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d'avoir si benigne et fraternellement retiré sa verge de dessus nous."

C'est à cette époque-là que l'on peut faire remonter la première origine d'un jeûne fédéral, c'est-à-dire commun à un certain nombre de cantons et décrété par l'autorité civile et politique.

Ce jour de prières fut animé d'un nouveau zèle religieux après que les Etats protestants eurent subi la défaite humiliante de Villmergen en 1656. Ils choisirent alors, en 1660, la date du 24 mai "pour célébrer un jour de louanges, d'action de grâces, de jeûne, de prières et de pénitence."

Une comète apparue en 1664 causa une énorme émotion. La Diète des cantons protestants, réunie au mois de janvier de l'année suivante, "décida que cet astre était le précurseur funeste de toute espèce de châtements et qu'il y avait lieu de s'humilier dans un jour de pénitence extraordinaire. Au jour fixé, les ministres devaient, dans tous les cantons, tonner sur les vices et en particulier les serments, les jurements, le jeu, la danse, les excès dans le manger et dans le boire, le luxe, la profanation du dimanche, le parjure, la magie, l'ingérence illicite dans les affaires de l'Etat, l'envie, la haine, l'esprit de vengeance, et inspirer l'esprit de piété."

Les événements extérieurs donnent encore parfois un caractère particulier au jour du jeûne. C'est ainsi qu'en 1666, on remercia Dieu d'avoir rétabli la paix entre l'Angleterre et la Hollande et que, vingt ans plus tard, on lui demanda de mettre fin aux persécutions dont sont victimes les Vaudois du Piémont. En 1756, enfin, il y a un jour extraordinaire de jeûne à la suite du grand tremblement de terre de Lisbonne.

Depuis 1832, le jeûne fédéral a été célébré régulièrement sans incidents graves. Je citerai cependant, et pour terminer, un petit fait significatif, à une époque où le "progrès" semble être synonyme d'unification dans un certain nombre de cerveaux. En 1871, le Conseil fédéral consulta les cantons sur l'opportunité qu'il y aurait "à centraliser cette fête et à l'annoncer comme fête religieuse et patriotique au moyen d'une publication adressée au peuple suisse par l'autorité fédérale en remplacement des mandements cantonaux. Le gouvernement vaudois, après avoir pris l'avis des autorités ecclésiastiques répondit négativement." D'autres cantons eurent une attitude semblable et il ne fut plus question d'un mandement fédéral pour le jour du jeûne. Il est vrai que nous ne perdons peut-être rien pour attendre.

Gazette de Lausanne.

Tel père, tel fils.—Hier, Sept, 27, à eu lieu à Zurich un match entre des tireurs militaires suisses et américains. Le programme comprenait pour chaque tireur 50 coups à 300 mètres dans différentes positions. Les Américains utilisaient le fusil militaire américain, les Suisses le fusil d'ordonnance suisse.

Le groupe américain était composé de M. Frank Schneller et de son fils, âgés respectivement de 45 et 19 ans. Le groupe suisse comprenait M. Hasler et son fils, âgés respectivement de 48 et 23 ans. M. Frank Schneller est un Suisse-Américain, domicilié à Nennah, dans l'Etat du Wisconsin; il fit la guerre dans les rangs des Yankees et se trouve actuellement en Europe avec l'American Legation.

Les deux Suisses ont totalisé 638 points, les deux Américains 631.

Un vrai renard.—Aimez-vous les histoires de chasse? Il y des gens malintentionnés qui prétendent que ces histoires-là ne sont qu'un tissu de mensonges; à entendre ces mauvaises langues, on dirait, ma parole, qu'un chasseur est absolument incapable de dire la vérité. Ce n'est pourtant pas le cas; du reste, on dit communément: "menteur comme un arracheur de dents," mais on ne dit pas "blagueur comme un chasseur!"

Ce petit préambule pour vous faire comprendre que l'histoire ci-dessous n'est pas une blague, quand même que c'est un renard qui en est le héros, et qu'un garde-chasse et un gendarme y sont mêlés en compagnie d'un automobiliste.

