

Bellinzona e il tiro federale

Autor(en): **[s.n.]**

Objekttyp: **Article**

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

Band (Jahr): **- (1929)**

Heft 392

PDF erstellt am: **28.04.2024**

Persistenter Link: <https://doi.org/10.5169/seals-689335>

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costume, without a hat and with town shoes, whom we met, some years ago, one summer day on the Kleine Scheidegg. In spite of earnest warnings he received from local guides of whom he enquired the way, he set out, ill-clad and ill-shod for such an ascent as he was, towards the Eiger and was found several days later, mutilated and dead.

Our mountains are as safe as Piccadilly Circus—at least, as safe except for those who undertake difficult ascents without proper preparation and without any training. People who do that might just as well jump overboard in the middle of the Atlantic and try swimming home.

Basle as a Fish Market.

(*Manchester Guardian Commercial*, 11th April): The efficient organisation of the fish trade in Switzerland, which has steadily developed during the past few years, has not only made the town of Basle the chief fish market in Switzerland but has provided it with good grounds for claiming to be one of the most important fish markets of Europe.

During the two-year period 1927-1928 approximately 48,000 cwt. of fresh fish, valued at over eight million of Swiss francs (about £320,000), were imported via Basle, the supplies coming mainly from France and Germany. The fish is transported to Basle by very fast trains and immediately conveyed to the numerous large refrigerating chambers owned by the wholesale merchants in this town. The consignments are thereupon distributed throughout the country by express trains, so that the fish arrives in good condition even in the highest mountain resorts.

The opinion is that British exporters of fish could with advantage pay more attention to the requirements of the Swiss market. The demand for salt-water fish is steadily growing, but the supply frequently fails to cover requirements. It is interesting also to note that kippers are becoming more and more the vogue. The hotels absorb a considerable quantity, but the upper and middle classes of the Swiss population are also beginning to take a fancy to this delectable British breakfast dish.

I might add that those of our compatriots who like kippers for breakfast when over here, much appreciate that tasty fish in Switzerland, but find great difficulty in obtaining it. I have, for several seasons now, despatched little parcels containing about a dozen kippers by express post to Switzerland, and such consignments have invariably given more pleasure than gifts which might have cost ten times as much. I am told that the kippers arrive in excellent condition. Naturally I make such consignments during coldish weather only and not during a heat-wave!

The Triumph of Iodine.

(*Daily News*, 16th April):—

Not yet, by a long way, have we fully discovered all the functions of the thyroid. We know that the thyroid is essential for the proper development of mind and body, that, in its absence, the child becomes a cretin, a misshapen and imbecile dwarf; and that a diet of thyroid will transform such a dwarf into a well-formed and intelligent human being.

We know, also, that the cretin is the typical offspring of a goitrous mother; and now comes the splendid sequel to that story. In the new official report on iodine it is recorded that, in the Canton Appenzell, in Switzerland, the use of iodised salt became general in 1922; and by 1925 it was reported that no more cretins were born and congenital goitre had practically disappeared.

What a simple discovery, anyone might say. Yes, and what a cheap one—for indeed the cost of the quantity of iodine which we all need is negligible, too small to be reckoned at all. Yet further, this new and triumphant and costless discovery is not new at all. The Ancient Greeks, and even their predecessors, used sponges and seaweeds to cure goitre; and now we know that those agents were rich in iodine. Again, after the discovery of iodine in 1811, it soon began to be used by doctors, and I possess a little book, by Dr. Gairdner, "On the Effects of Iodine on the Human Constitution," in which the author praises iodine for goitre; and the date on that book is "London, 1824." Why was all this forgotten? You may well ask, but there is no time for the answer now. The Greeks used sunlight. Why did we forget that until the other day?

In the Eugenics Laboratory at University College, London, Dr. Percy Stocks has confirmed the discovery first made in Switzerland that there is a relation between the incidence of goitre and that of certain types of cancer. Evidently anything which supplies the thyroid and helps to keep it in health may serve also towards the prevention of those types of cancer; and here is another use for iodine.

Again, we are learning that the thyroid helps to protect us against certain infections. Iodine may be, in the best sense, an antiseptic if it supplies the thyroid gland with the raw

material necessary for its work of protecting us against germs. I am reminded of sunlight, which is an antiseptic, killing germs which it strikes, but which is immeasurably more valuable as an antiseptic because it helps the body to kill germs for itself.

