

"The Swiss Oberserver" thirty years ago

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THE SWISS BAZAAR 1962

“As we have therefore opportunity, let us do good unto all men, especially unto them who are of the household of faith.” (Gal. 6,10). Paul wrote these words to the Christians in Galatia. We might address them to some of the Christians in London, our compatriots! When we write about our Swiss Church Bazaar, our first thanks will go to God, who in the years gone by so graciously has helped the Swiss Church and in whom is our trust for the future.

The Swiss Bazaar is always a joyous occasion. Already when you come in you feel you have come to your own country: gay cantonal flags hang from the ceiling, pretty women in their colourful national costumes of many cantons smile at you. All around, you hear your beloved native tongue, Swiss-German or French. You meet many friends whom you have not seen for some time! Then there are all those lovely stalls which tempt you to buy a variety of things. Members of the German- and French-speaking communities have for weeks been busy preparing for this Sale of Work which takes place every two years. Like last time, it was held in one of the spacious halls of the Westminster Central Hall. One of the highlights was the spirited way in which Mme Daeniker, the wife of the Swiss Ambassador in London, opened the Bazaar. She was introduced by Mr. Sommer, Vice-Chairman of the Consistoire. The active participation of members of the Swiss Embassy and Consulate greatly contributed towards the success of the Bazaar. Among other things, Mrs. Daeniker thanked all the kind individuals and firms who have given so generously in cash and kind, especially also firms in Switzerland, like Tobler who sent 100 kg. of chocolate, Arni sent biscuits, Gysi the “Ziebeli” for the “Baerner Ziebeli-Maerit” stall, Suchard chocolate; there was delicious cheese from the Kaese-Union, from Buergi, Buerki various “Stumpe” and “Brissago”, there were “Stoffeli”, and not to forget Swiss wines from the Société des exportateurs de vin suisse.

Our ladies from the “Naehverein” and the “Couture” produced many wonderful garments and showed considerable skill in selling their goods! The “Schwyzerchraenzli” and the “Jeunesse”, our young people, had their own well equipped stalls. The girls had been very busy producing all sorts of handicraft: hand-printed tablecloths, beautifully embroidered cushions and bags, toys, e.g. funny birds in raffia, etc. You can imagine the Embassy-stall did a roaring trade! As you looked round you could see other stalls with delicious home-made cakes and sweets, others with fruit and vegetables and even plants. There were also lovely Bally-shoes for sale! On a raised stage there was an amusement-corner. Some guests tried their skill at winning all sorts of things. There were candles to be lit with one match. Roars of laughter and a terrible din resounded when someone succeeded in knocking down a pyramid of cans with three balls.

When we talk about the Bazaar we must not forget to mention the truly Swiss lunches “Schueblig” or other Swiss sausages with Sauerkraut or delicious potato-salad and good coffee! Later on tea and home-made cakes were to be had and fruit-tartlets with real whipped cream — doesn't it make your mouth water? The food makes you think of the many willing helpers in the kitchen and at the buffet who made everything run so efficiently and smoothly. It was cheering to see so many young families — the children seemed to enjoy themselves thoroughly! One little girl of 2½ got so fascinated with watching and

talking to two budgerigars in a cage that it was quite a job to coax her away. I asked some English friends how they liked the bazaar; they said that what struck them most was the atmosphere of friendliness that prevailed everywhere! Our pastors, too, did their share in selling things — they made first-rate salesmen; if ever they should be out of a job, here is their chance! But they will never be, for we need our pastors so much! Here we might mention and endorse what Mme Daeniker said in her opening speech: that, if the bazaar was a success — and it was, the sum of over £1,000 was reached, which goes to our Church — it should be a sign of appreciation and thanks to our pastors for their devoted service.

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PERSONAL

The wedding will take place on Saturday, 15th December, at St. Mary Abbots Church, Kensington (3 p.m.), of Miss Yvonne Bircher, younger daughter of Dr. E. M. Bircher, of 25 Kings Road, Richmond, Surrey, to Mr. Edwin Fripp Clark. We wish to tender our sincere congratulations to the young couple, and best wishes for their happiness.

“THE SWISS OBSERVER” THIRTY YEARS AGO

In the issue of 5th November 1932 Mr. Stauffer reported on a Swiss Bank Club Smoking Concert which was attended by 300 people. It seems as incredible now as the announcement of the Swiss Gymnastic Society's “Combined Display and Dance”. The editor must have had a very busy time, for in the following week's issue a “Literary and Musical Evening” of the Nouvelle Société Helvétique and the Swiss Institute Orchestral Society at Conway Hall was reported on. It is not surprising that attendance was very good, for the well-known writer Alfred Huggenberger read from his peasant poetry and prose, as Mr. Stauffer put it, “with quiet simplicity, modest wisdom and robust humour”.

An unusual happening was reported on 12th November, when the Annual Memorial Service by the Union Helvetia took place in honour of their departed members. Pastor C. Th. Hahn and Pastor R. Desaulles of the Swiss Church officiated at this service of remembrance at Hendon Park Cemetery.

In the issue of 19th November the grave riots in Geneva on 9th November 1932 were reported, when twelve people were killed and seventy injured in an anti-Socialist demonstration. In Moscow “the destruction of the morale of the Swiss Army by Communist agitators” was joyfully welcomed.

In the same number a well-known member of our Colony, Madame Henri Bingguely, the successful sculptor, was congratulated on her election as a member of the Paris Winter Salon.

In the last issue of the month, very heavy losses by the Swiss Federal Railways were reported. Passenger traffic and goods traffic had declined, and net receipts had been 7.8 million lower than the previous year. Special reductions of 10% on ordinary tickets issued in Great Britain to Swiss winter sports resorts were advertised at the same time.