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horizontal and stretches across the front of the vehicle. The blades remove the snow from the mass and feed it into the ejector wheels, a kind of blower discharging snow through an ejector nozzle for distances of over 100 ft. Rolba machines range from the giant RR-2000, used by the Federal Railways, to the "Snow-Baby", a snowplough of the size of a lawn-mower. It could be a good Christmas idea for readers with country estates and snow-clearing problems!

NEW SWISS SUCCESS AT WEST END CINEMA

Judging from the time it has remained on the screen of the Academy Cinema in London, Claude Goretta's film *L'Invitation* appears to be as successful as Tanner's *La Salamandre*, which remained in the same cinema for about six weeks last April and May. Claude Goretta and Alain Tanner are considered as the leading Swiss directors of the day. But *L'Invitation* is to our mind superior to *La Salamandre* and certainly better than Suter's *Les Aprenteurs* shown (with *L'Invitation*) at the recent Swiss film fortnight at the National Film Theatre. The three films share the same main actor, Jean-Luc Bideau, who in *L'Invitation* plays the befitting role of the dreadful office joker.

L'Invitation would lend itself well to the stage. It is the straightforward story of an office house-warming party that turns wrong because — potent drinks aiding — social restraints are thrown to the wind and people reveal themselves in their true colours. While being a "serious" film it has no ideological ambitions. It purports to be no more than a straightforward personality and social study. Some characters are sharply etched. This is the case of the staid, hard-working and narrow-minded office sub-chief who is outraged when money is not taken seriously; there is the opposite personality of the junior typist resenting

the straight-collared atmosphere of the business establishment and who intentionally seeks to assert herself by shocking her elders; there is the totally unambitious employee whose sole interest lies with his many children and who scrounges the food from his rich friend's table. The film humorously depicts various reactions to the wealth of others. Bideau, who is an intrinsically funny character, is relied upon for the comic effects of the film. He has a rather heavy humour (and a Geneva accent which makes French audiences scream) which should however not be overplayed. *L'Invitation* is a technically more refined film than *La Salamandre* since it is in colour.

Standing out in the cast is Francois Simon, son of the great Michel Simon. He plays the role of the enigmatic waiter who has been hired to officiate at the house-warming party.

L'Invitation is a good film which we can only recommend. If the Academy decides to continue presenting the Swiss cinema to the British public, it is likely that its next try-out will be Tanner's *Retour d'Afrique*, which is already enjoying success in France.

MARRIAGE AT SWISS CHURCH

We have pleasure in announcing the recent wedding of *Mr. Armin Loetscher* and *Miss Ysabelle Gerard*. They were married at the Swiss Church on 22nd November by Pastor Uli Stefan. The sermon was delivered in English by Father Paul Bossard, making this marriage ceremony a truly ecumenical event. A reception was held later at the St. Moritz, the discotheque and wine-cellar managed by Mr. Loetscher in Wardour Street. The numerous attendance was warmed up with champagne before tasting the five-storey wedding cake and being treated to an abundant buffet. Mr. Loetscher is, statistically, the best known Swiss in London since many of the thousands of young Swiss who come here

every year make the St. Moritz their usual evening haunt. We hope that Armin will be as lucky in wedlock as he is at Tombola. For two years running, he has won the first prize at the City Swiss Club Annual Ball Raffle. Last year, he won a trip for two to Holland. On November 16th he left the Dorchester Hotel with a hi-fi and stereo radiogramme. We wish him and his spouse every happiness for the future.

P.M.B.

Christmas Competition

The Swiss Short-Wave Services have welcomed their listeners across the world to a Christmas Competition. Listeners are invited to send a 1-2 page piece on the little known Christmas customs of their country of residence or on any personal experience related to Christmas. These reports are to be written or recorded in English and to reach Berne by 10th December. Listeners will choose the best stories selected by a Jury for transmission on the Swiss Broadcasting Corporation's Worldwide Christmas Programme. This will be broadcasted on 25th December and repeated the following day. All votes have to reach the "SBC Christmas Competition" (3000 Berne 16, Switzerland) by 1st February. The Short-Wave service in French and German can be heard (in Europe) by tuning to 3985, 6165 and 9535 kHz (75.28, 48.66 and 31.46 metres).

First prize is 350 Swiss francs; 2nd 250 francs; 3rd 150 francs.

Forthcoming Events

NOUVELLE SOCIETE HELVETIQUE:
Open meeting, Thursday, 24th January. Talk by Dr. A. Weitnauer on Swiss foreign policy. Swiss Embassy 7 p.m.

CITY SWISS CLUB: Tuesday 22nd January. Dinner with speaker.

SWISS CLUB EDINBURGH: Tuesday 29th January 8 p.m. Fondue party with the Hartmann family, 46 Queen Street, Edinburgh.

RACCONTO PER NATALE

(Nota del redattore: "Il Natale coi tuoi . . .", così incomincia il detto popolare che consacra l'usanza osservata da tempo immemorabile in tutte le famiglie di ritrovarsi almeno una volta all'anno per "le Feste". In tali riunioni uno nota con rammarico le lacune lasciate dai nostri cari che ci hanno lasciato per sempre. Così è quest'anno per tutti gli svizzeri d'italico idioma in questo primo Natale senza il nostro grande poeta e prosatore, Francesco Chiesa, morto lo scorso mese di luglio nel suo 102° anno. Sfogliando la Sua opera per qualcosa a soggetto natalizio abbiamo trovato nel volume "Compagni di Viaggio" (uscito nel 1931 dai tipi della casa editrice A. Mondadori di Milano) il racconto "PADRE E FIGLIA", del quale per

tirrania di spazio, possiamo dare soltanto le parti III e IV. Le parti I e II raccontano dell'esistenza infelice d'una coppia anziana da quando la loro unica figlia li ha lasciati per sposare un "un violinista tisico, che suona nell'orchestrina d'un cinematografo di terz'ordine".)

III.

Ritornando a casa, l'ingegnere Salvi pensò che, giure a parte, un rimedio indubbiamente c'era; andarsene lui, sradicare la sua vita dal suolo di quella maledetta città, trapiantarla mille miglia lontano. — Sai? — disse alla signora — si va a stare a Palermo.

Ma non fece nulla e non ne riparlò. Si buttò più che mai nei lavori; usciva all'alba, rincasava a sera inoltrata. Una volta partì dicendo che sarebbe stato via la notte. Giunse, dopo due ore di ferrovia, nel luogo dove l'avevano chiamato, lavorò tutto il giorno e in sull'imbrunire rientrò nell'albergo. Ma, subito dopo il pasto, essendo salito per coricarsi, ché cascava dal sonno e dalla stanchezza, e già s'era cavata la giacca, si mise a cercare furiosamente l'orario, scoprì un treno che passava a momenti, ricacciò le sue cose nella valigia e partì. Perché? Rannicchiato in un angolo del carrozzone, chiuse gli occhi e rimase così immobile tutto il tempo del viaggio a domandarsi perché. L'odiosa città dalla quale avrebbe voluto strappare le fondamenta della sua casa,