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The Swiss Observer

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HOME NEWS



FEDERAL.

SWISS PARLIAMENT.

The Winter Season of the Swiss Parliament will open on December the 1st.

SWISS TRADE UNION ANNIVERSARY.

The Swiss Trade Union centre will celebrate this month the 50th anniversary of its founding. Its early founding was largely due to the influence of travelling German journeymen and to the advantages of Switzerland's geographical position on the highway of Europe.

Swiss Trade Unionism has therefore always been strongly influenced by the prevailing European events; although the strength and independence of the Swiss workers themselves is largely responsible for their conquest of a stable position in a country where bilingualism, widely scattered industry and paucity of population all worked against them. Perhaps one of the most striking features of the Swiss Trade Union Movement is the depth of the interest taken by it in workers' education; and the persistence with which it goes its own way in making experiments and comparing experiences in its resolute determination to prepare Swiss workers for their Trade Union work and raise the general level of culture among the workers.

Faced with the usual difficulty of detaching young workers from the absorbing claims of modern amusements and interests, the workers' educational centre has made a special study of new methods of attraction, and is experimenting with new methods of installing labour festivities.

It is unfortunate that the French-speaking parts of Switzerland are less efficiently organised and active than the German, but the total of 186,000 for a small country without large centralised industry is far from a bad record. The great defect of Swiss Trade Unionism is, obviously, its failure to organise its great host of hotel employees.

THE BASSANESI AFFAIR.

The trial of the Italian airman, Bassanesi, who "bombed" Milan with Anti-Fascist pamphlets on July 10th last, opened last Monday at Lugano. Over 22 press reporters from various home and foreign papers were present.

LOCAL.

ZURICH.

The town of Engelberg has made great preparations for the coming Winter Sport season. A large ice rink has been erected and will be opened shortly. A new ski-ing hut belonging to the Swiss Alpine Club has been built on the Bruni, and several big hotels have constructed special toboggan runs. Various international competitions will be held during the season for which cups and valuable prizes are offered. N.Z.

BERNE.

The socialist party has invited delegations from all over Switzerland, to meet on "Red Sunday" outside the Parliament Building, in order to protest against the increasing expenditure on armaments.

An "Association du Film Cultural" has been founded at Berne by the Geographic Society, the Natural Science Society, the Teachers' Association, and the Swiss Popular and Scholastic Cinema. The object of the association is to give representations of educative films every Sunday morning, and judging by the first "full house" the idea is popular in the federal capital.

BASLE.

A conference, which was attended by delegates of large Societies and public bodies in Basle has unanimously decided to enter into competition with regard to the holding of the federal Singing Festival (Eidg. Sängertag) which is to be held in 1935. It is learned that the town of Berne is anxious that this Festival should take place in that town. The last singing competition which took place at Basle was in 1893 and since 1912 none of the great Federal competitions have taken place there.

FRIBOURG.

On the 1st of this month the register of unemployment showed the following figures: Town of Fribourg 2,534, communes 1,132, making a total of 3,666 of which 3,113 are men and 533 women. N.Z.

GENEVA.

Details are now available with regard to the election of the Geneva cantonal Parliament, which we mentioned in our last issue. The 100 seats for the Grand Council are distributed as follows: Catholics 14 (13); Socialists 37 (32); Liberals 22 (22); Udeists 15 (21); Liberal-Conservatives 12 (12). The Socialists have thus gained five seats and the Catholics one seat. V.

The two minutes silence for all those, of whatever nationality, who died in the great war, proved to be a fiasco. The signal was to be given by the large bell of the cathedral, but owing to the electric machinery not functioning at the proper time, the population had no warning, and whilst a part of the pedestrians stood in reverent silence others passed by, and also the traffic, with the exception of the tramcars, was not stopped at the appointed time. V.

Six wild boars, one of them weighing 150lb., have been killed by hunters in the woods three miles from Geneva. The migration of wild boars towards the west among the Jura mountains is particularly noticeable this autumn and herds of 10 to 20 animals are daily seen in the neighbourhood of Geneva, a portent, according to the peasants, of a very severe winter. T.

AARGAU.

The death is reported of Stadtmann Hans Suter, from Zofingen, at the age of 71. The deceased was a member of the National Council as well as of the Grand Council of the Canton of Aargau, and for many years played a prominent part in the affairs of his canton. N.Z.