L'autre soir, donc, dans ce pittoresque canton du Valais, un citoyen, passant en auto sur le pont du Rhône, entre Riddes et Saint-Pierre-de-Clages, écrasa une bête. (Vous savez qu'en auto, mon Dieu, ça peut arriver!) L'automobiliste s'arrêta et descendit de sa machine pour se rendre compte à quelle espèce appartenait sa victime. C'était un renard qui, malgré de multiples contusions, était encore bel et bien vivant.

Celui qui se trouva le plus embêté, ce ne fut pas le renard—qui n'en menait pourtant pas large—mais l'automobiliste qui s'en alla tout droit chez Pandore, son voisin, pour savoir ce qu'il fallait faire de l'animal. Car, outre que la chasse n'était pas encore ouverte, l'écraseur n'avait pas de permis de chasse!

Ne sachant que faire, et à force de réflexion, le gendarme déclara que, subseqüemment, il devait en référer à ses supérieurs.

—Je téléphonerai au Département! dit-il de façon péremptoire.

Mais pour téléphoner, il fallait attendre le matin. On attendit donc que le jour pointa. Entre temps, on dû s'occuper du joli petit quadrupède prisonnier, car, il y a la loi sur la protection des animaux. On lava ses blessures, on lui lissa le

poil et, pour qu'il n'ait pas trop l'ennui, on lui donna à boulotter. Malin, le renard relaquait tout ça du coin de l'oeil et se calait bien, pensant que ça pourrait lui rendre service plus tard.

Au matin, c'est-à-dire à une heure raisonnable, un peu après 10 heures, on téléphona au Département de Justice et Police. Le chef étant absent, on ne pût avoir de réponse.

Celle-ci arriva dans l'après-midi. Elle disait laconiquement qu'il fallait abattre le goupil.

Le gendarme, escorté du garde-chasse, de l'automobiliste et de nombreux badauds, s'en alla donc chercher le prisonnier pour le conduire au lieu du supplice. Le garde-chasse lâcha son chien sur le malheureux renard. Mais, maître Renard, qui s'était parfaitement réconforté aux frais de la Princesse et avait retrouvé toute son énergie, ne l'entendit pas de cette oreille. Il mordit son quadrupède d'adversaire. Qui déta d'un côté, tandis que lui-même se sauvait à toutes jambes d'un autre côté, à la barbe des assistants, qui ne l'ont jamais revu.

En voilà encore un qui, à l'avenir, se méfiera des autos!

Courrier du Val de Travers.

ALLUVIONE.

Non ho mai visto il Brenno così gonfio!

Quant'acqua! che schianto!

Sono enormi flutti neri che si rincorrono, si accavallano rabbiosamente, si travolgono con insaziabile brama di strage e si sfasciano spumeggiando contro i pilastri angoli e tenaci del ponte di granito. Sembra un potente urlo di belva feroce, la voce del fiume oggi, il brontolio sordo e continuo di una fiera affamata, che chiede la sua vittima.

Quant'acqua! Acqua nera, densa di terra, spumosa, puzzolente, minacciosa.

Enormi tronchi d'albero, sradicati chissà dove, passano, passano sotto le arcate del ponte, travolti e portati via come fucilli da quei cavalloni neri e selvaggi. Ecco ora un attaccapanni, un mazzo di scope, un armadio da cucina mezzo sfondato, una lunga processione di zucche, un maiale...

Oh! i raccapriccianti segni di sciagura ancora ignore!

Non ho mai visto il Brenno così gonfio.

La diga sembra non basti. Già il fiume vomita oltre ad essa, terribili bocche d'acqua. Quant'acqua! Ancora una mezz'ora di questa pioggia insistente e siam perduti.

Oh! Evacuare la propria casa, il nido dei nostri affetti, dei nostri ricordi lontani, per lasciarla in balia dei flutti e del caos; vederla portar via nei gorgi e cancellare dal suolo, quale, quale angoscia!

