

Christmas time in Manchester

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Hotel. This event fell on the 86th Anniversary of the founding of the Club. The Legation was represented by Minister Thurnheer, Mr. Preiswerk and Mr. Giradet and their wives. The attendances were entertained by a performance of both light and classical music by members of the Colony. Instead of an Annual Banquet and Ball, the Swiss Mercantile Society held an "austerity luncheon" at Brown's Hotel prior to a lecture at Swiss House by Major L. H. Cripps, C.B.E., well known industrialist, ship owner and social reformer.

The Swiss Choral Society held a wartime General Meeting to discuss the situation resulting from the absence of its President, who had been away abroad for a long time, and to set up a strong working Committee. The meeting was held at Swiss House on 30th October. Mr. F. G. Sommer was asked to take the Chair. The new Committee was elected and the following members of the Society were asked to serve: President: Mr. F. G. Sommer; Vice-President: Mr. J. H. Berger; Hon. Treasurer: Mr. E. Ritzmann; Hon. Secretary: Mr. E. O. Dick; Hon. Librarian: Mr. C. Sykora. It was decided to elect a Music Commission consisting of the Conductor and four members to make sure the choice of songs would no longer be the subject of criticism. The Commission was to study Mr. Tall's suggestion to revive English songs and Mr. Mathez's suggestion to sing more French songs so as to attract more French-speaking Swiss to join the Choir. Fr. Lafranchi was made Honorary Member of the Society. Despite the war, the Swiss Choir had met regularly during the previous eighteen months.

An exceptional attendance turned up for the S.M.S. December Meeting which had a programme of films on the British Army and Navy supplied from the Ministry of Information by Mr. Gottfried Keller, President of the Foreign Press Association, and two films on Switzerland. The meeting was presided by Mr. J. J. Boos, who welcomed the following six new members: Messrs. W. Bachmann, A. de Westenholz, W. Flory, J. J. Keller, A. Kern and E. Ulmann, which brought the total of admissions for the year to 23.

Anglo-Swiss affairs

The Editor reported on a point raised during Question Time in the Commons on 4th August regarding the payment of income tax by two Swiss citizens resident in Switzerland and deriving income from a British company. Sir Herbert Williams had asked the Chancellor of the Exchequer, Sir Kingsley Wood why the Bank of England had first required to be satisfied that the funds in London standing on the credit of the two citizens concerned and on which they would have drawn for their income tax payments,

were available for transfer to Switzerland. He was told that, according to the Defence (Finance) Regulations, a resident living outside the Sterling area had to pay his taxes in foreign currency or in funds readily available for transfer. It was therefore not possible for a resident in Britain to pay debts on behalf of foreign residents.

The British Press reacted very strongly against the refusal by the Vichy authorities to grant transit visas to a group of nine Swiss journalists who had been invited to visit Britain for the purpose of study and information. The S.O. reproduced a long article on this matter by "Time and Tide."

The "Financial Times" of 7th September reported at length on the financial difficulties of Switzerland accruing from the British blockade, which had limited more and more supplies of foodstuffs and raw materials. It reported on the heavy defence expenditure of the Government (which had reached 2.9 billion francs by the end of 1941) and the recourse to the capital market to meet these military commitments.

An article on Swiss neutrality was picked from the "Tablet" of 24th October. Its author, Margeret Leiper,

had been the London correspondent of the "Courrier de Genève." In the same December issue of the Swiss Observer, a news item on the sentencing to death of two Swiss officers was gleaned from the "Times." Lieutenant Charles Reimann, of Basle, and Lieutenant Peter Kulli, of Olten, were sentenced to be shot for handing military secrets over to a foreign power. Less than a month earlier, Private E. Philipp, of Basle, and Sergeant J. Schweger, of Hergiswil, had also been sentenced to death on similar charges.

The 1942 Volume of the Swiss Observer ends with the following message by the Swiss Minister, Mr. W. Thurnbeier: "The end of 1942 finds Switzerland and its people more united than ever and inflexibly decided to maintain the traditions of liberty and freedom which are part of our common heritage. Although circumstances have not always permitted the close contact which it is my desire to have with the Swiss Colony enjoying this great country's hospitality, I am particularly glad of this opportunity of greeting all my compatriots and sending them my sincere wishes for Christmas and the New Year."

CHRISTMAS TIME IN MANCHESTER

The Swiss Club of Manchester arranged for the traditional Christmas Tree Party to be held at the Midland Hotel in Manchester on Saturday, 9th December, 1972. The support of our children and young ones was even better than for the previous year, although it was felt that a better attendance from members in general would have been forthcoming, more so that nowadays any such occasion should be welcomed to meet old friends and make new acquaintances and by this strengthen and foster friendliness within our own ranks.