ST. GALL.

Last Saturday afternoon a fire broke out at the factory of the Diana A.G. in Rapperswil. The fire brigade was unable to cope with it and their efforts were directed to save an adjoining dwelling house as well as the building of the Chemical works of Para A.G., both buildings, however, suffered extensive damages.

The buildings of the Diana A.G. were completely burned out, and although they were insured, heavy losses will be sustained by this firm. Unfortunately, a woman who was employed by the Diana A.G. lost her life, as the warning reached her too late to seek safety. N.Z.Z.

NEUCHÂTEL.

A lively discussion took place during the deliberation of the Grand Council as to the huge losses of the cantonal bank. A commission has been appointed to investigate things very thoroughly.

A socialist member addressed himself in very violent terms against M. Neuhaus, editor of the paper "La Suisse Libérale," who occupied the press gallery and who had attacked the speaker in his paper; the latter retaliated by calling his assailant a coward, whereupon a general uproar started so that the President was obliged to suspend the sitting. B.T.

'S MUEHTI RUEEFT.

Ha z'Nacht im Troum mys Müeti gseh
Und bi drvo erwachet
Es het ni no bim Name grüft,
Und gwinkt, und fründli glachet.
Und was da Troum z'bedüte het,
J ha's vernoh am Morge;
Do isch dr Bricht vor Heimet cho;
Mys Müeterli syg gestorbe.
Und vors für ganz vertschlofen isch,
So syg's no mol erwachet,
Es heig mr no dr Name grüeft,
Und gwinkt, und fründli glachet.

Josef Reinhard.

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NOTES AND GLEANINGS.

By KYBURG.

Winter Sports.

Heavy snow is reported to have fallen in Switzerland, not only on the Alps, but on many lower regions as well, and many foresee a hard winter. We, living in England, naturally feel a strong longing at this time of the year—when or at which time do we not feel it?—to cross the Channel and to go and spend a few weeks among the snowy valleys and hills of our native land. But alas, and alack! The times are not propitious and summer vacations have taken all our spare cash and, besides, isn't there the saving up for Xmas to be remembered?

But it does us good to read about Winter Sports and just now the British Press, especially the illustrated papers are full of the most alluring pictures of Swiss scenery.

If I had harboured any thoughts of going for a week's winter-sport, I might have rushed across to Switzerland without thinking at all about my kit. Just as we used to do in the old days, when a stout pair of boots, duly oiled or greased and a muffler were about the only "extras" we thought it necessary to wear. However, my eyes have been opened wide by reading what a serious business this is, this buying a kit for winter sports and it has, incidentally, banished still more my half-baked idea that my bankers might be persuaded to grant an extension of the old over-draft. Read—

What to buy for Switzerland.

By Fonthill Beckford in *Country Life*, 1st November:

The regulation ski suit has revolutionised winter sports clothes. Gone are the days of riding breeches, plus fours, woollies, odd jackets and all the ridiculous garments that some men considered correct. With the popularity of winter sports has come authoritative information which most of the great stores and shops offer to would-be purchasers. Here I would kill a canard. By all means purchase your outfit and skis in England, but go where you can get advice from an expert. So often I hear it suggested that it is wiser to wait till you get to your destination in Switzerland. What is the result? One or two small shops continually crowded, poor service, misfits and general discomfort.

The modern attire for both sexes to-day consists of a coat and trousers made from a gabardine, serge or any hard-faced material that will not collect the snow. Navy is the popular colour, though sometimes brown is chosen. I have seen Continentals wearing pale blue, red and green, but the Englishman is satisfied with navy or brown: it is better style.

In choosing this outfit, great care should be given to the fit of the trousers. For the benefit of those who are having ski suits made to measure, I give the following particulars, which have provided by a leading Swiss sports outfitter: Ski-ing trousers should be cut 1½ ins. longer than the full leg measure and "open" in the leg for stride. The width at the knee should be about 21 ins., above the ankle about 19 ins., then they taper suddenly till at the bottom they are only just wide enough for the foot to go through. Here they should be full on elastic, and a fairly wide elastic band is also sewn strongly at each seam to go under the foot and keep the trousers down inside the boot. The garment should be made with a fall front, the side pockets slanting, jetted and fastened with a zip fastener; a hip pocket is very useful.