Io guardo quell'acqua rabbiosa che sembra ridersi dello uomo e del suo cigno, guardo il cielo che si fa sempre più cupo e dove le nubi sature di acqua, danzano una ridda spaventevole e macabra; guardo il monte Erto, il Simano, lavati, pettinati dalla pioggia; solcati da una matassa ingarbugliata di ruscelli e torrenti ubriachi di acqua, rigidi, duri come la morte e mi sento stringere, stringere il cuore! E l'acqua, i monti, il cielo assumono un aspetto nuovo, un'espressione cupa, cattiva.

Mi domando che sta per accadere e ho paura! Oh! tornasse il sereno. Fuggissero quelle nubi atroci che mi riempiono l'animo di sgomento: risplendesse il sole ristoratore che è mio ad è di tutti!

No! la pioggia continua incessante. Danzano, danzano le nubi nel cielo nero e di là, all'altra riva, si piegano accasciati e vinti sull'acqua, i poveri alberi che non vorrebbero, non vorrebbero morire.

Il fiume rugge, rugge di minuto in minuto ammontore. Il ponte trema all'urto formidabile dei flutti e dei macigni travolti dalla corrente. Che sarà mai?

Ho paura! ho paura...

C.M.

Biasca, 25 settembre 1927.

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and to buy their Tickets
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HISTORICAL MEMS.

The 1st of October, 1872, is a landmark in Swiss history and a milestone in the history of Continental railway development. It was on that day that the first sod was cut on the Gotthard line.

More than ten years had then gone by since the first attempts had been made to bring the Governments of the Norddeutsche Bund, Baden, Italy and Switzerland together to agree to certain conditions and subscriptions. The driving force behind the whole propaganda was the well-known politician and railway magnate Alfred Escher, of Zurich.

The first estimate was reckoned with a capital outlay of about 190 million Swiss francs, but soon experience told another tale. Not only had the original estimate been too low, but, in addition, just at that time that long and depressing crisis known as "the bad eighties" (although the crisis started about 1873 and lasted almost twenty years) made itself felt. Money became scarce, commerce and manufacture declined, and the natural effect was a fall in Rail values. The stock of the Nord-westbahn was sold for half its nominal value; the dividend dropped from 8 to 3% in 1876. Other lines had equally bad years and, as if all this had not been sufficient, the German Railways also suffered considerably. Such were the prevailing conditions when the different Governments and the private investors were asked to provide another 100 million Swiss francs to ensure the completion of the great work. A formidable task for the organisers! But the difficulties were surmounted: so were the obstacles, unforeseen obstacles by the score, which lay in the way of the technicians. Ten years of hard toil, ten years of fighting against odds; ten years of political negotiations and compromises, lay between that first of October and the opening of the Gotthard Bahn. But men won over element and crisis, and North and South were brought nearer together.

During the period of which we write the foundation stones for another great undertaking were laid. On the 6th October, 1874, the "Welt-postkongress" was opened in Berne. With the advent of Steam and Railway the postal organisations in all countries developed rapidly. Where a decade or two before a distance of a hundred miles was looked upon as beyond the average man's conception, now it remained only a stretch of a day's journey. Where before the sending of a letter was an event, it now became an everyday occurrence. So with money and parcels. This development it was which made it appear desirable to a number of Postmasters-General and other far-seeing people to come together and arrange international services. So the first World Postal Congress opened its doors at Berne in October, 1874, and out of that Congress the World Postal Union has developed as a permanent organisation. We know so little of these organisations, yet if they stopped their service for one day we would judge it to be a calamity.

Yet another transport event, though of more recent date, falls in the first October week—the opening of the Bodensee-Toggenburg Bahn (3rd

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durch die Geschäftsstelle Seidengasse Nr. 13, II. Et., Zürich 1

MISCELLANEOUS ADVERTISEMENTS

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EXCHANGE: Swiss gentleman coming to England shortly for several months wishes to make an exchange with English or Swiss gentleman or lady desiring to learn French in Switzerland (La Chaux-de-Fonds). Occasion to visit Ecole de Commerce or assist in the office of Watch Factory.—Address full details to Box XYZ, c/o "Swiss Observer," 23, Leonard Street, E.C.2.

