

Mr. Abplanalp does it again

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MR. ABPLANALP DOES IT AGAIN.

(Mr. Arthur Abplanalp, Swiss physical culture expert, recently gave a demonstration of his system at King Charles Hall, Tunbridge Wells. He offered a prize of £50 to anyone who could hold a chair by the top at arm's length horizontally with each hand and then with both hands at the same time for as long as himself.

The following report has appeared in the "Tunbridge Wells Advertiser" (June issue).

Test of Strength.

Half-a-dozen men left their seats among the audience and went on to the small stage at King Charles Hall on Saturday evening and prepared themselves for a test of strength.

Challenger was Swiss physical culture expert Mr. Arthur Abplanalp.

With deceptive ease 67-year-old Mr. Abplanalp first of all lifted a drawing room chair with his right arm and held it out horizontal to the ground for 60 seconds. He then transferred the chair to his left hand and held it in the same difficult position for 30 seconds. To finish up he held out two chairs, one with each arm for 25 seconds.

He offered £50 to any member of the audience who could repeat his performance.

Not one got further than an attempt with the right arm. Best effort was a count of 10 seconds. *Not a Stunt.*

Mr. Abplanalp capped his other efforts by balancing a rifle by the muzzle end on his chin and holding a chair out horizontally with his right arm for 45 seconds.

This demonstration was the more remarkable because Mr. Abplanalp scorns to "dress up." He appeared in an ordinary lounge suit and explained to his audience that his purpose was not a stunt merely to entertain but to prove that it was only by putting all parts of the body to work and by obtaining perfect reciprocal co-operation that perfect health could be attained and maintained.

"The human body," said Mr. Abplanalp, "is like the soil of a garden: it acquires a quality according to the cultivation it is given."

Mr. Abplanalp first came to England in 1906 as assistant to the famous Eugene Sandow at the Sandow Institute. He returned to Switzerland in 1908 but came back to England in 1921 and has been here expounding his system of exercise for simple and effective health and figure culture ever since.

FEDERAL GYMNASTIC FESTIVAL.

(Reprinted from the "Young Traveller in Switzerland" by Mariann Meyer, published by Phoenix House, Ltd., at 7/6, by courtesy of the Publishers and kind permission of the Author.)

... On the following Sunday Herr Huber took John and Werner to the federal gymnastic festival at Aarau. The festival is held every four years, each time in a different town.

'I expect you think we have a lot of festivals, don't you?' he said to John, smiling. 'We run cantonal and federal ones for singing, rifle shooting, and other sports, and pastimes such as yodelling. In some years we have as many as a thousand festivals of one kind or another.'

Aarau is half-way between Basle and Zurich. The train followed the river Limmat as far as Baden, the attractive watering place that used to be the Aquae Helveticae of the Romans.

'A very well-known engineering firm has its works here,' Herr Huber remarked. 'There are other factories in the canton of Aargau, too. They make the Stumpen cigars, and the centre of the straw-plaiting industry is within the Aargau's boundaries. Many of the farm-houses used to be covered with a wide, thatched roof. But these are rapidly being replaced by red tiles. There's even synthetic straw now.'

'Cellophane was a Swiss invention and so is the zip-fastener', Werner put in.

'True. There's something quite different that Aargau is famous for and that is old castle ruins. The most notable are those of the ancient family castle of the Habsburgs.'

In well under an hour their train reached Aarau, a fine medieval town built in terraces, and set in the green country-side with the distant wooded hills as a background. Aarau had risen to the occasion and was gaily decorated with flags and flowers.

Herr Huber and the boys joined the crowds waiting for the long procession, the *Festzug*, which was part of the festival. Presently they heard a brass band coming nearer and very soon the head of the walking column appeared. The procession took two hours to pass. There were thousands of men in white gymnast's dress carrying their coats and each wearing diagonally across his chest a red and white ribbon covered with silver souvenir badges of all the gymnastic festivals in which he had taken part. Some societies were small and modest, others numerous and justly proud of their large numbers. Each *Verein* was preceded by a banner-carrier who wore an ostrich feather on his hat, huge white gauntlets, and a silk sash over his shoulder. On either side walked a gymnast with a large horn filled with flowers slung round his neck. Many public figures were in the procession. At intervals came brass bands. Some of the students' associations, which were also gymnastic societies, looked especially picturesque in their traditional costumes of white breeches, velvet jackets, and black riding boots. Each carried a rapier. Many of the girls and women watching the procession threw flowers to their friends in the *Festzug*.

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