The jacket can be either single or double breasted, made tunic fashion, but, personally, I prefer the blouse type. Let it be worn tucked inside the top of the trousers, the latter made with a close-fitting belt, for snow has an unhappy knack of creeping up inside a loose-fitting garment with dire results.

H. R. Spence, the British cross-country ski-ing champion, has made a study of winter sports clothes. He claims that if a man is going in for cross-country ski-ing, plus fours of navy blue gabardine are ideal, but down-hill racers and jumpers, particularly the latter, will find trousers more successful, for plus fours are apt to give the impression that the knees are bent, which counts heavily against any competitor. It will thus be seen that trou-

sers are essential to a good appearance in the air.

For wear underneath the ski suit I recommend a light-weight pullover of the sleeveless kind and a shirt in navy blue or some dark material. Many of my readers will agree that after a little of this exercise one is apt to get over-warm, but with such a shirt one can discard the tunic and carry it strapped on one's back.

Then, again, underwear? That made of wool or silk and wool should be worn. With such violent sport it is necessary to provide against chill. I prefer the two-piece garment, an undershirt that is pulled on over the head, with short sleeves, and shorts. The latter do not ruck up around one's knees, as the old-fashioned drawers are inclined to do. Some great skiers, including H. R. Spence, swear by a combination suit, a one-piece affair which keeps in place if correctly fitted in the first instance.

After the ski-ing suit comes the all-important boot. It should be strong and pliable, with the uppers cut well forward, as the usual position of the ski-runner is slightly bent forward. The welts should be nearly square, so that the toe irons fit perfectly, the front plain and high.

There is also the Arlberg boot, the original of which hails from a small village in the Austrian Tyrol, an entirely different model, giving ankle support and at the same time plenty of room. This is being made in England, the uppers cut all in one piece from dark tan English calf, very supple, the soles of stout, strong leather.

Remember that the socks must be all wool or of goat's hair. The ski-sock in navy or a mixture, sometimes having a fancy-coloured top, as well as the ankle, and, perhaps, a brightly coloured woollen muffler are the only touches of colour which the male allows himself to-day.

Gloves are nearly as important as boots. From experience I recommend those made from fine cashmere, but the ordinary knitted kind is less expensive, wrist length, worn inside a leather of waterproof gauntlet of mitt shape. On the other hand, lots of beginners prefer the gauntlet lined with wool, but they are cumbersome and difficult to dry quickly if they get wet.

I have already referred to shirts, and suggested the navy blue, but for the man who does not want to go to the expense of a special one, taffeta or wool in any dark colouring is excellent. It is a mistake to wear a shirt that has an attached collar, for this involves tightness around the neck, detracting from one's comfort. On the other hand, a taffeta tennis shirt with a polo collar is very good.

Peaked caps of the same material as the suit have superseded all other kinds. They are workmanlike and keep the glare off the eyes. Those that have ear flaps are preferable to the plain.

Devotees of the skate are all in favour of knitted jerseys, be they cream carrying one's school or club colours, or in navy, black, scarlet, yellow or pale blue.

"PENALTY FOR IMPROPER USE—"

The Hon. Arthur Capell on Swiss Official Courtesy.

Sir.—On September 14th I travelled from Lausanne to Boulogne, leaving at 8.30 p.m., by the Rome-Milan Express. Shortly after leaving Lausanne I proceeded to pull down the blinds of the carriage before retiring to sleep. Over the door communicating with the corridor was a small handle. This, being extremely short-sighted, I thought belonged to the blind. I pulled it, and then to my dismay realised it was the alarm bell.

In less than a minute the train was at a standstill.

Officials from the engine and the guard's van hurried with torch lights and lanterns along the line, passengers without number also emerged from their various compartments. For a brief while I was the centre of an unwanted and undesired attraction.

The necessary explanation having been offered I was informed I must appear before the authorities at the frontier station, Vallorbes. This I duly did. I explained that my action had been due to my lack of sight, and offered with many regrets my profound apologies. They were received in the most friendly spirit, and I was informed that there was no alternative but to impose the regulation fine, but was told that in the circumstances a portion of it might be remitted.

The fine amounted to 50 Swiss francs, which I duly paid.

Last week I received the remission of the entire fine in an English postal order, amounting to £1 19s. 6d.

Would any other country in the world have treated a foreigner with such courtesy and consideration?

