

A happy Christmas

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THOUGHTS AND WISHES.

The year 1934, with its tribulations, disappointments and often bitter experiences, is about to pass into oblivion, and few will be the tears shed over its passing away. It has left the world, little better if not worse off than at its commencement, and a tired world is still longing and waiting for that betterment, which has been so often promised and yet seems so slow to arrive.

There are people who have almost given up hope, and have predicted that the seven lean years will be doubled if not trebled. Although there is little cause to be optimistic, whilst there is so much unrest, misunderstanding and illfeeling amongst the various countries; yet it would be a sad outlook indeed if not one glimmer of hope was left in our hearts, that things must ultimately take a turn for the better. Does it not largely depend on each member of the community to hasten along, the turning of the tide? We all, each of us, some in a smaller, some in a larger degree can help to make our earthly, abode a fitter and better place; by trying to foster that spirit of goodwill towards mankind. Let us start at home, or amongst our countrymen here and in our homeland, let us make an effort to understand each other more, to forgive and forget some of the things which have vexed or annoyed us in the past, to live more up to the maxim that "to err is human, but to forgive devine."

It behoves the Editor of the *Swiss Observer* to pass a parting glance at the outgoing year, it would be superfluous to state, that the universal crisis had no effect on our venture, the truth is, that we have suffered like everyone else, and if we have not broadcasted our distress, we have done it, in order not to add to the worries of those who have given us their support in such a generous way, we believe in trying to fight our own battle, without squealing and appealing, whenever a dark cloud appears on the horizon. One of the biggest disappointments for the Editor was the small almost insignificant response to the appeal for new subscribers in our special 15th Anniversary number. Our faithful and untiring collaborator *Kyburg* has taken up his pen to appeal to our compatriots throughout the British Isles, he has done it in a way, which will endear him for ever to all those, who have our little paper at heart, unfortunately the success of his labour has been so small, that we have not yet found the heart to acquaint him of the great disillusionment we have experienced.

It may be that we missed *le moment psychologique*, and that our prospective new subscribers were awaiting a more convenient moment to give us their support, which is so badly needed. It would be indeed a splendid New Year's resolution to become a reader, and therefore supporter of the *Swiss Observer*. If each one of our present subscribers would make it a duty to induce *only one* friend of theirs to become a regular subscriber, *all our troubles and anxieties would be at an end*, and we could then go to work with a joyful heart, to improve and enlarge the *Swiss Observer*.

This seems to us not an impossible task, and we make an earnest appeal to our patrons to try and persuade at least *one* of their friends to give us this help.—

Yet in spite of some disappointments, the Editor is glad to say, that he has received throughout the year, numerous messages of appreciation and encouragement, especially from readers from the provinces, to whom the *Swiss Observer* is almost the only link between them and their country.

The Editor wishes to thank his collaborators, *Kyburg*, *ek.*, *M.G.*, and *H.E.*, for their great and never failing help, without which it would have been almost impossible to carry on. He wishes to thank the Swiss Minister and the Swiss Consuls at Liverpool, Manchester and Glasgow for their appreciated and valuable co-operation. The Publisher for his never failing help and advice. Thanks are due to all those who have, from time to time sent articles or communications; including those, who, on many occasions have informed him, that they were *going* to write, and who *never* wrote, and he sincerely hopes, that amongst their New Year's resolutions will be the one, to honour a long standing promise.

Editor.

Jeder SCHWEIZER der die heimatliche Scholle liebt,

wird beim Lesen von

WANDERER GEGEN ABEND

der soeben erschienenen kleinen Novelle von MARIE BRETSCHER seine helle Freude haben.

EINE SCHOENE NEUJAHRSGABE!

Erhaeltlich gegen 5/- von U. BRETSCHER
139, Cannon Street, E.C.4.

32nd Annual Concert and Ball

of the

UNIONE TICINESE

at Pagani's Restaurant, Great Portland Street.

Another Christmas is upon us. Quite an event for the children. Yet we grown-ups, however much we like to exhibit dignified indifference, cannot help being inwardly thrilled by the season's festive proceedings.

In fact, Yuletide in the Western World is as old as humanity; not therefore a mere ceremony, but a venerable ancient tradition whose origin vanishes in the twilight of Time.

The appearance everywhere in shops of a welter of delightful objects, large and small — of which for most part of the year we prefer to dream owing to a thin purse — as well as the kind thoughts bent on generosity that everybody harbours, add greatly to our spontaneous gaiety.

Christmas we welcome in the midst of the family circle; grown-ups forgetting past and present cares become children again and the little ones have it all their own way.

The "Ticinese" family of London also held this year a Christmas reunion, slightly in advance of the actual date perhaps, but none the less merry. It was the occasion of the 32nd Annual Concert and Ball organized by the Unione Ticinese in aid of the "Fonds de Secours" and held at Pagani's on the evening of the 18th instant.

As befits its unofficial designation of "festa familiare," the function had all the marks of a huge family party; the homely atmosphere of the House of Pagani, a cordial reception, the same Committee, the same guests, the same artists; nothing was there that might overawe the shiest of natures.

