-holders. The crush to get in proved to be well worth while. Our Swiss Ruth Draper or, if you will, Yvette Gilbert, unfolded a rich and varied programme with consummate skill to the delight of 400 compatriotes and English and other friends of Switzerland.

Miss Attenhofer opened with our old folk-song "S'Vreneli am Thunersee", followed by an English and a Ticinese folk-song, all of which were much applauded. For a Swiss artist to come to England to interpret English Folk Songs such as "The Tree in the Wood" or "The Drummer and the Cook" great daring and self-confidence are required. Whether she quite succeeded with our English friends we do not know. To her compatriotes the song dialogue between the drummer and the cook could not have been more funny. The negro song by Max Werner Lenz, however, definitely failed to get across, the argumentative pathos of the plaint not corresponding to our own experience of the mellow sentimental simplicity of the negro-world. In "le vieux château," however, a dramatic song from the Yvette Gilbert repertoire, Miss Attenhofer succeeded in capturing the audience so completely that she sent shivers down our backs as the old lady shivered with fear in her lonely vigil in her inherited castle.

The second part of the Programme opened with a delightful "Sunday Conversation" of a Bernese lady of leisure with her beau over the telephone. No doubt Miss Attenhofer must have felt herself that here, in

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63.AA

this burlesque genre of fun lies her greatest forte. Certainly the audience rocked with laughter as this lazy dame who could not make up her mind whether she could be bothered going out with her admirer unfolded the abysmal depth of her plattitudinous mind. In "The hairdresser" Miss Attenhofer excelled again in similar vein and in "Dried Eggs" she gave us an unpayable conversation scene over the banister between another less lazy but more tongue-tied Bernese Hausfrau and her "Welsch" neighbour downstairs who could not abide dried eggs. The "New Loreley" was perhaps somewhat laboured, but the "Sailor Song" by Lenz and the final house-wife's song about her endless labours were most telling. "The Scarecrow" is a macabre philosophical exercise with much dramatic effect, which, however, seemed to suffer in translation. The crowning glory of the evening as of other performances we have seen of Miss Attenhofer's was the telephone conversation of the secretary of "European Union" with all the celebrities on the political firmament of our poor old Continent. The audacity of some of her sallies might have caused embarrassment but for the delightful naivety of the fun.

It was a great evening altogether, marred only by a slight sense of grievance, detectable here and there, because the Programme was a little too ambitious as far as English is concerned and therefore disappointed those somewhat who had hoped for a more Swiss entertainment in our native languages. We cannot help feeling that Miss Attenhofer might have succeeded even better in capturing all our hearts and those of our English friends present, if she had in fact retained a larger part of her programme and her patter in between the numbers in her original languages and habitats. For her real greatness, surely, is rooted in the very multilingual colloquialism of her art, inspired and sustained by the Swiss background of four languages and a multitude of dialects.

After the performance there was a private reception at the "Glendower Hotel". The catering could not have been better, but unfortunately, it could only start an hour late and the patience of the guests was sorely tried by the fact that Miss Attenhofer arrived even later, as she had to get ready after a most exhausting evening. Grateful mention should not be omitted of the competent accompaniment on the piano by Mr. Günther Bunz. The great success of the evening, which was attended by our Minister, Monsieur Henry

de Torrenté, and a large party from the Legation, was no doubt the best form of thanks the indefatigable organisers of Elsie Attenhofer's visit could have wished for.

### WATERCOLOURS EXHIBITION.

By RICHARD WEISBROD,  
at the Leger Galleries, 13, Old Bond Street, W.1.  
(Open from April 29th to May 17th, 1952.)  
Daily 10—6, Saturdays 10—1.

We wish to direct the attention of our readers to the forthcoming exhibition of recent watercolours by our compatriot Richard Weisbrod. This fine artist is no stranger to the Swiss Colony having exhibited some of his paintings in March, 1950, at the Leger Galleries. We understand, that he also exhibited last year in Zurich. We heartily invite our readers to visit this interesting exhibition, they will not be disappointed.

Richard Weisbrod was born on April 16th, 1906, at Affoltern-am-Albis near Zurich, and came to live in Blackburn in 1932. He is a member of the Manchester Group, the Manchester Society of Modern Painters, the Manchester Graphic Club and the Blackburn Artists' Society. He shows regularly in the provinces and in London and is represented in the Blackburn and Salford permanent collections as well as in private collections.

In this exhibition is a wide range of subjects — sordid Lancashire back-Streets, sparkling studies of Parisian boulevards, and a variety of Swiss scenes.

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