

33rd swiss Children's annual Christmas Party

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33rd SWISS CHILDREN'S ANNUAL CHRISTMAS PARTY.

208 children accepted the invitation to this Party at the Victoria Halls on January 5th and were welcomed by M. Campart. M. Campart also greeted Dr. Bernath, Counsellor of Legation, who represented the Swiss Minister, Monsieur and Madame de Torrenté being in Switzerland.

The Party always begins with the story of the Nativity, which this year was told by some of the children of the Sunday School of the Eglise Suisse, and was followed by carols in English and in French. Then to the delight of all the children who know them and love their merry tunes, M. Gandon's Swiss Accordion Club played and 7 year-old Jean-Michel recited and sang.

"Uncle" Stanley Cable came on the platform next and amused and mystified us with his conjuring. Some of his tricks only work if the children help, either by going on the stage or by shouting the magic word very loudly, which all adds to the fun.

Films are always a great treat, and here we must thank the Swiss Federal Railways for their co-operation. There were two cartoons and a lovely film of children and their pets enjoying life in the mountains in the beautiful scenery of both summer and winter. We are especially grateful to the S.F.R. for this last film which gave the British born children a glimpse of life in the land of their Fathers.

Tea followed to the accompaniment of the accordionists whom we thank very much indeed for providing music all the afternoon. Then there was a visit from Father Christmas and the distribution of presents. We dare not disclose the identity of the very dear friend who is responsible for Father Christmas because, as everyone knows, that is always a secret. We do thank him though for coming to see us every year; his appearance up there on the stairs is always eagerly awaited. Each child received an orange, some sweets, a toy, and a picture of a beautiful place in Switzerland in the form of a calendar.

Mademoiselle Matthey does her best to find all the Swiss children in London, but there may be some she doesn't know. If there are any children under 16 who were not invited, she would be glad to have their names and addresses.

The Committee thank all those who helped to make this such a happy afternoon; those who were in the hall and those who were behind the scenes. Also the kind friend in Birmingham who gave the chocolates. Especially we thank M. Campart who collected the money and Mademoiselle Matthey who sent out the invitations, for there would not have been any party at all without them.

A.L.B.

JAMES PALMER-TOMKINSON †.

The death reported in the English Press, early this month, of the well-known skier, Mr. James Palmer-Tomkinson, a member of the British Olympic Team, who was killed when training at Klosters for a championship race, has caused universal regrets, and especially in the Swiss Colony in London, where he had many friends.

Mr. Palmer-Tomkinson, aged 34, captained the British team in the winter Olympic Games at St. Moritz in 1948, when he competed in spite of an ankle injury. A former British champion, he also took part in the 1936 Winter Olympics at Garnisch-Partenkirchen (Germany).

In 1947, he won the Pery Medal as the outstanding skier, the highest award made by the Ski Club of Great Britain, of which he was Vice-President. He was Chairman of the Committee which will select Britain's team to compete in the Winter Olympic Games in Oslo next month.

OUR NEXT ISSUE.

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