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34th SWISS CHILDREN'S ANNUAL CHRISTMAS PARTY.

On Saturday January 3rd nearly 200 children came to the Victoria Hall for the Swiss Children's Christmas Party. We were very pleased to be able to welcome the Swiss Minister and Madame de Torrenté who came with their daughter and their presence was greatly appreciated by all.

Last year the party was opened by the Sunday School of the French-speaking community, so this year it was the turn of the Sunday School of the German-speaking community. Under the direction of the Rev. H. Spörri they sang carols in German and one of the girls, Heidi Meier, read the story of the Nativity in English.

Next came the Jacquard Puppets. Enchanting little puppets who danced and acted to music and singing in a model theatre with lovely scenery. We laughed at Barnacle Bill the Sailorman, and The Little White Duck. Then we were entranced by the grace of the dancers and the neat footwork of the Highland Laddie. The show ended with a wonderful circus which was perhaps the number the children liked the best.

Mr. Gandon and his accordionists then played the merry Swiss tunes we all look forward to hearing and Jean Michel surprised and delighted us with his yodelling. Last year he recited and sang and two years ago he played the big cowbell. Well done Jean Michel and thank you!

The Swiss music heralded the colour film "Balloons over Switzerland". By courtesy of Esso Films we were able to see the beautiful scenery, interesting places and friendly people to be found on a trip round Switzerland starting at Zürich and finishing at Lugano.

The entertainment was over and it was time for tea. Mr. Gandon and his accordionists kindly played again and we thank them very much for the lively music that makes tea-time so enjoyable. Father Christmas came and received an uproarious welcome and then there was the distribution of the presents.

An account of the party would not be complete without a reference to the late Mr. César Campart. The Rev. C. Reverdin had welcomed the children in his stead and had told them to remember the friend who had been devoted to them all for so many years.

The Committee wish to thank all those who helped by giving money, gifts or their services. They are especially grateful to Mr. Dupraz for undertaking the collection of the necessary funds and to Mr. Franoux for his constant attention to every detail which ensured the successful carrying out of the programme.

A.L.B.

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