

35th swiss children's annual christmas party

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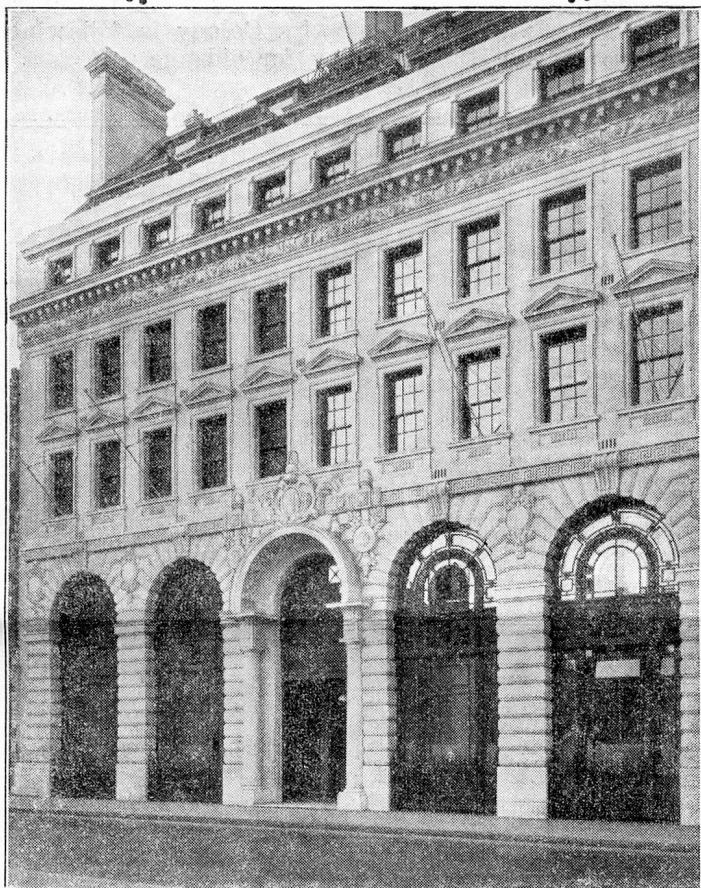

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35th SWISS CHILDREN'S ANNUAL CHRISTMAS PARTY.

If you had looked in at the Victoria Halls on the cold and foggy afternoon of January 2nd you would have seen 184 children sitting in the warm bright light of a Christmas tree. It was the annual party to which all the children in the Colony are invited. The Swiss Minister, Monsieur de Torrenté was there and the children gave him a big clap to show their appreciation of his presence amongst them.

The party started as is the custom, with the story of the Nativity and the singing of carols. A few of the children of the Sunday school of the French speaking community recited and sang in French and in English.

The Jacquard Puppets then opened the entertainment with a beautiful and varied programme. There were puppets acting and singing nursery rhymes and songs, some delightful scenes, some comical ones. Others danced, played the piano and even performed tricks in a circus.

Mr. Gandon and his accordionists then played their merry Swiss tunes and yodels. They played again during tea and we thank them most sincerely for providing Swiss music for the party.

Colour films of Switzerland came next. These were provided by the Swiss Tourist Office by courtesy of Mr. Ernst, to whom we extend heartfelt thanks. Most of the children are British born and not all of them can visit the homeland of their Swiss parent or parents. Every year at this party, however, they take an imaginary trip to Switzerland. This year they visited Lucerne and saw the scenery, sports and art festivals for which it is famous. The other film "Where is the Fox?" showed an exciting chase on skis in the bright sunshine of Arosa.

The children then had tea and Father Christmas was greeted with great applause. They listened quietly as he spoke to them, and then filed out to collect their presents: each child received some chocolate, (our warm thanks to the kind donor) an orange, a calendar as well as a present.

Every year someone has remarked how well behaved the children are, and it is time this was mentioned. They laugh and clap during the entertainment and make a lot of noise at tea as all happy children do. When spoken to, however, they are always quiet and attentive and they go in and out of the halls in an orderly way. It is a real pleasure to see them every year and to arrange the party for them.

Everyone was so glad to see Miss Matthey welcoming the children and checking her lists as usual. We would have missed her sadly if she had not been well enough to come.

The Committee thank all those who gave the necessary money, gifts and services, especially Mr. Dupraz for passing round the now famous "little black book".

A.B.