

Christmas service and party of Swiss Catholics

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Objektyp: **Article**

Zeitschrift: **The Swiss observer : the journal of the Federation of Swiss Societies in the UK**

Band (Jahr): - **(1947)**

Heft 1060

PDF erstellt am: **22.07.2024**

Persistenter Link: <https://doi.org/10.5169/seals-687363>

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THE SONG OF SEMPACH.

Lasst hören aus alter Zeit

Let's sing of the times of old,
And of our fathers, strong and bold,
Of sword clash and deadly spear thrust,
Of deathblows and choking camp dust;
Let's praise in song that valiant breed
And our great hero, Winkelried.

To Sempach, at break of day,
The Austrians came, in full array,
Trampling cornfields, boastful, jeering.
A Swiss cried: "We'll stop you sneering,
Ere long, before the sun is up,
With blood we'll fill your morning cup."

The Swiss then plunged in the fray,
It was a hot and sultry day.
The en'my, by armour shielded,
Stood rock-like and nowhere yielded,
Yet death soon brought their spirits low.
They found the Swiss a doughty foe.

For fighting with bodies bare,
Their valour was beyond compare.
Of victory they were not doubting,
Pressed onward, their war-cries shouting.
But many fell; they could not breach
The wall of lances out of reach.

"Take care of my wife and kin"
Cried Winkelried above the din
As the spear-points, closely serried,
In his brave heart he deeply buried.
Thus to his glory and our pride
A gallant hero nobly died.

And over him, steeped in blood,
The Swiss poured like an angry flood,
Breaking through, with dreadful slaughter,
Smashed the armour, gave no quarter,
And wrote in freedom's history
A page of glorious victory.

Translated by J.J.F.S.

Nouvelle Société Helvétique (LONDON GROUP)

Free Discussion

open to all members of the Swiss Colony
on

"HOW TO MAINTAIN AND STRENGTHEN
ALLEGIANCE TO SWITZERLAND"

at the

Vienna Café, Berkeley Arcade, Baker St., W.1.
(opposite Baker Street Station)

on

Thursday, February 6th, 1947.

CHRISTMAS SERVICE AND PARTY OF SWISS CATHOLICS, 28th DECEMBER, 1946.

As in previous years, so again on the last Sunday of 1946 the Swiss Catholics met first for a religious service and afterwards at a Childrens party.

At the service in St. Peters Church, Palace Street, W.1, Father Lanfranchi, the Chaplain, preached. In his address he reminded the congregation of the greatness of the Christmas festival and its meaning to the world. He described how our people at home celebrate and spend Christmas both in the Churches and in the homes. He particularly dealt in his sermon with the words of the gospel "The Word was made man and dwelt amongst us." Whilst the "Word" our Saviour, Christ, is not with us in the flesh as He was with the Apostles and earliest Christians, the Almighty is still with us in spirit and in the Holy Sacrament. At the end of the year our thanks must be to Him for the graces granted us and we must pray for 'His' blessings for all, our homes, our country and the whole world.

The solemn Benediction was given by the Rev. Pater Loetschert assisted by two other missionaries from the College at Immensee (Schwyz) eight of whom are now in this country studying English and Oriental languages before proceeding to various Mission fields.

The childrens party that followed and at which nearly 600 people were present was a highly successful affair. After tea was served (gratiously thanks to some generous donors) we were treated with an excellent entertainment suited for young and old. The Swiss Catholic mixed Choir sang Christmas Carols and Swiss songs, a conjuror with his magic feats held everyone spellbound and guessing and he amused the children, particularly so, as he used the help of two little boys and girls in his tricks with boxes, ribbons, balls and rope tricks.

Madame Papacini rendered three songs and Mr. Gandon and his little daughter delighted the audience with accordian recitals.

Father Christmas, in the person of Pater Wuermes also of Immensee had a kind word for everyone of the nearly 100 children present, each of whom received a little present and some sweets from under the lighted Christmas tree.

Father Lanfranchi, who had organised the party almost single handed, deserved the thanks of all, he and his helpers from the Edelweiss Club worked hard the whole evening to make the party such a successful one. After the childrens party many of the grown ups enjoyed a few additional hours of songs, music and dancing in the well decorated and well heated Cathedral Hall.

Everyone present was glad they had ventured to come along, although London was shrouded in thick fog, to spend such a pleasant afternoon in such good company, the only regret was that neither H. E. The Cardinal (who was otherwise engaged) nor the Swiss Minister, Dr. Paul Ruegger (who was indisposed) could not join as had been hoped, the happy assembly.

X.Y.Z.