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HOME NEWS

The elections for the re-constitution of the Swiss National Council will take place on Sunday, October 29th next.

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The fiscal accounts of the Canton of Thurgau for 1921 show a pleasing improvement, as the revenue of 11,027,591 frs. exceeds the expenditure by 112,538 frs.

At the end of 1921 the Thurgovian State property was valued at 15,416,942 frs.

* * *

Swiss Co-operative Societies have paid 1,416,942 frs. in taxes and licences during 1921.

The 493 societies which constitute the Swiss Co-operative Union are running 1914 shops and depots all over the country, thus each business contributes annually 740 francs towards taxation and other fiscal dues.

* * *

A terrific storm, accompanied by heavy lightning and hail, in the region of Bellinzona has, unfortunately, caused tremendous damage to crops and property, particularly in Lumina and Gnosca and the adjacent valley of Misox.

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The third "Liebesgabenzug," provisioned by the Swiss people for the benefit of starving Russian children, left Moscow for Zarizyn on August 10th.

The train was composed of 30 waggons of wheat and one waggon of oatmeal, representing a value of 100,000 francs, and will enable the Swiss kitchens in Sarepta, Krasnovarmeisa and Tschorny-Yar to add to each daily ration of 20,000 children about 100 grammes of bread.

This is the third train despatched from Switzerland in aid of the Russian children, making in all 100 trucks of food, clothing and other necessities, which will put the 70 Swiss kitchens in Russia in a position to carry on their benevolent work until the end of November.

To celebrate the Swiss National Fête in Russia, the executive committee of the Swiss Relief Fund had arranged on the First of August to supply double rations to the Russian children.

* * *

The feudal Castle of Gruyères, which has been closed to the public for some years, has been thrown open again to visitors daily from 2 to 5 p.m., by the courtesy of its proprietress, Madame Balland, to whom application for inspection should be addressed.

The Cantonal Tribunal of Neuchâtel has given a verdict for 21,500 frs. damages against the Community of Colombier.

A scholar, aged 12, broke his arm whilst doing gymnastic exercises during school hours, and the accident has left him with a permanently stiff and useless right arm.

The tribunal was of opinion that the particular exercise was too dangerous for scholars of that age, and that the gymnastic instructor committed a grave error of judgment in imposing the drill.

The Community, being insured against risks of this nature with the "Zürich," has not appealed against the verdict.

* * *

After Geneva follows Zürich with Aerial Displays. Great efforts and preparations are in progress to assure the success of the International Aviation Meeting which will take place in Zürich-Dübendorf from September 3rd to 10th inclusive.

The first International "Alpenrundflug" is receiving predominant attention; the first prize consists of the "Chavez-Bider" challenge trophy and 10,000 frs., the second prize 3,000 frs., and the third prize 1,000 frs.

For military aviators the Federal Council is offering cash prizes amounting to 5,000 frs., in addition to a bronze statue for the winner by the sculptor Hermann Haller.

For civil sporting aviation there are offered handsome prizes to the value of nearly 5,000 frs., accompanied by a gold challenge trophy, the work of Swiss craftsmen.

The Section Romande of the S.Ae.C. is offering a trophy and 3,000 frs. for the International Acrobatic Competitions in the air, while the Federal Council is giving a further cash prize of 1,500 frs. for the International "Bombing" Competitions.

Inducements to attract "aces" of the international flying world are therefore not lacking, and it is hoped that the meeting will prove another success for Swiss organisation.

* * *

The grand pyrotechnic display which was intended for the First of August Celebrations at the Tonhalle, Zürich, had to be postponed from day to day, owing to inclement weather. On Thursday evening, the 10th instant, it was thought that the opportune moment had arrived, and thousands had gathered to witness the fireworks. Luckily, the Clerk of the Weather delayed re-opening the sluice gates and quenching the brilliance of the immense fire-wheels until the crowds did get a few moments' delight from the grand sight. Let us hope this capricious official will be of a friendlier turn of mind during the aviation week.

* * *

An unusual "residence" of vagabonds has been discovered by the Municipal Police of Berne.

Each of the pillars of the stately Kirchenfeldbrücke on the left bank of the Aare has an empty chamber of

respectable dimensions at the base, to which an iron door gives access.

Some members of the fraternity which takes the line of least resistance for getting through life, had managed to secure skeleton keys and installed their "homes" in the rent-free abode, until, early one morning, the police entered the castle, finding two of the "lodgers" still fast asleep, among all sorts of goods and provisions which constituted the remnants of a series of unexplained burglaries in the town.

Three other confederates, among whom a woman, who had risen very early that morning, or, more probably, had not returned from the "night shift" when the police disturbed the peace of the house, were not caught till later in the day, and all now share separate apartments—also free of rent and taxes—in the municipal hotel where the coming and going of residents is supervised to an irksome degree.

* * *

At the preliminary elimination trials of the National team of eight shots, who are to represent Switzerland at the forthcoming International Rifle and Pistol Matches at Milan, the following have so far qualified:—Rifles: W. Lienhard, Kriens; K. Zimmermann, Lucerne; J. Hartmann, Lausanne. Pistols: F. Zulauf, Altstetten; F. König, Berne; K. Widmer, St. Gall.

W. Lienhard obtained in the three positions: standing, kneeling and lying, the grand total of 1,068 points, which beats the score of the American champion, Stokes, at Lyons in 1921, by 13 points.

* * *

The wife of a platelayer was caught by the engine of a goods train near Kesswil (St. Gall) and was instantly killed, her body being cut in two.

* * *

On the Lake of Zürich, Hermann Heer, 22, from Zürich, recklessly attempted to dive underneath a passing motor launch. He was hit on the head by the propeller and drowned.