As in the past we were again honoured by the presence of our Consul General and Madame Born who later, however, had to leave us for an important engagement in Liverpool. We were also able to welcome our Vice Consul, Mr. Leuenberger. We were also most happily surprised to shake hands with Mrs. Banderet, who was on a short visit in England and we think that she felt very happy amongst us. In the absence of our President, Dr. H. R. Bolliger, our Vice President Mr. Peter Senn, directed the proceedings of the evening and he must have been quite reassured by the smooth and happy development of the evening, whose success depends so much on the hard work of our committee in general and of Mrs. M. Themans in particular.

The beginning of the Party was fixed for 3 o'clock, everybody met in the lovely Rotonda and sat down to

the special "Midland high tea" consisting in the main of an assortment of sandwiches and followed, for the children's sake, by cakes, pastries, jellies, ices and sweets, concluding it with some rounds of crackers which obviously helped towards the general merriment and shortening somewhat the time for Father Christmas.

After this, each one armed himself or herself with a chair or two, moving to the little ballroom where a lovely lighted tree welcomed us, set in the midst of an imposing hall formed by parcels large and small, immediately attracting the attention of our youngsters. The musical side was quite ably taken over by a young lady and everybody joined in the singing of our beloved Christmas carols, soon afterwards to be interrupted by a knock at the door. Sure enough, there he stood, old and tired but evidently happy to have arrived at all and to be able to warm himself at the many little candle fires of the tree. He was introduced to us by some of the Committee members, being greeted by a long and well meant applause. This must have put him in a very good mood, showing in the way he chatted with old and young who had formed a large ring around the tree.

Much merriment and happiness came to all of us by the children's solos and recitations, much appreciated by Father Christmas, who distributed to all of them—also to those who had awakened our sympathy by their mutisme or shall we say shyness—quite lovely colourful bags containing sweets, chocolate and other goodies. The per-

sonality of Father Christmas may change from year to year, but we felt that this year he was the very same as the previous one, and so must have thought some of the Simon children. Soon the time arrived for our saintly man to leave us, so that he may convey the good news of happy tidings to many more children in the wide world, and when he left, our warm and loud applause accompanied him, showing to him our sincere feelings of thankfulness and how our thoughts may follow him on his wanderings.

Mrs. Trudi Bolliger, the wife of our absent President, helped by Mrs. M. Themans, proceeded then with the distribution of the many individual parcel gifts and no one was forgotten. The impatient rustling of paper, the opening of boxes, all these pleasant noises told us that the children took eager possession of their small but treasured possessions, which must have given them a foretaste of what may be waiting for them in a few weeks time. Some more surprises were in store for us when balloons, in many colours and shapes, lots of them, were distributed to young and old, objects for much merriment . . . until the time for the goodbyes had arrived, gradually the lines thinning out, when everybody had left, with happy memories and the hope to meet again soon.

(E. Berner)

THE VECTIS ISLAND

The following message of goodwill was sent to us by the Swiss of the Isle of Wight. It was unfortunately not possible for us to print it in time for Christmas, but we print it here as it is not too late to wish our readers all the best for this New Year. We take this opportunity of thanking the Swiss of the Isle of Wight for their kind message, which we certainly should like to reciprocate.

Jede Jahreszeit entfaltet ihre Pracht besser und schöner als die vorangegangene. In grosszügiger Fülle leuchten die Farben. Im Frühling sind es die hellen grünen Farben, im Sommer das dunkelgrün mit der Pracht vieler bunten Blumen, und im Herbst alle Abstufungen vom hellen Gelb bis zum dunkelsten Braunrot. Wenn sich am Horizont über einem schmalen Silberstreifen eine Nebelwand bildet und gegen die Küste zu bewegt und die Landschaft mit einem melancholischen Dunst umgibt, so fesselt uns der Anblick des ruhigen unendlichen Wasserspiegels. Angelockt von der oftmals scheinbar grossen Faszination offenbaren sich Erlebnisse — das Losgelöstsein von der Erde, die Erhabenheit der Welt. Das ist ein Spaziergang auf der Kante der Insel.

Die hier wohnhaften Landsleute wünschen allen Lesern des Swiss Observers frohe Festtage, einen guten Start ins neue Jahr und dem Verlag zusätzlich gute Entwicklung und viele neue Abonnenten.

Accident in Manchester

Members and friends who attended the monthly meeting of the Yorkshire Swiss Club in Leeds on the 5th inst. were deeply shocked to hear from our President that on the previous Saturday our good friend Mr. Emilio Lanfranchi had been involved in a serious road accident.

A motor cyclist to avoid a lady crossing the street swerved on the footpath investing our friend in such a violent and severe way that he had to be rushed to the Bradford Infirmary and submitted to urgent surgery.