Morning Post.

MUSIC AND MOVEMENT.

Rhythmic movement in Europe has achieved rapid popularity during the past few years particularly in Germany and Austria wherever children receive some instruction in movement. England has been slow to recognise the educational value in rhythmic movement, although since 1913 London has been the British Headquarters of the Dalcroze Method of Eurhythmics, which combines the teaching of Music and Movement in a way no other method attempts and has given the impetus to the various Schools of Movement throughout the world.

The London School of Dalcroze Eurhythmics is holding a Christmas Holiday Course which promises to be unusually interesting. In addition to Miss Ethel Driver, L.R.A.M., Dalcroze Diploma, Mistress of Method in the Training Department of the School, who will be in charge of the course, there will be two teachers of note who have been making special post-graduate study of Movement in its latest developments in Geneva and in Australia. Miss Constance Hook, L.R.A.M., has lately taken a course of study in Geneva, under Monsieur Jaques Dalcroze in person, while Miss Gell comes to the Holiday Course fresh from her teaching experience in Australia.

The course begins on December 29th and lasts until January 3rd. It will consist of class lessons in rhythmic movement, solfège (ear training) and improvisation (practical harmony). In addition it will be possible to arrange for private lessons. The course forms an admirable introduction to the Dalcroze Method. It enables those who have not yet decided on a career to obtain an insight into the aim and scope of eurhythmics. In many cases this short course has convinced students that eurhythmics is an inevitable necessity for the modern world and has impelled them to enrol in the training course. Both professional and amateur will find that Dalcroze Eurhythmics restores and stabilises the balance and just equipoise of their natures. Moreover, there is always delight in bodily movement, and Dalcroze Eurhythmics unites bodily movement with alertness of mind. No one can form an idea of the sense of well-being which Eurhythmics imparts unless he has himself taken active part in the lessons; it cannot be understood except at first hand. And should we not be thankful that here at least is a subject that cannot be lectured about indefinitely to somnolent audiences? It must be experienced as a living thing by the students themselves.

This course gives a unique opportunity for people to become acquainted with the Dalcroze Method in its recent aspects. It will cater for the newcomer in search of information, the teacher anxious for refreshment, the artist desirous of experiencing beauty in form and sound, the student of music, the student of the dance, all of whom will gain help and inspiration from it.

PROBITE.

Un pieux Londonien avait perdu son parapluie, un dimanche à l'église. Il en était fort marri, car c'était un parapluie neuf en soie, acheté trois jours auparavant.

Plein de foi dans l'efficacité des annonces, il courut à son journal et rédigea quelques lignes, promettant une superbe récompense à qui lui rapporterait son beau parapluie.

Au bout de quelques jours, ne voyant rien venir, il vint se plaindre à l'administration du journal d'avoir perdu, en sus de son parapluie, le montant de son annonce.

"De quoi vous plaignez-vous?" lui fut répondu: "votre annonce était stupide."

"Hein? Comment?"

"Promettre une récompense à un voleur. Vous n'y songez pas monsieur. Voici comment il faut procéder."

Et l'administrateur libella l'insertion suivante:

"Une personne dont le nom est connu a été aperçue, à l'église Saint P., au moment où elle s'emparait d'un parapluie qui ne lui appartenait pas. Si cette personne tient à garder sa réputation de bon chrétien et à éviter une affaire désagréable, elle est priée de rapporter le dit parapluie, High Street, N.10."

Dès le lendemain, le volé trouva dans son antichambre, non pas un, mais douze parapluies en soie, tout neufs.

LES PETITS ENFANTS.

Loulou a une maman atteinte de la manie de la propreté. Elle le lave du matin au soir. Et les mains, et la figure (jusqu'au fond des oreilles, s'il vous plaît, avec une petite eurette qui passe partout mais qui est bien désagréable!) et les jambes et encore les mains et de nouveau les genoux, parce que Loulou s'est traîné à terre et que "on ne sort pas avec des genoux comme ça!" Sans compter le bain quotidien. Et que sais-je encore. Loulou exaspéré, passe son temps à se sécher...

"Comme vous grandissez, mon petit Loulou, le complimente aujourd'hui cousine Anne-Marie."

"Oui fait l'enfant s'excusant, ce n'est pas ma faute, elle m'arrose tellement!"

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