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NEWS FROM THE COLONY

SWISS CHILDREN'S ANNUAL CHRISTMAS PARTY

Once again the traditional Swiss Children's Christmas Party was held at the Victoria Hall in Bloomsbury Square on Saturday, 4th January. Over a hundred children attended. The entertainment commenced with a selection of French and English songs presented by a young compatriot who accompanied himself on the guitar.

Pasteur Jacot then spoke a few words of welcome both to the parents and children. It was next the turn of that old favourite "Uncle Percy" who combines the virtues of magician, ventriloquist and Punch and Judy Show, which the children greatly enjoyed. After this the children were shown films by courtesy of the Swiss National Tourist Office; we were taken to the sun and snow clad slopes of Switzerland with breathless ease. The second film showed the magic of the Swiss handkerchief industry, and a third film took us to the beautiful valleys of the Appenzell.

Then it was tea-time, during the course of which the children were visited by Father Christmas much to the joy of the younger ones. Upon leaving, each child received a parcel containing a toy or game, nuts, fruit and sweets.

We were pleased to have amongst us Monsieur and Madame J. de Stoutz from the Swiss Embassy and take this opportunity of thanking them for joining us on this occasion. Our sincere thanks also go to all those who made this happy event possible, both to those who contributed so generously and to those who kindly helped in the organisation.

If any reader knows of Swiss children who do not receive an invitation for this party, would he or she kindly contact

Mrs. J. Zwicky,
29 Friars Walk,
Southgate, London N.14.
Tel: ENTERprise 1346.

She will be pleased to welcome them to this gathering in the future.

We send our very best wishes for the New Year and are looking forward to seeing as many children as possible again next year. J.Z.

NOUVELLE SOCIETE HELVETIQUE (London Group)

On Wednesday, 29th January

7.45 for 8 p.m.

at the Glendower Hotel

9 Glendower Place, S.W.7

AN INFORMAL DINNER

to meet Monsieur Maurice JACCARD
Chief of the Section for the Swiss Abroad
Federal Political Department

Dinner at 17/-, including gratuity, paid at the table, must be booked by Monday the 27th.

CHRISTMAS DAY AT MANCHESTER

Once more the annual Christmas day celebrations took place in the beautiful rooms of the Midland Hotel in Manchester. We all thank M. Simon and the other members of the Swiss Club who made it possible for us to have a very enjoyable day.

It was with great pride that the small children ate their delicious tea in the presence of grown ups!

Being well fed the happy people entered the decorated room and stood in awestruck silence before the warm and inviting Christmas tree lit by many candles and possessing "luscious" sweets hanging on the branches.

With the front row seats all occupied by enraptured children (the parents fading into the background) the traditional wait for Santa Claus was passed in singing Silent Night. Then, the long awaited moment came at last! Three loud knocks announced the arrival of Father Christmas and amid hushed silence he walked in carrying an apparently very, very heavy sack and eyeing the somewhat shy children with looks that would kill anyone with a guilty conscience!

The question of "have you all been good children during the past year?" was answered with remarkable promptitude, the arguments and troubles of 1963 obviously already forgotten!

At the request for a song for Santa Claus a few hesitant adventurers ventured forward to be lifted bodily onto a table (Father Christmas thankfully remembered either the pride of the older children at having to stand on a table or the fact that the improvised stage could not possibly hold these well-built performers!). The long-practised verses, songs and poems poured forth from the happy children, their eyes either gazing intently in Santa's kindly face or with pleasant anticipation at the bulging green sack brought in by the old gentleman. Having performed in a way even the Beatles could not beat the thrilled children received prizes of sweets.

Before Father Christmas left to continue his journey some very able ladies promised to distribute the brightly wrapped and exceptionally beautiful parcels deposited beneath the tree.

The cries of excitement and joy, the presents, balloons and paper hats were all ample proof of a day which I am sure the small children will remember with sweet innocence for many years to come.

FANNY (age 17).

APOLOGY

Unfortunately some printing errors concerning dates and figures crept into the last issue. On the front page Federal Councillor Tschudi was stated as having polled 204 votes; this should read 190.

It is with special regret that we apologise for three errors which occurred in the obituary notice of Mr. Henri Charnaux. He died on 4th October, not 4th August. It was in 1918 that he got married, and he left six grand-children, not five.