

37th Swiss Children's annual Christmas Party

Autor(en): **A.B.**

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37th SWISS CHILDREN'S ANNUAL CHRISTMAS PARTY.

169 children came to the Victoria Hall on January 7th for this party: but for illness there would have been several more. In the absence of the Rev. C. Reverdin, Mr. Dupraz welcomed the children and also expressed their joy and gratitude to the Swiss Minister and Madame Daeniker for kindly honouring the party with their presence.

With the hall lit only by the Christmas tree, Mademoiselle Bertin, of the Ecole du Dimanche de l'Eglise Suisse, spoke to the children and read them the story of the Nativity. As several of the Sunday School children were in Switzerland, there was not the usual choir to sing the carols, but the few who were there sang the traditional "Holy Night, Silent Night" with the other children.

The entertainment that followed began with community singing led by Mr. Nüssli, among other songs the children sang "John Brown's Body", with actions, quite heartily. A conjurer then amused them with all kinds of tricks, including the one they never tire of — producing a live rabbit from a hat.

The colour films were then shewn by courtesy of Swiss Federal Railways. We are always very grateful to them for these films that give British born children a glimpse of Switzerland. This year they saw the farmers taking the cattle to the high mountain pastures, for the summer, and the joyful return to

the villages in the autumn. The second film, about a "foxhunt" on skis, was one the children had seen two years ago and were glad to see again. They enjoyed the beauty of the snowfields in the sunshine and the excitement of the chase.

It was then tea-time, and while enjoying a good tea the children always watch for Father Christmas. They greet him loudly and affectionately when he appears, and then listen quietly while he tells them to be good, and to be thankful for the love of parents and friends. He reminds them that there are so many children less fortunate than themselves and that they must be kind to one another. When he says good-bye the children collect the presents he has brought them; a toy, an apple, an orange, some chocolates, and a calendar for every child.

Everyone was disappointed that owing to Mr. Gandon and his family being ill, there was not the usual Swiss music this year.

Several children asked why there wasn't any music, for they really do love to hear Mr. Gandon — and his accordeonists playing their merry Swiss tunes especially during tea.

Miss Matthey too was missed by the children who were sorry to hear that she had not been well enough to come.

The children and the organizing committee wish to thank all their friends in the Colony (especially Mr. Dupraz who collects the funds, and Miss Matthey who sends out the invitations) for a very happy party.

A.B.

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