

Unusual activity at the Legation

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FETE SUISSE ANGLO-FRENCH BALL.

The fact that quite a number of the members of the Colony are going to the Ball at the Dorchester on Thursday, April 4th, but would like yet to attend at least part of the Fête Suisse, has caused some embarrassment. The matter has been discussed and it is suggested that both Ladies and Gentlemen should attend the Fête Suisse in *Evening Dress* which can only bring some charm and dignity to our Fête. Realising, however, that some might feel embarrassed, the President will announce at the beginning of the Fête why some people are in full dress, informing the audience also of the honour conferred on the "Chanson de Gruyère" to appear at the Dorchester in company with well-known international artists.

It is also suggested that a certain number of seats could be reserved downstairs at the Central Hall, so that those attending the Ball will be together. Will those intending to come in Evening Dress please state this when applying for tickets if they desire to be with their colleagues.

Comité de la Fête Suisse.

UNUSUAL ACTIVITY AT THE LEGATION.

Unusual activity could be witnessed at the Legation on Saturday, 16th February.

Post Office engineers arrived early in the morning and were busily engaged outside and inside the building, laying additional cables for a direct connection between 18 Montagu Place and Broadcasting House. On their heels came BBC engineers with mysterious grey steel boxes, rolls of cables and wires, stands, microphones, mixers, batteries, telephones, hooks, and ladders, and quickly installed a sub-station. The reason was that Mr. Haller of the Swiss Broadcasting Company had arranged on behalf of Studio Basle a live broadcast from London to Switzerland. The Swiss audience were to hear, in the Swiss version of "In Town To-night", a 1 $\frac{3}{4}$ hours' programme on how Swiss in London would pass a Saturday evening.

The programme started with the arrival of a Swissair machine at London airport. Then followed a cultural-gastronomical talk at the Elizabethan Rooms in Kensington where Professor Leonard Forster of the University of London discoursed in perfect "Basel-Dytsch" on customs and menus in

the times of Elizabeth I. The next item on the programme was a contribution by two Swiss musicians living in London, Miss Huggenberger (3 Brahms Waltzes) and Mr. Ferber (Prelude by Rachmaninoff, and Toccata by Debussy). In order to give a proper background to this Concert, the Minister and Madame Daeniker had very kindly lent the reception rooms at the Legation and invited some members of the Colony to act — as Mr. Haller informed the Swiss audience — as "claqueurs". The Minister himself gave a short interview before the microphone and was followed by Mr. H. P. Hort from Basle who accompanied himself on the guitar and gave the audience a foretaste of the Fasnacht by singing a typical Basle "Schnitzelbank". The invited audience did its duty nobly although several of them confessed that the very subtle allusions in broad Basle dialect were beyond their comprehension.

Then followed an interview with our compatriot Mr. Käufeler, the Grand Chef of the Dorchester, a Rock'n'Roll visit to a coffee bar, and a glimpse of late-night gaiety in the Dorchester Restaurant.

It was the first time that so elaborate and so lengthy a programme had been arranged for direct transmission and broadcasting in Switzerland. It needed months of preparation by Mr. Haller and the experts from Studio Basle. It required not only days of work by BBC technicians, but also an unusual amount of goodwill and consideration from the BBC administrators and engineers. The whole major operation went without a technical hitch and was in every respect a grand success.

E.B.

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