

Zeitschrift: The Swiss observer : the journal of the Federation of Swiss Societies in the UK

Herausgeber: Federation of Swiss Societies in the United Kingdom

Band: - (1961)

Heft: 1397

Rubrik: What's on in Switzerland

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WHAT'S ON IN SWITZERLAND

BERNE

During the autumn fair lasting from 18th to 27th November, the Schützenmatte in Berne will be turned into an animated town of booths and stalls. The "Onion Market", which brings the fair to a colourful close on 27th November, is a red-letter day for the Bernese, and any visitor to the capital at that time can witness a charming custom which dates back to the 15th century and has an interesting story behind it. When three-quarters of Berne was burnt to the ground in 1405, the neighbouring town of Fribourg was prominent among those offering assistance to the stricken place. As a token of gratitude the Bernese conferred upon the citizens of Fribourg a perpetual right to hold a market within their walls on the fourth Monday in November. Since onions were the principal product the inhabitants of Fribourg had to sell, this gave rise to the "Onion Market", which has continued down to the present day. Thousands of onions are bought and sold in the arcades and the Bundesplatz, the young folk engage in wild confetti battles, and no true Bernese would dream of dining on anything else but an honest-to-goodness onion pie. A week later, on 5th December, another time-honoured fair adds a note of gaiety to the life of the town, only this time it is not onions but girls that are the centre of attraction. In times gone by the peasant lads of the neighbourhood were paid their wages once a year. To celebrate the occasion they descended upon the town and a kindly fate often contrived a meeting with a fair companion — who sometimes became a companion for life. To-day the occasion of the "Meitschimärit", as it is called locally, is still marked by light-hearted dances.

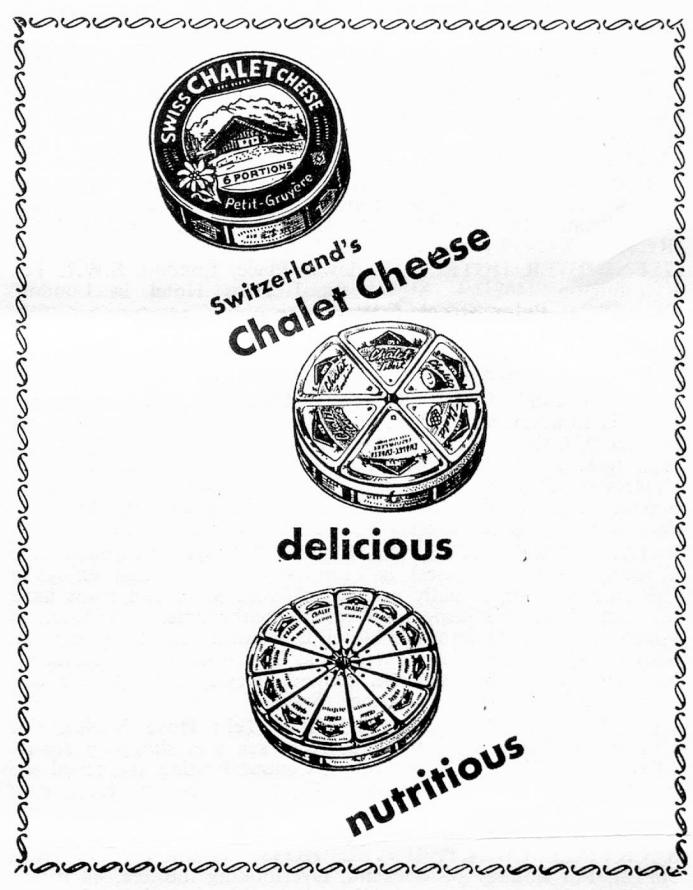
GENEVA

The International Indoor Horse Show at Geneva (11th to 19th November) promises to be an exceptionally outstanding event this year. Combining the tradition of a brilliant social occasion with the participation of the leading riders and horses from Germany, France and Italy, it is certain to be a great success. International show-jumping is growing in popularity every year, and the Genevan authorities will be doing everything to ensure an ideal setting. A further feature is that Switzerland will be entering a first-class team of riders and horses. Major Lombard, Lt. Weier, Lt. Buhöfer, 1st Lt. Eschler, Lt. Weber, and their civilian colleagues, Messrs. Brenzikofer, Burger, Blinkenstorfer, Hauri, etc., given a "little bit of luck" — a vital factor for even the best of horsemen — may be able to gain honours for Switzerland at this meeting in Geneva. Their horses will be in first-class condition and should be easily able to cope with the difficult circuit.

ZURICH

As the "Art and Culture of the Hittites" exhibition remains open in the Kunsthaus (Art Gallery), Zurich, until the middle of November, there is still time to discover the ancient — yet totally new — world it opens up, mainly through treasures loaned by Turkish museums. Showing

here for the first time is the fantastic heritage left by this Asia Minor people — inhabitants of a great empire in the second millennium B.C. — in the form of stone and bronze statues of animals and people, gold utensils and clay animal-shaped receptacles, along with spouted pots, bronze figurines, cuneiform tablets, seals and seal impressions, and late stone reliefs with copious hieroglyphics. The wealth of original material gives archeologists and non-archeologists alike a fascinating insight into an ancient and self-reliant world of art — a world formerly known only through accounts in books about excavations at Bogazköy (the ancient Hattushah) and other investigations. The wonderful exhibits on view reveal the artistic culture of this powerful people who perished in the turmoil of a great folk migration.



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