The unpropitiously wet evening was responsible for the many late arrivals, but on to 120 participants sat down to listen, nay, to laugh at Mr. Claude Chandler's naughty stories; How many readers can guess that the lowest thing in the world is the water level in the Scotchman's bath, when he is "on the meter"? Our old friend proved himself once again an able ventriloquist with an uproariously funny dialogue between a gentleman of leisure, whose generous alcohol intake had momentarily dulled his coherency of expression, and the rigid, immortal features of some classic notability the former had lifted from their dusty pedestal in order probably to ensure an attentive audience for his unusual expansiveness, and lo! they also had a voice.

Followed Mr. Von Bergen, who accompanied by Mr. Gandon on the accordion entertained us

A HAPPY CHRISTMAS.

These greetings which have been broadcasted during the festive season are not always mere expressions of goodwill and good fellowship, they often take a more tangible form which help to make Christmas really happy.

How many of the Swiss Colony in London are aware of the great amount of work which has been put in by a small band of active workers, so as to ensure that a "Happy Christmas" may brighten many homes, which otherwise would have been void of not only little luxuries, but even the barest of necessities.

It was the writer's privilege to take a peep behind the scenes of the active organization which works ceaselessly throughout the year, with the one object in view "help to the needy Swiss." Who could imagine that dear old Church in Endell Street turned into a regular emporium, pews filled with all kinds of groceries, fruits, garments of every description for young and old, lines stretched across bearing wraps, stockings, shirts, etc. etc.

The needs are many and varied, each family or solitary individual has been visited, requirements are tabulated, and in due course this orderly mass of articles has been made up into neat parcels bearing the name of the recipient and the combined names of the senders — "Swiss Benevolent Society, Eglise Suisse, Schweizerkirche London."

Nearly 200 parcels have been distributed this Christmas within a fifteen mile radius of Charing Cross, there again other willing workers loan

with two Swiss "Volkslieder" interpolated with excellent yodelling which invariably enthralled us "Suedlaender."

Miss Eva Cattaneo, soprano, received a warm ovation on appearing, a clear indication of the popularity enjoyed by this charming artiste. She infused great verve in Arditti's well-known aria "Il Bacio," which she sang with her usual freshness and purity of tone, exquisitely controlled. She responded to the enthusiastic encores with an equally well received "Parlami d'amore, Mariù."

After Mr. Gandon's brief yet efficient solo accordion recital, Mr. Jones, tenor, sang in robust, pleasant style "Eléonore" and "I hear you calling me."

A little girl, Miss Anita Broggi, in typical "ticinese" dress, complete with red spotted neckerchief, recited, a little unsteadily probably for the first time the cynosure of all eyes, two poems in Italian, by "ticinese" authors, extolling the natural and historical glories of our Homeland.

A note of gloom was struck by Miss Cattaneo and Mr. Jones choosing the "Miserere" duet from the "Trovatore" opera, which however they gave with refreshing gusto.

That none present responded to the invitation of Mr. Von Bergen to join in the singing of "I ticinesi son bravi solda," is a thousand pities.

Mr. Chandler reappeared on the podium, this time to intrigue us with conjuring tricks; clever tricks they were too.

At the close of this commendable programme the President, Mr. W. Notari, announced Mr. Berni, who had just arrived to surprise us with a few Neapolitan songs, which he charmingly rendered with his accustomed vigour.

An excellent supper and then, finally, "on with the dance." The available parquet space was taxed to the full as in the meantime the number of revellers had remarkably increased. Nevertheless, notwithstanding occasional unrehearsed "bumps," a charming partner—petite, brunette, in an attractive orange crêpe — impishly smiling, remarked: "I wouldn't have missed it for worlds!"

To such unsolicited appreciation your humble reporter wholeheartedly subscribes in congratulating the organizers for a brilliant evening and in wishing to you all, kind readers, a prosperous New Year.

eusj.

their cars so that the distribution be speedy and free of cost.

Seeing Endell Street Church turned into a General Store illustrated beyond words the manifold christian purposes it lends itself to, besides the place of worship which the majority of us only know it by.

If all those that have done so much for the needy could see with what gratitude these parcels are received, the sunshine which enters into many a dreary home or solitary room, they would be highly recompensed and would be further encouraged to continue this wonderful work.

Readers of the "S.O." will no doubt join the writer in tendering sincere thanks to all those ladies who throughout the year are busy making garments, knitting wraps and stockings, pull-overs, etc., those many friends who have contributed in kind or with financial help, and all those who have so generously helped the organizers of this "Happy Christmas" movement.

ONLOOKER.

PARTY AT THE LEGATION.

Mme. Paravicini gave a Sherry-Party at 21, Bryanston Square on Tuesday, December 18th, for the young Swiss who are staying in this country for short periods, on visit. The Staff of the Legation were also invited and the Party, which lasted from 6 — 7.30 p.m. was felt by all to have been a great success.

Many of these young compatriots left within the next day or two to spend Christmas and the New Year in Switzerland.