

Annual report of the Swiss Y.M.C.A. London

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ANNUAL REPORT OF THE SWISS Y.M.C.A. LONDON.

July 1946 — June 1947.

On looking back over the activities of another year we are thankful to record considerable improvement over the previous years, due to the influx of Swiss students. Our meetings, with few exceptions, were well attended, and as the interest grew, we met once a week instead of every fortnight as during the war. On many occasions we have been able to be of service to young men in finding accommodation for them and in giving practical advice. Unfortunately our student members can only stay here about four months, and it often means for us a race against time to reach them.

The main object of our meetings was to present a clear conception of what Jesus Christ means to us, and to show that faith in Him does not only build a strong character, but also stability of mind, which means a good equipment in an age like the present which bristles with difficulties and problems of all kind. We have been led particularly to study the mind of the young man of to-day and have explored avenues of approach. The value of a living faith in Jesus Christ was new to many. The question has often been asked in our midst: "Why does not every young man take an interest in Jesus Christ?" Space is too short to go into the matter fully here, but in many cases we found that there was a preoccupation with professional aspirations which ignored the life of the soul. In other cases there is a great deal of prejudice, of wrong notions about the Christian faith and what it stands for. Or again there is a lethargical indifference to spiritual things because they cannot be seen and yet are real. But the message of Jesus Christ is addressed to all these classes, but they have to be reached in different ways. In one case it means an adjustment to the true values of life; in the other a willingness to listen to what God offers in His Word, the Bible; or again it might need a crisis in a man's life to make him realise that there is a living God. Although we have witnessed great revival meetings in London last winter, at the Westminster Central Hall and the Royal Albert Hall, Christian work has become more and more a personal matter, a witness as from man to man, as it was the case with the early Church.

Our Christmas party was held as usual. It was at the same time a reunion for the family members of our married friends.

The writer had the privilege to attend the annual Conference of Old Londoners and Parisians held in Zurich last year, and was very much encouraged by the active testimony given by former members of these Associations. One became deeply impressed by the fact that as the years go by the vision of faith gets clearer and firmer, and this is the best evidence that our faith does not merely rest on doctrine, but also on a living conception of Jesus Christ.

We should like to thank our donors in London and Switzerland for the financial support they have given us, which has enabled us to continue our work. We would ask them to give us anew their wholehearted interest, and to make our cause a matter of prayer, so that the good start we have made may be followed by further success. Let us remember the passage: "Men ought always to pray, and not to faint."

W.F.

NATIONAL DAY FESTIVITY AT THE SCHWEIZERBUND (SWISS CLUB)

A Gala Dance was held on Friday, August 1st, commencing at 7.30 p.m., and it was obvious from the beginning the evening would be a success.

Our M.C. "Mario" excelled himself by arranging dances he knew would be so popular among our folk, and everything went with a swing.

Those five stalwart "Veterans" Messrs. G. Bruscheweiler, A. Schmid, E. Siegrist, C. Strübin and A. Wyss, with their wives and friends attended, and all brought a present for our *Tombola*.

They made themselves very very comfortable by arranging a large table in the Lounge and showed the "youngsters" their capacity for enjoying themselves. At the same table I also noticed Mrs. Rossier, and her sister, Mrs. Abersold, Mrs. Scherer and many others.

It was a happy sight to see also the very many young Swiss, who have recently arrived here, gather round these "Veterans" and join in a Community Sing Song led by that indefatigable "Gusti" Wyss.

In the Dance Hall it was noted that Mr. and Mrs. Caluori had their usual table fully occupied with members of their family and friends.

Mrs. Caluori also worked hard with Mrs. Stoeri in selling the *Tombola* tickets.

Mr. and Mrs. A. Schmid's table also graced the presence of Mr. De Brunner, whom they brought along as a guest.

This fact was specially noted by the President, Mr. Peter Stoeri, who in a short speech welcomed everybody.

Mr. A. Schmid's table later became the centre of much hilarity and enjoyment, as the result of the *Tombola*.

There were nine prizes in all and five of these were won by Mrs. Schmid (including the one presented by her husband).

This was promptly opened and enjoyed.

Around 10 p.m. the Male Choir put in their appearance and sang two lovely songs.

Later the Accordion Club played to us some of our well-known tunes.

These two items undoubtedly added to the success of the evening.

It was with a very warm feeling in my heart, when on my way home, I looked back on the enjoyable evening I had spent, and I feel that thanks are due to the hard working Committee, Steward, Stewardess and their Staff.

In conclusion, we should all thank our popular President, Mr. Peter Stoeri, for his energetic and tireless efforts on all occasions.

A born host, he has the gifted ability of making everybody feel at home, and thereby fully deserved the congratulatory remarks I heard on all sides.

Those of us who knew his late father "Old Peter" will, I am sure, agree with me, when I say, he is truly "a Chip off the Old Block."

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