October, 1910). This line, connecting Romanshorn (on the Lake of Constance) with St. Gall and Rapperswil had to fight with financial difficulties right from the beginning. As it was, and is, a short piece of line amongst the network of the State-owned Federal Railways, it cannot count on transit traffic, so its commercial outlook will always—at least, as long as it remains a private railway—be gloomy. Yet the value of the line is great to the stretch of land which it crosses, and it has been the means of more than a dozen large villages being brought nearer to town and markets. Amongst the many viaducts of this railway the most remarkable is the bridge spanning the Sitter; the rails are 360 feet above the ground level of the Sitter valley. The State-owned Ricketunnel, where about two years ago half a dozen railwaymen lost their lives, connects the B.T.B., which terminates at Wattwil in the Toggenburg, with Rapperswil, a small but pleasant old town on the Lake of Zurich. Another decade or so and the B.T.B., I think, will become Federal Railway, too. JOHN HENRY.

QUOTATIONS from the SWISS STOCK EXCHANGES.

BONDS.		Sept. 26	Oct. 3
Confederation 3% 1903	...	80.50	79.85
5% 1917, VIII Mob. Ln	...	101.67	101.30
Federal Railways 3½% A-K	...	84.30	84.50
" 1924 IV Elect. Ln.	...	101.20	101.00
SHARES.		Sept. 26	Oct. 3
Swiss Bank Corporation	...	500	813
Crédit Suisse	...	500	865
Union de Banques Suisses	...	500	737
Société pour l'Industrie Chimique	...	1000	2645
Fabrique Chimique ci-dev. Sandoz	...	1000	4287
Soc. Ind. pour la Schappe	...	1000	2842
S.A. Brown Boveri	...	350	582
C. F. Bally	...	1000	1295
Nestlé & Anglo-Swiss Cond. Mk. Co.	...	200	787
Entreprises Suisses S.A.	...	1000	1185
Comp. de Nav. n. sur le Lac Léman	...	500	540
Linoleum A.G. Giubiasco	...	100	140
Maschinenfabrik Oerlikon	...	500	790

SWISS BANK CORPORATION.

The Board have decided to call an Extraordinary General Meeting for the 17th of October at which it will be proposed to increase the paid-up capital from Frs. 120,000,000 to Frs. 140,000,000. If the Board's proposals are approved by the shareholders Frs. 20,000,000 (represented by 40,000 new shares of Frs. 500 nom. each), ranking for dividend as from the 1st of January, 1928, will be issued in the course of the present month.

Shareholders will also be asked to authorise the Board to issue a further amount of Frs. 35,000,000 (represented by 70,000 shares) at such times and on such conditions as the Board may consider suitable.

CORRESPONDENCE.

The Editor is not responsible for the opinions expressed by Correspondents and cannot publish anonymous articles, unless accompanied by the writer's name and address, as evidence of good faith.

To the Editor of the *Swiss Observer*.

SIR,—In John Henry's weekly letter to the *Swiss Observer* of Sept. 23rd, he makes a suggestion to form a committee of information to manufacturers in Switzerland composed of people who are experts in their own particular line. This, I take it, is quite a serious proposition on his part, and I have been waiting for the Secretary of the Nouvelle Société Helvétique to inform him officially that this is—or was—one of the activities of this particular Society. Also I would like to inform John Henry that there is such a thing as the Commercial Attaché to the Legation, and that any manufacturer in Switzerland who wishes to have any special information regarding his particular business has only to address himself to the Swiss Legation in London, and they will give him all the information he requires. Or then, why not go to the Fountain Head, the *Swiss Observer*; the most obliging of Editors, with his vast circle of acquaintances will be only too pleased to put him in touch with anyone in the particular line of business.

