

News of the colony

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enlarged his original hotel on the Riffelalp and ran an agricultural concern in Brig to supply his hotels. Soon he was the master of a staff of 600 catering for over 1000 guests.

Seiler was the man who made Zermatt. However, the elder citizens of this mountain commune were not prepared to accept him as one of theirs and Seiler spent the last years of his life in a vain struggle to become a citizen of Zermatt. He died in 1891, the year of the opening of the Vitznau-Visp-Zermatt railway.

He had an estimated 14 to 18 children. They nearly all died in infancy as those were the days when powdered milk invented by Nestle which had already reached the rich children of America and England, was not yet available to the poor children of the upper Alpine valleys. Three sons remained to outlive him and run his enterprise. Joseph settled in Gletsch and confined himself to the management of the inn founded there by his father. Hermann was a law student and not interested in keeping hotels. He eventually became national councillor, a promoter of the national "Verkehrszentral", a champion of the hotel industry and of the thousands living on it before the First World War. But it was Alexander II who was to keep the empire going. He was a man of great charm, a "**grand seigneur**", a champion of liberalism who spent his life in a struggle against the forces of reaction in his native Valais. He modernised and improved his legacy, but did not expand it. He died in 1920, six years after Sarajevo and at the outset of a world crisis which was to hit the traditional hotellery which his kith and kin had so much contributed to establish.

(To be Continued.)

NEWS OF THE COLONY

Hamilton Swiss Club

CHRISTMAS CELEBRATION

Parents at our Christmas Party were once again outnumbered by their children, and how healthy and noisy they all were! But when the candles decorating the tables were lit, a hush fell and everyone had only eyes for the stage. And well worth it it was! The scene opened in a toy shop with about ten "dolls" dressed in national costumes from various countries. Belinda Fluhler, as shopkeeper, while dancing in her graceful way, dusted the dolls and fell then asleep. But the fairies appeared and the "dolls" in the shop and from the storeroom came alive like magic. In their clear voices they sang Christmas songs from England, Switzerland, Sweden, Spain, France, Germany and Burgundy.

Mrs Fluhler deserves top honours for spending so much time and patience in teaching these 25 boys and girls this well-received play. Many thanks to Mrs Rangi Gilgen for her help in all these Friday practises.

Another highlight was the trotting in of the always well-respected Father Christmas. After walking around talking to the children he presented the gifts that made him the most-liked man of the evening! He had a few to spare and he will put them under the tree of the "Times" Christmas Appeal.

After an excellent supper and wishing each other "Frohe Festtage", Mums and Dads took tired children home. On behalf of the Hamilton Swiss Club, I would like to wish all our Members and Friends a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.—R.E.W.

Wellington Swiss Club

CHRISTMAS PARTY

Santa Claus was coming, yes, to the children of our Club at the Brooklyn Hall. He knocked at the door as they just finished singing some English and German carols. The small hall which was nicely decorated, was really crowded. Even our Ambassador, Mr Corti, honoured us with his presence. Among the children's presentations were two promising clarinet solos and good piano music, too. Father Christmas then handed out a present to each child, also a "Gritibänz" and a bag with fruits and sweets. The children were really impressed.

When Santa Claus had left, soft drinks were served and the children went out to play, while now the adults got their party with music and supper. Everybody will agree that this Christmas party was a real success. —M.K.

Christchurch Swiss Club

Our final gathering for 1971 was held at Moser's farm on a beautifully warm Sunday at the beginning of December. It was a day for the children mainly — St. Nicholas Day. About 17 children ranging in age from 14 weeks to 11 years came with their parents to await the arrival of Father Christmas. He came bedecked in a red gown and hood, complete with beard, sunglasses (to avoid recognition) and gumboots. The children rushed him to receive their gifts of stockings filled with goodies. An air of silence fell as the children settled down to sample the biscuits, sweets, nuts and fruit.

Altogether it was a very enjoyable day, meeting friends who are seen only now and again.

For the committee of the Club it is a time that we have all looked forward to when we can relax and enjoy the holidays ahead.