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CHRISTMAS COMES BUT ONCE A YEAR BUT IT CAN BRING BARGAINS TOO!

Some of the heaviest rain in London for many years could not keep away the many hundreds of people who thronged to the Central Halls in Westminster for the Swiss Churches' annual bazaar at the beginning of November.

And well rewarded were those who made the effort! Not only was the event a good chance to meet old friends and perhaps make some new ones, there were bargains and goodies in abundance.

At lunchtime there was an opportunity to sample some of our more traditional sausages and other foods while for those who wanted to enjoy Swiss food later at their leisure there was an opportunity to buy cheeses and other goods at very competitive prices, thanks largely to the generosity of those who supported the event by providing goods at cost price.

There was also no shortage of volunteer helpers, including many of our Embassy staff who were none-too-easy to recognise as they were all in "plain clothes" — i.e. casually dressed for the work in hand.

Much of the success of this event — it raised a staggering £4,000 (almost) for the churches — is due to the hard work of Mrs. Suess and her committee and Mrs. Gyssler who coped fantastically well with the daunting task of organising the catering.

This fact did not go unmentioned by the Swiss Ambassador who graciously consented to open the proceedings. In so doing Dr. Thalmann did something which he acknowledged was somewhat unusual for a Swiss Ambassador in these days of economic restraint when we are being told to invest, save and freeze wages.

He suggested that we should all open our wallets and pockets and spend our money on the goods on display, not only in order to help the Swiss churches but also to get a good bargain.

Having uttered these few words our Ambassador promptly proceeded to

follow his own good advice. It is generally acknowledged that he and Madame Thalmann could be seen doing some of their own Christmas shopping.

The children too were well catered for with various stalls and competitions designed to keep them amused while their parents did their shopping. Father Bossard of the Catholic community was almost overrun at times by children clamouring to reach his treasure hunt and memory game stalls. All good, happy stuff that most of us will, I am sure, look forward to again in the years to come.

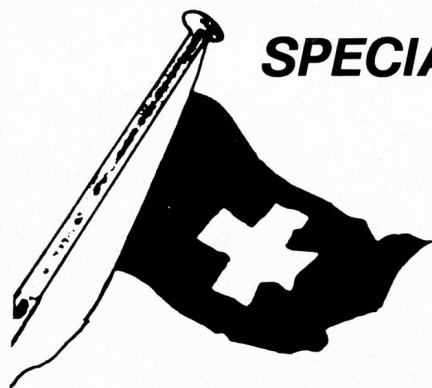
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TV VIEWERS' ASSOCIATION

Several television viewers' associations have been set up or planned during recent months. Their purpose is to act as a kind of consumer association with respect to the quality of television programmes. The existence of these groups has been widely commented because they have turned out to be mainly of conservative tendencies and inspired by a wish to monitor the political and moral orthodoxy of the various programmes.

One such organisation, la "Société pour le développement de l'économie

suisse", has set up a monitoring service and publishes a bulletin called "reflets de la Radio-Télévision suisse romande". It is based in Geneva and sponsored by industrialists. There is another organisation, closer to the grass roots of conservatism, called the Hofer Group, which has also undertaken to ensure that programmes respond to certain standards. This trend has been criticised by several radical commentators as a kind of constraint on the freedom of expression, but others have seen in it the beginning of a fruitful dialogue between the Television establishment and the viewing masses.



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