Mr. Emilio Lanfranchi is a member of a well known family in Poschiavo, Switzerland, but resides in Shipley near Bradford. One of his many brothers was the Padre A. Lanfranchi who for many years was chaplain to the Swiss Catholic Community in London. Another brother is Mr. Silvio Lanfranchi, now retired, who was at the head of a very important confectionary business in Bradford, now taken over by our "Emilio," who is a most active and faithful member of our Northern Colony and much endeared to all of us.

We all wish him a speedy recovery and that he may soon return to his family and his work.

(E.B.)

FORTHCOMING EVENTS

CITY SWISS CLUB: Tuesday, 23rd January, Card Evening. Tuesday, 30th January, Dinner with Speaker. Dorchester Hotel at 6.30 for 7 p.m.

SWISS CLUB MANCHESTER: Thursday, 18th January, 7.30 p.m. at the Cottons Hotel, Knutsford. Raclette Party.

SWISS CLUB EDINBURGH: Tuesday, 30th January, 8 p.m. at 112 Hanover Street. Fondue evening. Tuesday, 20th February, 7.30 p.m. at the "Sheep's Hide Inn," the Causeway, Duddingston. Skittle match against Dunfermline Swiss Club.

SWISS PHILATELIC SOCIETY: Friday, 26th January, 35 Fitzroy Sq., at 7.30 p.m. Auction. Friday, 23rd February, Dorchester Hotel: Annual Dinner.

SWISS MERCANTILE SOCIETY: Saturday, 3rd February, 6.30 for 7 p.m. at the Dorchester Hotel, Orchid Suite: Annual Ball.

CULTURAL EVENTS

Wednesday, 31st January, Queen Elizabeth Hall, 7.45 p.m., Charles Dutoit conducts the English Chamber Orchestra in a Stravinsky and Mozart programme. His wife, Martha Argerich, plays Mozart's Piano Concerto in C, K.503.

SWISS CHURCH

SERVICES EN FRANCAIS: à l'Eglise Suisse, 79 Endell Street, W.C.2, tous les dimanches a 11h15 et 19h00.

PERMANENCE: chaque jeudi de 15h00 à dimanche du mois, matin et soir.

SAINTE-CENE: le premier et troisième 18h00.

REUNION DE QUARTIER: huit veillées en automne et au printemps: voir "Le Messager".

CLUB DES JEUNES: tous les dimanches de 12h00 à 22h30, tous les jeudis de 15h00 à 22h30.

REUNION DE COUTURE: le 2e mardi du mois.

LUNCH: tous les dimanches a 13h00.

VISITES: sur demande.

PASTEUR: A. Nicod, 7 Park View Road, London, N.3. Téléphone 01-346 5281.

* * *

SERVICES IN GERMAN: at Eglise Suisse, 79, Endell Street, W.C.2, every Sunday at 10 a.m. Sunday school takes place on the first and the third Sunday in the month for children of all age groups. Children assemble in the church with their parents who attend the normal Service. Services also at John Southworth Centre, 48 Gt. Peter Street, S.W.1 every Sunday at 6.30 p.m.

HOLY COMMUNION: every first Sunday of the month at evening service only. On major feasts at morning and evening services.

CONSULTATIONS: every Wednesday 4-6 p.m. at Eglise Suisse.

DISTRICT GROUP S.E.21 and SERVICES OUTSIDE LONDON: see "Stimme."

"KONTAKT" (Youth Group): every Wednesday 4-10 p.m. at Eglise Suisse. Supper at 7 p.m. Programme at 8 p.m.

WOMEN'S CIRCLE: every first Tuesday of the month from 12 noon onwards at the Eglise Suisse.

MOTHER'S REUNION: third Wednesday in the month, 11 a.m. to 4 p.m. at the Eglise Suisse.

VISITS: by request.

MINISTERS: Pfr. M. Dietler, 1, Womersley Road, N.8. Tel: 01-340 6018 and Pfr. U. Stefan, 3, Womersley Road, N.8. Tel: 01-340 9740.

SWISS CATHOLIC MISSION: John Southworth Centre, 48 Great Peter Street, London SW1P 2HA.

Sundays: Holy Mass at 6.30 p.m. with sermon in German, in the Club hall, ground floor. (2nd floor at the same time, Protestant service in German).

CONSULTATIONS AND CONFESSIONS: by appointment.

SERVICES EN FRANCAIS: Notre Dame de France, 5 Leicester Place, W.C.2, on Sundays, 10.00, 11.00, 12.15, and 6.30 p.m.

SWISS CATHOLIC YOUTH CLUB: Open every Sunday from 3 p.m. to 11 p.m. (48 Great Peter Street). Discussions, dance, lectures (with members of other denominations), Sunday services and refreshments. See programme "Die Stimme."

During the week: open according to programme of the English Youth Club.

RESIDENCE OF CHAPLAIN: Paul Bossard, Swiss Catholic Mission, 48 Great Peter Street, (2nd floor), London SW1P 2HA. Telephone: 01-222 2895.