

Home news

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The Swiss Observer

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HOME NEWS

FEDERAL.

The international shooting competition at Stockholm has begun very favourably for Switzerland. Here are the results up to now:

	Flat	Kneeling
Hartmann	382	375
Lienhard	368	363
Zimmermann	380	377
Reich	370	361
Tellenbach	382	368

With a total of 5,443 points, Switzerland have beaten their own world record of 5,391 made in 1928 at Loosdiemen. In the individual class Hartmann has beaten by six points his own world record of 1,109 points made by him in 1925 at Saint Gall.

At the standing position Hartmann has also beaten by six points the record of 352 points, established at Saint Gall in 1925. The President of the Confederation has sent a telegram to the Swiss representatives telling them how proud Switzerland was of their achievement.

Hartmann has been proclaimed world champion.

Switzerland recently met Austria in an International Athletic meeting at Berne, the former taking the honours by 68 points against 56.

LOCAL.

Rapperswil (St. Gall) is celebrating the 700th anniversary of its foundation. N.Z.

The Federal Railways have decided to convert the present Gotthard route into a double track line. The tunnel through Monte Ceneri is also to be started in the near future. St.G.

A few months ago Fridolin Dürst left his farm in California and returned to Rüschiikon in the hope that his wife might there recover from her melancholy. As this hope did not materialise, and unable to face his wife's removal to a mental home, Dürst killed her with a revolver shot and then committed suicide. St.G.

During the Federal Shooting Competition at Bellinzona, the body of an unknown man was found in the Lago Maggiore, near the mouth of the Ticino. He has now been identified as a 55 years' old farmer, Alfred Meyer, from Wilchingen (Schaffhausen), father of three children. The cause of his death remains a mystery. St.G.

A novel way of committing suicide was followed by a lady shop assistant in Zürich. In despair over an unhappy love affair, she threw herself from the top of the Utlilberg Tower and achieved the desired end. N.Z.

The decision of the Valais authorities to evacuate the hamlet of Randonnaz has awakened deeper interest than ever in the sad question of emigration from the high valleys of Switzerland. The Federal Council have decided to submit the whole matter to a special commission and have promised to give the conclusions arrived at their most serious consideration.

Twenty high pastures in Monthey and Val Ferret are contaminated by Foot and Mouth Disease. At the beginning of August, 1,669 heads were affected. The spread of the disease is therefore much greater than was the case last year. The first symptoms were discovered on the 22nd May at Val d'Herens and ever since then in spite of strict supervision the disease has made very serious progress.

If the series of climbing accidents continue, this year should be a record one in this respect. Following last week's fatalities there are four

other fatal falls. One in the Val Ferret, where a young climber from Paris M. Daniel Hauser, 21 years of age, was climbing with some friends. All of a sudden a large stone detached itself from the mountain and fell on the tourist who was found with a broken skull.

The second at Baltschierental, where a young boy of 12 fell in picking raspberries.

The third on the Wetterhorn where two climbers from Neuchatel, Messieurs Jacot Guilmart and Louis Roy lost their lives.

The fourth on the Matterhorn. There two young ladies, daughters of Dr. Schiess, of Fribourg-in-Breisgau accompanied by the Bernese guide Kohler, and the well known Alpinist Dr. de Beauclair climbed the Matterhorn on Thursday. On the way down Dr. de Beauclair and one of the young ladies who were tied to the same rope, had a fall of about 200 metres just below the Solvay Refuge.

Owing to the torrential rains of the last few days a serious landslide occurred on Monday afternoon above Zinal. The waters of the obstructed river have caused important damage, carrying with them several bridges and interrupting communications with the lower part of the Val d'Anniviers. At Zinal itself two chalets were carried away, although the inhabitants escaped with their lives. It is supposed that it will be necessary to call in the military to clear the approaches to the village and re-establish communications.

FREE ZONES DECISION IN OUR FAVOUR.

The Permanent Court of International Justice gave a decision this afternoon at the Palace of Peace on the first of the questions submitted to it by France and Switzerland concerning the Free Zones in Haute Savoie and the Pays de Gex. The decision, which was in favour of the Swiss thesis, was that of nine of the twelve judges, the three dissentients being M. Nyholm (Denmark), M. Negulesco (Rumania), and M. Dreyfus (France).

About two hundred people were in the court to hear the judgment, including Mrs. Snowden and several members of the delegations to the Conference.