But to come down to brass tacks! It is hardly the duty of the Swiss in London to tell the Swiss manufacturer what he should do, or that they should form an enquiry office free, gratis and for nothing; it seems to me that it is the Swiss manufacturer who should see that he gets all the information he requires through his own efforts. These enquiries are already catered for; at least he pays for them, or something towards them (or does it come out of the Matriculation Tax we are paying here?) If he would but take the trouble to inquire of any Trade Association in Switzerland, they would refer him to the Commercial Attaché, whose particular duty it is, if I am rightly informed, to attend to just such matters.

I therefore think that to form a Committee, as John Henry suggests, would simply be carrying coals to Newcastle. J.J.S.

Townshott Cottage,

Great Bookham, Surrey.

To the Editor of the *Swiss Observer*.

DEAR SIR,—Somewhat belated I have just come across Mr. John Henry's letter in the "Observer" of last week but one, in which he suggests the establishment of some practical link between

our people at home and the Swiss Colony in England. I think the idea of an informal committee for free advice is excellent and most certainly worth while trying out. In a very gentle manner J.H. points to a certain defect in the work performed by the Swiss Press representatives here. In our correspondence to the Swiss papers there is certainly very little practical information regarding matters of everyday life that would interest the general reader at home who is looking for some useful hint from abroad how better to do some things, or who contemplates sending his son or daughter over here or extending his business activities into England. So many useful things about conditions and activities in England, apart from what everyday journalism relates, might be made known in the Swiss Press, as well as privately, if one only had the feeling of knowing them all. A kind of advisory body of men who really know about things in a practical way could, I am sure, do very useful service in many ways. I, for one, would certainly not fail to avail myself of such an opportunity to receive good advice.

There is one particular field in which I most strongly feel the need for some kindly advisory co-operation from my compatriots in England, i.e., on matters commercial, industrial and financial. I am sure there are many Swiss business men in England who could on occasion give very valuable information for the Swiss commercial Press about matters of interest to our business men at home, be it as exporters or as industrial competitors. Hints as to new trade openings, as to innovations, which might usefully be copied in Switzerland, as to important industrial combinations (such as the chemical *liaison* with Germany!), as to new manufacturing processes (such as the Lilienfeld artificial silk patents), as to market developments, as to the effect of the new import duties, etc.—any inside and expert information on such matters, about which the English Press gives only one-sided or purposely-belated news, I and my readers in Switzerland would be most grateful for. I find it very difficult to get any first-hand information of this sort from the practical business man, not because he could not tell but because he is of a secretive frame of mind even in things in which his own interests are scarcely involved. If any of your readers should feel inclined occasionally to communicate with me regarding matters which might be of interest to the business world in our home country I would be extremely grateful.

I hope that I may be pardoned for mentioning this rather specialised wish in this connection. It is an important instance—although perhaps a little outside of what J.H. had in mind—of the many ways in which members of our colony might give the benefit of their knowledge to their compatriots here as well as in Switzerland. The first step towards the realisation of J.H.'s suggestion would probably be, that all readers willing to co-operate would signify their intention to the *Swiss Observer*.

Yours very truly,

4th October, 1927. DR. H. W. EGLI,

(The first correspondent seems to be ignorant of the fact that there exists in London a "Commission Economique"—a kind of Swiss Chamber of Commerce—for the purpose of assisting the Commercial Attaché in dealing with any enquiries from Switzerland. Though no regular meetings are held, we believe that whenever the need arises the members representing particular trades are consulted in dealing with special enquiries.—ED., S.O.)

"SWISS" ACCIDENTS.

32, Queen Anne Street,
Cavendish Sq., W.1.

To the Editor of the *Swiss Observer*.

SIR,—On August 29th I addressed to you the following communication: "I hasten to send you a copy of the letter which I have addressed to the various papers who have mentioned that the Chamonix disaster had taken place on Swiss territory. I hope that the intervention of the Legation and the Swiss Federal Railways will help to dissipate the wrong impression created owing to one of the numerous lapses in geographical knowledge of which the British Press is only too guilty."

You did not consider it necessary to give room to my letter although you mentioned in your issue of September 10th that thanks to the prompt intervention of the Swiss Legation most of the newspapers concerned had corrected the report in question.