In many parts of the world to-day the law requires that no salt—sodium chloride—be sold without having a fixed content of iodine, in the form of sodium iodide. I am informed by Dr. Carrière, the Director of the Public Health Service of Switzerland, that in some Swiss cantons where non-iodised salt is still allowed to be sold, the law fixes the price of the iodised salt at the same level. Outrageous prices have been charged in this country for many of the iodised salts which have been put on the market since I began my campaign in 1924.

BELLINZONA E IL TIRO FEDERALE.

Questa caratteristica cittadina di aspetto severo e bellicoso, con i suoi castelli e le sue mura merlati, sta signorilmente preparando per il tiro federale che, in quest'anno costituisce il più grande avvenimento patriottico per l'intera confederazione.

Dal 14 al 28 luglio essa accoglierà, baldanzosi e festanti a contendersi il primato della valentia, oltre 30,000 tiratori, tutti appartenenti ad associazioni che risiedono in territorio elvetico.

Ad essi si aggiungeranno molte società svizzere di tiro che si trovano all'estero. Hanno già assicurato il loro intervento quelle di Londra, di Parigi, del Cairo, di Milano, di Lione, del principato di Monaco, di Innsbruck e di Buenos-Aires. Ed alle forti e balde schiere di tiratori si aggiungeranno amici e simpatizzanti, in numero grandissimo; e così la piccola capitale del Cantone saluterà ospiti ambiti, che vi giungeranno da ogni angolo della Patria e da ogni parte del mondo.

La sua stazione ferroviaria trasformata ed ingrandita, assume ora aspetto gaio e grandioso, con l'ampio piazzale che le si stende innanzi, da cui si diparte la via principale, rosseggiante di porfidi, che penetra nel cuore della città.

Tutti gli edifici pubblici e privati, sontuosi e modesti, si sono abbelliti con tinte e decorazioni nuove e, civettuole si ergono ai fianchi delle vie in veste nuova, per farsi ammirare.

La piazza Indipendenza attirerà specialmente l'occhio del visitatore con l'umile e graziosa chiesa di San Rocco, restaurata con fine senso artistico, sulla cui facciata campeggiano, in una severa armonia di tinte, dolci figure con mistica espressione medioevale, fra le quali, a guisa di gigante, quella del patrono, in atto di mostrare la sua inseparabile piaga.

Una via nuova ed ampia si stacca dalla piazza Rinaldo Simen, e dopo aver attraversato verdi praterie raggiunge il campo della festa che si presenta già fin d'ora, bello ed imponente.

Un'altra strada carrozzabile, ultimata in questi giorni, dal piazzale della stazione, con pittoreschi riscoli, sale sul terrazzo di Montebello e tocca il ponte levatoio del castello omonimo o di Svitto, ricostruito nel 1903 a ricordo del primo centenario dell'Indipendenza Ticinese, nelle cui auguste e cupe stanze ha sede il museo storico della città.

Dalla spianata, fuori del castello, si gode una magnifica vista che, a sud, si estende sino all'azzurro specchio del Verbano, e di fronte abbraccia il campo della festa, la piazza del tiro che fiancheggia, per lungo tratto, la sponda sinistra del fiume Ticino.

Omaggio di fiori avrà il milite morente, che, col monotono mormorio di limpida acqua, onora la memoria dei soldati ticinesi che perdettero la vita in servizio della Patria nella mobilitazione, durante la grande guerra quando la Svizzera dovette provvedere alla difesa delle sue frontiere.

Il palazzo municipale, vera opera d'arte lombarda, con la sua torre snella e graziosa, che dall'alto vigila sulla città, sarà meta gradita di visite quotidiane dei numerosi ospiti, ai quali parlerà delle glorie del passato, con la sua severa architettura, con i vetri istoriati, con le graffi mirabili e con gli stemmi dell'insigne patriato Bellinzonese.

La Colleggiata, dall'alto della stupenda gradinata, con la sua facciata nobile e severa, inviterà, sotto la sua navata alta e solenne, tutti quanti amano l'armonia del bello, ad ammirare le stupende espressioni di fede e di arte che innidano il cuore e lo spirito di un godimento sublime.

E nei dintorni quante altre cose belle gli ospiti del tiro federale potranno ammirare! A sud della città la basilica di Ravecchia, monumento nazionale e la vestusta chiesa delle Grazie con i suoi pregevoli dipinti, a nord la chiesa di San Paolo che accoglie i resti degli eroi di Arbedo e ovunque incantevoli quadri di bellezza naturale con i grotti rustici e poetici...

