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Odds and Ends

In the business world of Western Switzerland the main Autumn event is the "Comptoir Suisse" in Lausanne. This 42nd "National Fair" for the promotion of industry, agriculture, trades and commerce lasts from 9th to 24th September. The complete reconstruction of the north area has provided the Fair Authorities with sufficient space for the introduction of new sections. One of the most important events will be the four prize markets and the dog show, due to be held in the modern stable area.

In the lower part of the sunny Valais, the "Valais Romand", the busy town of Martigny will be holding its own Fair from 30th September to 8th October. The first ten days of September will also see the Oberland Autumn Exhibition at Thun, while Olten, on the Aare, calls its fair from 30th September to 2nd October the "MIO", and the Autumn exhibition beginning on 28th September in Zurich's Hallenstadion is known as the "Züsä". There will be an ironmongery and hardware fair in Basle from 24th to 26th September; in Geneva the "Journées Paysannes" will take place during the last three days of September.

* * *

The English minister was having a heart-to-heart talk with one of his younger parishioners.

"John," he said, "I hear you have been raising false hopes in the breasts of some of the young girls. Rumour whispers that you are engaged to one girl of this parish, another in Little Dells to the north of here, and a third in Fair Oaks, south of here. How can you do such things?"

"It isn't too hard," John replied, "I've got a bicycle."

* * *

The International Apparatus Gymnastics Match, Switzerland - Austria, will be staged on 23rd September at that popular venue for sports events, Aldorf, the capital of Canton Uri. In recent years our Austrian neighbours have greatly improved their standards in apparatus gymnastics and stand a good chance of winning this match against Switzerland.

* * *

At breakfast in the lovely old West Arms Hotel at Llanarmon Dyffryn Ceiriog in Wales, a fat, proud pigeon came through the dining-room door, strutted around the tables, cooed at the bacon-munching guests and then disappeared through another door marked "Kitchen".

On the table was the menu for that night's dinner. One of the items — Pigeon Pie.

* * *

The autumn season at Montreux culminates in the 16th "Septembre Musical". Between 3rd and 28th September no less than twelve full concerts are being given by two choirs and three orchestras of international repute, providing a richly diversified programme presented by leading conductors and soloists. Ascona, on Lake Maggiore, will also be presenting its 16th music festival, which is scheduled to continue until the middle of October. The International Music Competition in Geneva holds its final gala prizewinners' concert on 7th October.

* * *

Librarian: "I hope you found the novel interesting."

Patron: "No, not very, but the letter my neighbour left in it for a bookmark certainly was."

The National Costume Festival to be held at Basle on 23rd to 24th September will be the scene of a magnificent display of Swiss national costume. Costumes still worn to-day in many parts of Switzerland will be on show, and there will be plenty of colourful representations of Swiss traditions and the Swiss way of life. As these Costume Festivals are held only infrequently they are always accompanied by all the brilliance of a national red-letter event.

* * *

Noson lawen is Welsh for — well, a cheeful or merry night.

It is a term which has been used for centuries to describe a distinctive form of Welsh entertainment.

When the day's work is over, people — family, friends, neighbours and anyone who just happens to be passing by — gather around the fire to sing, tell stories and read poetry.

And it was a noson lawen at the mountain home, near Conway, of Dr. and Mrs. Caradoc Evans that we heard this story . . .

In a nearby valley lived an old man of eighty who hadn't a tooth in his head.

One day a keen, young dentist came to the village and spoke to the gummy old man.

"I can make you a set of teeth," he said, "that will last a lifetime."

The old man eyed him with scorn.

"If God Himself had two attempts and failed, man, what damn chance do you think you've got?" he demanded.

* * *

Autumn brings days of light-hearted drinking, dancing and singing wherever the vineyards flourish. Lugano will be holding its grape harvest festival and grand procession on 1st October. In Bienne the first grape harvest Sunday is scheduled for 24th September, and on the following Sundays there will be a festive atmosphere in all the towns and villages round the Lake of Bienne. The tenth "Three Sundays Festival" is taking place at Cressier from 10th to 24th September while Morges, on the Lake of Geneva, and Neuchâtel have chosen the week-end 30th September - 1st October for their colourful grape harvest festivals. Similar festivities in Spiez are due to begin on 25th September.

* * *

Cannibal to witch doctor: "Something's wrong with my kid. He won't eat anybody."

* * *

The Swiss Institute of Meteorology has just been singled out for distinction, in the person of its director, Dr. Jean Lugeon, who has been invited to take part in Boston, as the only European expert, in the working out of a plan of co-ordination between the university institutes and the meteorological departments. The Swiss meteorological department will thus benefit greatly from the work of an important new organisation of widespread public interest.

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Spanish lessons will be given this winter in Canton Thurgau for farmers employing Spanish workers.