* * *

Mr. Ernest Studer, distiller, Erpolingen, during a violent thunderstorm, while on the road to Oberdiesbach (Berne), was struck by lightning, being instantly killed. It is only nine months since he lost his wife, and their eight children are now left orphans.

* * *

Alpinism.

This year's first ascent of the Monte Rosa (4,638 m.) via the Greuzgletscher was accomplished on August 5th by Professor Burckhardt-Socin, Madame Grether-Revel and Mr. Pierre Burckhardt, from Basle, who were accompanied by the Zermatt guides Aufdenplatten and Gonderen.

* * *

M. Joseph Macheret, member of the Club Alpin de Fribourg, section Moléson, had a fatal fall while descending the Grand-Paradis (4,061 m.) in the Grées Alpes, Italy. He leaves four young children.

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No trace has yet been found of Ellis Abraham, 19, from London, who disappeared from Champéry on Sunday, August 6th.

* * *

OBITUARY.

M. Arthur Compte, civil engineer, of Geneva, who has rendered valuable services in the preliminary study of the

funicular railway leading up to Vesuvius, died at Geneva on August 8th.

In his capacity of Municipal Engineer to the city of Geneva he has also planned and conducted the construction of a number of municipal works.

* * *

The Swiss missionary, Mr. L. Gehrig, from Uznach (St. Gall), has succumbed to fever in East Africa.

EXTRACTS FROM SWISS PAPERS.

La fontaine de Gryon (Canton de Vaud. 1133 m.).—Combien de personnes passent à Gryon sans prêter attention à la grande fontaine du haut village, étagé au-dessus des gorges sauvages de l'Avançon. Après avoir apaisé avec son eau fraîche et limpide, la soif née de la longue montée aux raccourcis rapides, le touriste ne se doute pas que ce magnifique bassin de 6 m. 40 de long sur 1 m. 55 de large, d'un seul bloc, est là depuis plus d'un siècle. C'est en effet pendant l'hiver de 1805 que les gens de Gryon hissèrent ce bloc, fidèle témoignage de leur ténacité. Eugène Rambert, parlant de la montée au village de ce beau monument, s'exprime en ces termes:

"La merveille de Gryon est le bassin de la grande fontaine. Et, en effet, si l'on prend la peine d'y réfléchir, on trouve que ce n'est pas chose si simple qu'un bassin pareil à cette hauteur. Il est d'un seul bloc, en marbre, et ne mesure pas moins de vingt et quelques pieds de longueur, et la largeur en proportion. Les connaisseurs devineront tout de suite d'où il vient. C'est du marbre de St-Triphon. Mais, ce qui est moins facile à comprendre, c'est la manière dont il a pu faire le voyage de St-Triphon à Gryon. Par la route nouvelle, ce serait chose aisée: une dizaine de bons chevaux suffiraient. Mais le bassin est plus vieux que la route, et dans le temps, où il a été hissé à Gryon, il n'existeit que l'ancien chemin, pierreux, raboteux, aux contours subits, moins un chemin qu'un couloir, et dont les piétons se servent encore aujourd'hui pour abréger. De robustes chevaux montagnards pourraient à la rigueur tirer par ce casse-cou un chariot à deux roues. Mais comment y faire manœuvrer un attelage à plusieurs chevaux? On s'y prit différemment. Tous les hommes valides descendirent à la rencontre du bassin communal et vinrent s'y atteler au bas de la pente.

"C'était en hiver, la neige était dure, et dans les endroits les plus favorables, on pouvait le faire glisser; ailleurs on le faisait cheminer avec des rouleaux. En les voyant passer, le directeur des Salines paraît sa tête qu'ils n'y arriveraient jamais; mais l'honneur était engagé et les gens de Gryon ont forte poigne. Le soir du premier jour, ils avaient fait à peu près le tiers du chemin. Ils continuèrent à travailler toute la nuit, puis le lendemain. Le soir du deuxième jour ils avaient dépassé le village des Posses et il ne restait qu'une dernière rampe. Mais tout le monde était à bout de force et les travailleurs allaient prendre le chemin du logis, laissant le monstre dormir à la belle étoile, lorsqu'on fit accourir toutes les femmes de Gryon enflammées d'une sainte ardeur.

"Elles s'attelèrent aussi et minuit n'avait pas sonné à l'église paroissiale que le bassin était en place et l'on dansait autour une danse triomphale."

Une soixantaine de personnes, hommes et femmes de Gryon, une mule, celle d'Antoine Morge, avaient uni leurs efforts pour cette corvée. Le bassin fut parachevé avec les soins que l'on imagine et, quelques semaines plus tard il recevait son baptême, au milieu de la population enthousiaste, à qui il rappelle le souvenir de cet effort en commun.

Un autre témoin de la volonté, de la ténacité des habitants de Gryon est le bloc erratique que constitue le monument de Juste et Caroline Olivier. Cette pierre a été descendue, en 1906, des hauteurs de Solalex, alpage précédant celui d'Anzeindaz. Le bloc pesait 15,000 kilos environ; une centaine d'hommes mirent deux jours pour l'amener au village; il fallut un jour plein pour le charger sur un char spécial; on fut obligé, tout le long du pâturage, de faire passer les roues sur des plateaux que l'on déplaçait au fur et à mesure; on avait dû soutenir les ponts et, par endroits, élargir le chemin. On arriva sans accident au village et le bloc fut dressé au milieu des chants et de l'allégresse générale. ("La Tribune.")

* * *

La Municipalité de Moudon vient de faire faire des réparations au clocher du bâtiment du Rochefort; il a également fait repeindre le cadran de l'horloge. Au cours des travaux, dit