Durante il tiro gli edifici della città ed i castelli saranno pavesati a festa con bandiere ed orifiamma e la sera scintilleranno tutti d'una miriade di luci sfavillanti, mentre nelle piazze si diffonderanno le dolci armonie delle musiche e dei canti patriottici.

Accorrete numerosi a Bellinzona, o concittadini che vivete sul suolo di questa nobile e garande Albione; accorrete per rendere più maestoso il tripudio dei figli d'Elvezia, che attraverso la gara pacifica del tiro federale, si apprestano ad onorare la patria con tutte le forze dell'anima e del cuore.

TERESA LUNGI-REZZONICO.

OUR FORTUNE. From a Correspondent.

There is hardly a subject on which people's ideas vary so much as on this one: That not everyone can have the same success as an Andrew Carnegie, Rockefeller or Henry Ford and many more like them, is no doubt clear to most of us. When we talk of "making our fortune," it means rather the making of a comfortable living that gives us enough and something to spare, than the amassing of great material wealth. It means also our happiness, which is based on a contented mind.

However, the wheel of fortune never stops, it always goes round, and those at the top now may find themselves down below before they realise it, while some others from underneath move up. There is, therefore, always hope for those who keep awake and who are ready to move forward.

It would be interesting to collect the life-stories of many of our compatriots scattered over the whole globe, and write a book on their fortunes and misfortunes. No more fascinating book could be thought of, especially for our younger generation. It would be a useful guide, and help them to avoid many a pitfall.

Some years ago I knew a nice elderly business man who had gone through many ups and downs during his career. At one time he was one of the wealthiest European merchants in India, worth a million, he said. But as often happens, he was unfortunate in some business and lost every penny he had. Back again in Europe he worked in practically every country. He tried everything everywhere. He knew about half a dozen languages, and was a very capable business man. In spite of this he had many more disappointments. He liked to tell me of his experiences in every country and important seaport in Europe, and I just liked to listen to him and always liked going to his small private office, where he worked as a clerk of a large firm, starting a new department without success.

One day about ten years ago, walking along Cannon Street, I met my first employer here. It was years since I had seen him last. We shook hands and began to ask the usual questions as to how each was getting on. He was a big merchant at one time, but lost all his money and was just trying to make another start. A few days later I heard that he had died. He started with nothing, became rich, and died as poor as he started. Such is our fortune.

"Tis not in mortals to command success;
We will do more—deserve it."

For individuals as for nations, fortune was always to a certain extent their own making. This is a very old story, and is very nicely demonstrated in a book I bought a short time ago from the *Efficiency Magazine*, 87, Regent Street, W.1, for 2/6. The title is *Self-Help*, by Samuel Smiles. (Publishers, John Murray, London.) The cover says:

"Few books in the whole history of literature have had such wide popularity or such healthy and stimulating effect as the works of Samuel Smiles. How great men achieved greatness and successful men achieved success is the subject of his enthralling volume, which proves irresistibly attractive to young and old in all countries of the world."

SWISS CHORAL SOCIETY.

Nationalism is such an obsession to-day that its real value in the scheme of things has been almost completely lost. Like most natural things, once it became a conscious aim it became unnatural; and nationalism as applied to art particularly so.

Those who think only, when national music is mentioned, of the priggish and artificial fashion for what is called folk-lore should have attended the Annual Concert, at the Mortimer Hall, of the Swiss Choral Society, on Thursday, April 18th. Though the national artists are to a certain degree in the position of exiles from the nation, there was a spontaneity in the performance, an expression of unconscious natural familiarity quite different from what is so common to English audiences. It is a pity, in fact, that there was not more of the Swiss and less of the international.

The Choir, directed as usual with the skill and discrimination that M. Walter Meyrowitz always displays, sang with admirable precision and tone balance. The most delightful items of a delightful programme were, however, the three short double quartets, particularly "Der Bärner-Bär," in which the yodellist—if there is such a term—covered himself with glory.

Miss Evelyn Ruegg is a young violinist of more than ordinary promise, possessing a fine and consistent tone and a fluent technique. She played among other things a piece appropriately entitled "Enchantment," composed and accompanied by M. Meyrowitz.

The Swiss Institute Orchestra, though not so far as choice of programme is concerned, specifically Swiss, is, nevertheless, a spirited and hard-working combination, and under the baton of M. Paul Dick achieved a well-earned popularity with the crowded audience.

V.W.L.