Since then the Legation have been in communication with the following papers in connection with the Chamonix disaster and other erroneous reports on accidents which had taken place in the Alps but not on Swiss territory: the *Daily Telegraph*, the *Daily Express*, the *Evening Standard*, the *Star*, the *Irish Times*, the *Glasgow Herald*, the *South Wales Echo*, the *Cardiff Evening Express*, the *Yorkshire Herald*, the *Sheffield Daily Telegraph*, the *Observer* and the *Sunday Pictorial*. My intervention was not confined to written protests but included personal remonstrances with the Editors of the more important of the above-mentioned journals and the Federal Railway Office supported my steps in every way.

I leave it to your readers to judge if, after you had considered it superfluous to publish my above-mentioned communication, you were justified to give space to "Kiburg's" query whether we have "Swiss Government Representatives over here who could use their influence to stop such practice."

Believe me,

Yours very truly,

J. BORSINGER,

Swiss Chargé d'Affaires

4th October, 1927.

OLYMPIC WINTER GAMES AT ST. MORITZ.

To our faithful Swiss Fellow Countrymen in Foreign Countries.

The joyful recollection of the VIII. Olympiad at Paris and Chamonix is still ever fresh in our memories, for it was there, where our young Swiss athletes did such creditable and honourable work over against the representatives of many other nations. A brilliant inspiration came over our country at the receipt of that good news concerning the victory of the Swiss military ski-patrol over dangerous and determined adversaries. The waves of this enthusiasm became even higher and greater when the story of the brilliant deeds of our horsemen and oarsmen became known and when finally our football team and our turners showed in how worthy a manner they were representing our colours; our Swiss people won for Switzerland, even in foreign countries, a great sympathetic sentiment due to genuine respect.

Now preparations are being made anew everywhere. In the year 1928 the IX. Olympiad is to be held, and this time the honour has fallen to Switzerland to sustain an important group of the competitive matches. Whereas the oarsmen, athletes, swimmers, turners and football champions will exhibit their performances in Holland, the II. Olympic Games will take place in Switzerland.

On our own native soil our skiers and skaters, the ice-hockey national team, whose valiant bearing on the occasion of the last European championship meeting is still in vivid memory, the bobsleigh runners and those on skeleton sleds will test their skill with the best trained sporting comrades of the other nations. On Swiss soil those spirited and magnificent contests will be engaged in, the echo of which on the former occasion resounded from Chamonix throughout the entire world.

To carry out the II. Olympic Winter Games and Sports and to defray the expenses connected with our representation at Amsterdam, will require considerable pecuniary resources. Nevertheless, no one will deprive himself of the pleasure of making a sacrifice, where it is a question of performing perfect work in bringing honour for Switzerland and in discharging an obligation of gratitude towards our own representatives and those who have to submit to the hard labours connected with conscientious and serious preparatory work.

The subventions, which our Swiss federal authorities have granted in their recognition of the importance and significance of our national sporting development, do not suffice to carry out the great task in a suitable manner, and it is a duty of honour on the part of each and every one to assist us to the best of his ability so that the accomplished work may be a credit to the master. For this reason the urgent appeal is directed to all: Help along to bring to a successful issue this celebration of the youth of our country. Be alive to the fact that even the smallest gifts will serve as an encouragement to our representatives at the competitive matches and to the organisers of the festival so that each will stake his entire powers and his full ability in order to assist in bringing the II. Olympic Winter Games to a point of success worthy of us.

We are told that the Swiss in foreign countries follow very attentively the sporting development of our nation. They would therefore not understand how in such a national collection as this one we should not make an appeal for help to them.

The federal political department at Berne has authorised the Legations and Consulates of our country to accept cash contributions. The remittance of the money will then be made by the official representatives of Switzerland. We most cordially thank you for each and every contribution.

Swiss Olympic Committee: Nat. Federation for Gymnastics: HIRSCHY. FRISCHKECHT.

Committee on Finance: COLONEL LARDELLI.

The Mandatory for the National Collection of the Executive Committee of the Olympic Games 1928: LIEUTENANT COLONEL KOLBRUNNER.

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