The question to be decided was whether article 435, paragraph 2, of the Treaty of Versailles had as between France and Switzerland abrogated the provision of the treaties of 1815 and 1816 regarding the Customs and economic regime of the Free Zones, or whether it had for its object their abrogation. The Court decided that the clause of the Treaty of Versailles did not abrogate the regime of the Free Zones, and had not abrogation for its object, the only aim of the treaty being to leave France and Switzerland to settle this regime between themselves by means of an agreement, the contents of which were in no way prejudged by the treaty, and which therefore may or may not solve the abrogation of the Free Zones. In the considerations for the judgment the Court pointed out that Switzerland did not sign the Treaty of Versailles, and had accepted the provisions of the clause in question only with an explicit reservation respecting the Free Zones.

This is not the final judgment of the Court on the matter. Under the agreement between France and Switzerland the Court was first to decide this particular question, and then, before rendering any judgment, was to give the parties a reasonable period to settle the matter between themselves, and that failing such an agreement the Court was to pronounce its decision by a single judgment.

The Court by means of the order made to-day fixed May 1, 1930, as the date of expiration of the period within which the parties may settle between themselves the regime of the zones. Failing such an agreement the Court will then pronounce its judgment.

It follows from this decision that when the French Government removed the French Custom houses from the frontier between France and the Free Zones to the frontier between the latter and Switzerland in November 1923, it was guilty of a violation of the Treaty of Versailles, and the Custom-houses should now be restored, pending a final solution of the question, to their original position.

WHAT'S DOING IN OUR COLONY?

For last Saturday evening the 17th inst., at the Club-House of the Union-Helvetic, the "Territorial Administration England" invited members and friends to muster in full force for the Farewell Concert of Mr. and Mrs. Frey-Bernhardsgrütter, who again reaped grateful applause from a numerous gathering, which at times might have preserved a little more silence, not only during the singing, but also while a speech was being delivered by the Honorary Chairman of the evening, Mr. N. Frederick.

I have a further little "grumble," on occasions like this, when a fair sprinkling of English friends of both sexes is present, *why send round a plate?* It is far from good taste and must as inevitably as unfortunately, tend to lower the standard of the artistes, especially in the eyes of the uninitiated. There are various other and far more "gentle" methods of collection, which would prove equally efficacious and savour less of the boxing-booth!

A GOLDEN OPPORTUNITY MISSED.

The speech delivered by our compatriot and leader in the Hotel sphere, Mr. N. Frederick, revealed a deplorable circumstance ament the visit to this country of some four hundred Swiss Scouts, who attended the International Scout Jamboree at Birkenhead and to whose Camp our Minister, Mons. C. R. Paravicini, paid a visit.

I call it a deplorable circumstance without fear of contradiction, for in whose lifetime is it likely to happen again that our Colony will have a chance of meeting, in one "bunch," happy youths representing not only every one of our 22 Cantons, but also a world-wide movement whose objects must be termed laudable, in the full sense of this word?

What a happy rally around these young Swiss scouts could have been organised and how many of the members of our colony have been deprived of spending a few hours in most genial company? I will not labour our loss any further, but I feel certain, many a lump will rise in many a throat among us, when one visualises, if only faintly, the atmosphere which such a gathering would have produced and the stimulating heart-balm that would have flowed from the singing by those members of the rising Swiss generation of our Schweizerpsalm and "Rufst du mein Vaterland."

There is, however, one redeeming feature, outwardly our face has been saved by the spontaneous and generous action of one member of our colony, who singly sprang into the breach at the last moment, and, doubtless, our Swiss Scouts have left these shores with the kindest of thoughts for their host and friend Mr. N. Frederick. He took the entire contingent to the Zoological Gardens, over Carrera's Cigarette Factory, which each scout left with a present of cigarettes, over Selfridge's Stores, and showed them over the palatial Grosvenor House Hotel, which excited their keenest interest, naturally so, remembering that we spring from—a nation of Hotel Keepers. The previous evening, Tuesday, Mr. Frederick had divided his "little" party into two sections, taking one to the Coliseum and the other to the Palladium, re-uniting them at Lyons' Corner-House, where they indulged in refreshments, and were 'banned' to the premises by the band playing homely tunes in their honour, until the Tube and District gates had been closed against them and a weary tramp to West Brompton faced them. The Benjaminus of the contingent, however, were wheeled to their quarters by Mr. Frederick's car picking them up along the route and returning as often as was practicable to fill up with tiny tots and bring them to rest.

The Ticinese Detachment were also favoured by Mme. Monico with an invitation to the Cafe Monico, Piccadilly, where their hostess regaled her protégés in the warm-hearted fashion inherent in our compatriots from the southernmost corner of Switzerland.

At Tilbury on Wednesday Mr. Frederick's guests, after an unsuccessful attempt to kidnap their benefactor and carry him off with them, took leave from him on board the S.S. Alsacien which carried the Swiss Scouts on their home-bound journey to the French port Dunkerque, and it must be a great moral satisfaction for Mr. Frederick to be conscious of having planted a seed of deep affection in so many young hearts.

The following telegram was sent to Buckingham Palace: