

# Notes and gleanings

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## LA DIFESA SPIRITUALE DELLA SVIZZERA.

1° agosto. Alte le fiamme si ergono e illuminano i nostri monti. Campane cantano a distesa la gloria della nostra terra. S'alzano virili e sereni i canti patriottici. Ovunque, nelle città, nei paesini alpini, accanto alle rive dei nostri laghi, accanto alle più alte vette, s'esalta oggi l'amore che tutti portiamo verso l'Elvezia nostra. E come i confederati d'allora, dal 1291 giù giù lungo lo svolgere dei secoli, fino a noi, tutti quanti ci sentiamo orgogliosi d'appartenere a tanta patria. E con commozione indicibile che ci dichiariamo, ad alta voce, e con lo sguardo sfavillante, "Svizzeri"! E come allora, unico, deciso, perenne, è il nostro motto: "Libertà — indipendenza." Per noi è una necessità quella di essere liberi. Un bisogno radicato in noi; è atavico, tramandato da generazione a generazione, che nasce col nascere d'ogni figlio elvetico; che non può, non deve, venir stroncato. E per questo imperioso bisogno che combatterono, decisi a vincere o perire, i nostri maggiori; è per questa libertà che oserei chiamare sacra, che i nostri fiumi furono irrigati di sangue, che i nostri campi accolsero, vittime grandiose, i guerrieri elvetici che via via combatterono per salvare e tramandarci questo stupendo dono. A noi spetta salvarlo e tramandarlo a chi verrà dopo di noi.

Sono passate sulla nostra patria le bufere che la storia non risparmia a nessun popolo. Mentre veniva formandosi, la Svizzera conobbe essa pure le guerre civili, le guerre religiose, le invasioni, le insurrezioni. Ma nulla, mai, poté soffocare, recidere l'essenza politica Svizzera che è basata sulla libertà; anzi da queste calamità la patria nostra ne uscì sempre più grandiosa e serena. Sempre più forti si fecero le sue organizzazioni. Sempre più decisa ad affermare, di fronte a ideologie politiche diverse, il principio della libertà, d'indipendenza. Sempre più tenace nel difendere, non solo con le armi, ma anche spiritualmente la terra nostra. Ed è questa un'opera più che necessaria nel momento attuale tanto periglioso. Opera che vuole salvaguardare il patrimonio storico e morale della Svizzera — unico esempio in Europa di uno Stato basato non su unità di razza, di lingua, di religione, ma bensì sulla ferma volontà che ogni cittadino ha di conservare questa patria, che gli garantisce la libertà di vivere, qualsiasi idea politica esso abbia, qualsiasi religione esso pratichi, qualsiasi lingua esso parli.

Essere liberi è privilegio acquistato con il continuo sacrificio di uno per il bene di tutti. E difendere dobbiamo questa nostra libertà, questa nostra indipendenza, da ogni infrazione straniera, da ogni influenza nefasta. Gravoso questo retaggio nostro, ma splendido, meraviglioso. Nessuno deve sentirne il peso. Tutti dobbiamo invece comprenderne la grandezza e dobbiamo essere fieri d'averne un tale compito da svolgere.

Insegniamo ai nostri bimbi le glorie della patria elvetica. Narriamo loro le gesta dei prodi nostri. Di Guglielmo Tell. Di Winkelried. Di Stauffacher. Di Stanga. Durant. Pestalozzi. Franchini. Così ogni piccolo svizzero imparerà a conoscere la storia della propria patria, ad amare chi l'ha servita con sacrificio. Imparerà ad amarla e servirla, con sacrificio puro, se necessità sorgesse. Diamo loro in mano, spesso, un buon Compendio di Storia Patria; discutiamo con loro i fatti politici; facciamoli partecipi d'ogni avvenimento che interessi la Svizzera; cresciamoli nella scuola di "Liberi e Svizzeri." E quando per forza di cose, questi figli sono costretti ad allontanarsi dalla terra natale, vivere in nazioni straniere, per quanto amiche, alimentiamo sempre, teniamo sempre viva questa fiamma d'amor patrio, facendoli partecipare attivamente alla vita sociale dei diversi circoli Svizzeri che si trovano in quasi tutti i centri stranieri; mandando loro giornali, riviste svizzere; mandando loro, spesso, a mezzo della Radio, il saluto della Patria; facendo loro ascoltare la voce della Svizzera che non li dimentica, che li incita al lavoro, al sacrificio, per la maggior gloria loro e della terra loro, che sa comprenderli e li vanta.

Difendiamola spiritualmente questa nostra Svizzera! Uniamoci sotto l'egida del nostro gonfalone rosso crociato e facciamo che esso sventoli sempre, alto, glorioso. Possente si elevi da ogni petto il grido: "La Svizzera agli Svizzeri."

E.G.L.

## WALTER ACKERMANN †.

(The following appreciation appeared in the "Aeroplane" July 26th and was contributed by Mr. F. D. Bradbrooke.)

Walter Ackermann died at the controls on July 20th. He was one of the senior pilots of Swissair, than whom there are none better, but he was also a man of many-sided charm and attainments and my valued friend.

I met Walter first when he brought over Swissair's first Douglas to England five years ago, but I first knew him when I became able to read his books. His English was good, his French excellent, but his writing in German was at times almost great. Besides other works he

was the author of *Das Bordbuch eines Verkehrsfliegers* (The Log Book of a Transport Pilot), *Flug mit Elisabeth* (Flight with Elisabeth) and *Fliegt Mit* (Fly with Me). He was at work on another quite lately.

The *Bordbuch* was his masterpiece. In it he tells of his early flying in the Swiss Air Force, but his intense pride in his profession of *Streckenflieger*, a Pilot of the Line, inspires most of a really excellent book. He saw the future of air transport, but he gloried most in the trail-breaking which he was lucky enough to do. In 1928 he pioneered Strecke 12, 500 miles non-stop Zürich—Berlin, in single-motored Dorniers without radio, and flew it daily for a season with a regularity which would still be good.

Lately, as he confessed to me one day, 13,000 ft. up over unbroken French clouds, he was discontented with "bus-driving." The great days of Route 12 were gone. He knew the skyways of Europe to the point of boredom, and Switzerland had no colonial routes to build. He admitted the temptation of a prospect with K.L.M.

The *Bordbuch* was written in a very different frame of mind. His pride of craftsmanship appears in his chapter on the American Experiment, when the air mails of the U.S.A. were taken from the commercial lines and entrusted to the Army Air Corps, with deadly results. Bureaucrats and financiers had, in their criminal ignorance and at a moment's notice, made Army pilots try to replace specialists in regular air transport. This murderous and unscrupulous injustice to both — as Walter saw it — roused him to one of the most grimly scathing passages I know in any language.

But besides this rare anger, his pride of skill and sense of adventure he had poetry and a gentle philosophy. This is well shown in a chapter of the *Bordbuch* which he allowed us to reproduce in *The Aeroplane* (p. 418, Oct. 5, 1938), although it loses by amateur translation.

Soon after he had flown his first half-million kilometres, in 1933, he wrote: "Yet how little you have up there, for all your lordliness. You sit for hours in a motor-roaring solitude, a dozen instruments in front of you and oil-steam in your nostrils. You are banned from the magic garden below; you set foot only on one aerodrome then the next. You live equally in Berlin, Vienna, Amsterdam or Paris — and nowhere." He was a fervent admirer of Kipling, and the effect was evident in some of his writing.

Like most of his countrymen, he was a bold and skilful ski-runner, but he was an exception among them in being also a fine horseman. I like to think that in the very few days he spent in England, out of hundreds of journeys hither, he got some hunting with friends. One of my most pleasant memories of him will be his boyish delight after one very good day of long, hard runs. The other men in the house had in turn to lead him out of their rooms back to his own, where he was supposed to be changing for dinner, and stem the flow of enthusiasm from the sportsman-poet-novelist-philosopher who was Walter.

We teased him to say that the dogs were wagging their tails. He retorted: "Ah no, I know it was hounds — but Himmel, I have already forgot what they were wagging!"

Not long ago we were talking of his romantic novel, *Flug mit Elisabeth*. Its altogether laudable moral tone was much approved by religious leaders in Switzerland. By it they showed that aviators and other heroes need not be abandoned characters as, the reverend gentlemen implied, they usually were. Walter got hundreds of approving letters, which embarrassed him, for he used to say with a grin that the reality was quite otherwise. He thought that at his advanced age — he was 35 — one had missed the moment for marrying.

The day after his death I learned that he was to have been married a week later to Fraulein Erna Fisch.

Such men are the salt of the earth and, with our sympathy, we would like his betrothed and friends to know that Walter was appreciated also outside his native Switzerland. He will be remembered in some English homes with real affection.

## NOTES AND GLEANINGS.

By KYBURG.

*The Freedom of the Press:* We all know that freedom of thought and expression are fundamental necessities for a democratic people and must be jealously guarded against insidious attacks from above and from below. We know too that both Fascism and Bolshevism, as we know it, can exist only as long as the people at the head of such states effectively control the Press and keep the individual's thought shut up.

From *Freedom of the Press*, however, we must dissociate what is mere licentiousness, or the Freedom of the swine, as Goethe once said.

Freedom in itself, as we know, means discipline, or as we Swiss used to say,

"We are a free people, we only do what we are told to do."

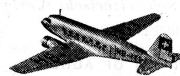
I was frankly very pleased to read the following in "Tablet" 22nd July, because it was

high time one of the worst offenders against good taste and worst mis-users of the Freedom of the Press should be brought to book and shown up publicly as the "corrupter of souls and ruiner of homes." Perhaps, some other sensational papers might take a warning,

## Catholic Press Victory:

The famous libel case in which the *Paris-Soir* sued the *Echo Illustré* for fifty thousand Swiss francs damages, ended last week in a decision in favour of the Catholic paper. The *Echo Illustré* is a small Swiss Catholic weekly belonging to Mgr. Besson, Bishop of Lausanne and Geneva. On February 25th, 1938, it reproduced under the heading *Pourrissoir* an article written by Mgr. Schaller in the Berne Catholic daily *Le Pays*, and denouncing the bad Press "which we should fight as one fights incendiaries and poisoners." The writer blamed the *Paris-Soir* for its low moral tone, its sensational headlines, its suggestive illustrations, its propaganda in favour of divorce and free love, its dubious tales, its mystifications and its plagiarism.

As soon as the libel case was made public, the Swiss Catholic bishops, the Social Commission of the Protestant Consistory, numerous patriotic associations, professional jour-



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P. GODENZI, PROPRIETOR.

nalist and medical associations, openly came forward to support Father Chavanne, the editor of the *Echo Illustré*. The Geneva court declared on July 6th as follows:—

"The attacks by *L'Echo Illustré* were not prompted by a spirit of rivalry, as the two papers belong to totally different classes. *L'Echo Illustré* is a small family publication of Christian inspiration, which weekly provides its readers with information, pleasant and instructive articles, practical counsels. It was in this capacity that the *Echo Illustré* devoted one page to dangerous reading and to the *Paris-Soir*. On this ground, and without the least motive of commercial competition, it had the absolute right to take exception to the *Paris-Soir*, considering the circumstances mentioned: that the *Paris-Soir* is liable to influence its readers' mentality, their conception of the world and of things in general. The moral purpose of the *Echo Illustré* deserves protection as much as the diffusion of the *Paris-Soir*, and it is only if the methods used by the *Echo Illustré* to combat *Paris-Soir* are illegal that the prosecutor's plea is acceptable. . . . It is not within this court's competence to decide whether the *Paris-Soir* corrupts souls, contributes to the dissolution of families, the ruin of the home, the corruption of the young, the paganization of the minds. The problem lies in the question whether, according to sincere and respectable opinion and according to Catholic conscience, the expressions complained of are relevant. According to this criterion, and not the judge's personal opinion, should their justification be examined.

"This court notes that it is legal for priests and for a paper like the *Echo Illustré* to criticize the influence of the *Paris-Soir* and the character of some of its columns and extracts, and this criticism was justified. It may be stated, in general, that the *Paris-Soir* gives undue prominence to crime by the space devoted to it as much as by the headlines and the sensational photos of its front page. It draws the readers' attention to circumstances that are particularly horrible, suggestive and immoral. It tends to make crime vivid to the reader and to present it in an absorbing atmosphere. It builds up a legend of crime and idealizes it for instance by calling Colette Tricot 'The Muse of Crime.' . . . All these circumstances justify a Christian conscience in speaking about 'a scandalous paradox' and considering *Paris-Soir* as a paper that 'corrupts souls and ruins homes.'

The case was dismissed.

As befits the week after the 1st of August has come and gone, we like to read of our beloved country's preparedness against attacks from outside and in "*Everybody's Weekly*" of July 22nd, I find an article by George Godwin who was evidently impressed by what he saw in Switzerland:

#### You'll Never See a Swiss Mr. Miss:

I am just back from a land where conscription has been in force since 1515 and over four centuries later it is still going strong.

Switzerland adopted conscription for the sole purpose of defending her frontiers against invasion by a foreign enemy. She is still using her citizen-soldiers for that purpose — and that purpose alone.

Maybe that explains why when the young men are called up to the colours at twenty they go, not readily, but with absolute eagerness.

Every Swiss man has two ambitions. First, to be a seasoned fighter; second, to be a first-class marksman.

When I say that Swiss conscripts go eagerly it is no exaggeration. What is the explanation? Why do young men so willingly turn from the mountain pastures or the security of the city streets to go through a vigorous training on nominal pay?

The answer is a very, very simple one. They know what lies in store for Switzerland if ever a foreign power attacks them or uses Swiss territory as a highroad to battles further afield.

#### Her Neutrality Pledged.

Switzerland is pledged to perpetual neutrality, whatever happens to other lands. That is why she stood out during the Great War. Even though, as a fine democracy, she must have hoped ardently for the victory of the Allies.

Only a few days ago I stood in a typical Swiss home in the beautiful city of Zürich. My host was a well-known citizen of Zürich who had three sons. The youngest was twenty-one, the eldest twenty-five. My host was forty-seven.

All had done their military service. That meant an initial four months' intensive training and, thereafter, every year, three weeks of field exercises.

"What," I asked, "would you all do in the event of a general mobilisation order?"

"Come upstairs," was the reply, and I will show you."

#### . . . And Ammunition.

I was then shown four complete military kits and also — and this struck me as being rather astonishing — ammunition for four riflemen and four rifles.

In no other country in the world, a General Staff Officer told me later, do conscripts go home after doing their service carrying with them their entire kit.

This system makes it possible for Switzerland to mobilise in an emergency in a shorter time than any other nation with compulsory military service.

Military proficiency in Switzerland, to a great extent, takes the place of sports with us. For example, all bookstalls and bookshops display a wide range of magazines dealing solely with military topics — journals about rifle-shooting, ski-ing for military purposes and so on. These enjoy large sales and are read eagerly by men of military age.

#### Their Sacred Duty.

For four hundred years, the time that Switzerland has been pledged to neutrality, there has not been a single year that has not seen some part of Europe in armed conflict.

Wars have washed about the skirts of the mountains that provide Switzerland with a natural defence; but nobody since the Napoleonic era has crossed those frontiers.

Every Swiss man and boy regards the preservation of Swiss soil as a sacred duty. He hears of this duty as a small child. The idea seeps into his blood. He grows up with it.

And beside it, as deeply engraved upon his mind is that central article of the Swiss constitution — never, never again a war on foreign soil. "What would happen if foreign military aeroplanes flew over Swiss territory in war time?"

That question, put to the President of the Swiss Confederation, brought a quick, twinkling reply from Monsieur Etter: "We should shoot them down," he replied.

Once, as a young officer during the last war, he added, he had shot at a German aeroplane while on frontier duty.

I saw Swiss conscripts under a variety of conditions. I saw them enjoying themselves at the National Exhibition, at Zürich — I saw them entraining for their camps, a laughing group of shortish, but exceedingly sturdy youths.

#### Tired But Cheerful.

I saw them at field exercises fighting in a mock battle in which the "enemy" had committed the last iniquity — the violation of their beloved native soil.

It was a day of Scotch mists and sticky mud an hour and a half's motor run from Berne. By eight at night the troops were mud-plastered and tired. But it would have been hard to imagine a chevier lot even at a football match.

We have often fallen into the error of regarding Switzerland as a "Playground" for long and lovely hikes, for ski-ing and skating and mountaineering.

It is that, of course. But there is another Switzerland not nearly so well known as it ought to be. It is the sturdy hard-working Switzerland whose democracy is the nearest thing to absolute social and political equality the world has yet seen.

The fact that Swiss Soldiers have been issued with 60 rounds of rifle-ammunition has drawn quite a lot of highly favourable comments in all sections of the English Press and, when you come to think of it, it does constitute a splendid testimonial to the confidence our Government can rightly place in our people.

At the turn of the month, The Lord Mayor of London has honoured Switzerland with a State visit, as you will all have read in the Press and seen from the many pictures published this last

few days. I see with pleasure that our people at home have given London's First Magistrate a splendid welcome and I hope that this visit will do much to strengthen the bonds of friendship which happily, exist between England and Switzerland.

The Lord Mayor visited the "Landi" at Zurich and he probably saw it as the writer did who, in "*The Field*" 22nd July, publishes his impressions, as follows:

We live in an age of exhibitions. Sometimes they are national, sometimes international, but whatever form they take they attract foreign visitors. The number of such visitors has greatly increased with the present economical travelling facilities, and it is hardly surprising, therefore, to learn that the Swiss National Exhibition at Zurich, opened on May 29th, has already proved itself a great attraction. As the exhibition will remain open until October it is probable that many summer visitors to Switzerland will halt a day or two at Zurich when on their way to some other destination in the mountains. It will not be wasted time, for there is much to see and much to learn from a tour of the exhibition grounds.

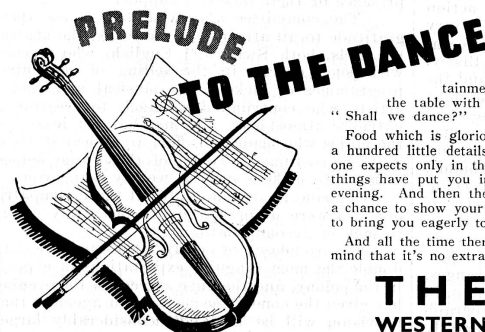
There are, of course, always a certain number of "exhibition migrants" who never fail to go to any exhibition whatever it is staged. They go for many reasons — on business, to see people, to learn about the country — but the ordinary traveller will go to Zurich to enjoy himself and nothing else. That is the spirit of holiday and the spirit, too, which animates the Swiss National Exhibition. It is here that the native has given himself over to showing visitors the excellent products of Switzerland. He has done the job cheerfully and well.

It is not easy for one to take a visitor round the exhibition in mere print and give him a real impression of what it is like. It is only possible to give him or her details of some of the exhibits and hope that the accompanying photographs and their own personal knowledge of the friendliness of the Swiss people will do the rest.

Perhaps one of the most interesting sections for the visitor from abroad is the one which gives an insight into the life and history of the people. This section lies along the so-called "Hohenweg," on the left shore of the lake. The first pavilion is dedicated to the very soil of Switzerland. Under its vault, the eyes of the visitor come to rest on the great painting in which Bodmer, one of the foremost living Swiss artists, has given expression to the nature of the Swiss people. In the foreground a number of women stand singing in a meadow, in the background the homely gables of a village are seen among trees, while the male strength of the country is symbolised by a male figure, shirt-sleeved, singing among the women. Not many countries could confide to figures so unsophisticated the symbolisation of the profoundest aspects of the national mentality. But for Switzerland that is right. It is from such roots that Swiss life springs, and is nourished in the best sense.

I was interested in the gallery leading out of this pavilion, for here one can see the models of a number of Swiss villages. It was not merely single models that held my attention, but a comparison of one with the other. As I have travelled through Switzerland I have always been struck by the difference of temperament and individuality of the people. Here in the models at Zurich you see something of this portrayed. There is no such thing as a typical Swiss village. They are fiercely independent entities, varying in speech, in mentality, in aspect. You will find among the models that there are some of towns, but they by no means occupy the place of honour.

To my mind the towns of Switzerland, pleasant though many of them may be, are a



Perhaps the crowning of an evening's entertainment at the Myllet is the moment you rise from the table with a sense of well being and say to your partner: "Shall we dance?"

Food which is gloriously cooked, wines which are perfectly served, a hundred little details of the tactful attention to your wants which one expects only in the cream of West End restaurants — all these things have put you in the frame of mind to make the best of an evening. And then there is a perfectly sprung floor which gives you a chance to show your prowess as a dancer, and Jesse Watson's band to bring you eagerly to your feet.

And all the time there's the comforting thought at the back of your mind that it's no extravagance and will only cost 5/6 a head.

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means to an end. The "Swissness" of Switzerland cannot find so marked an expression in her cities, where a certain adaptation to internationalism is bound to happen, and I would therefore always encourage foreign visitors to sample both towns and villages during their visit to Switzerland. Only thus will they grasp the true loveliness of this grand country and the real character of its inhabitants. But I am wandering from the point of this article.

You must not think that the Swiss National Exhibition is merely a show or a fair; it is something much more lively and interesting, presenting a picture of all branches of production with their mutual relations and dependencies. The exhibits are not displayed in tiring series, but are to be seen where they belong with regard to their functions in daily life. For instance, furniture is to be found in the section "House and Home," and not in a furniture section, while office furniture may be inspected in a modern office. The electricity section, too, is not only confined to a display of the various applications of "white coal." In short, the individual manufacturer has given way in the foreground to the productive capacity of the closed economic group. Everyone has done his best to sacrifice his personal ambition to the community. This thematic arrangement makes the exhibition a world in *petto*, active and energetic and really productive.

Part of the charm of the Swiss National Exhibition is the natural beauty of its surroundings. Situated on the lakeside, one shore has been utilised for the showing of agricultural produce and the other is devoted to the creations of Swiss industry. Those keen on engineering may prefer the latter, but I found great pleasure in the farming and livestock shown on the right shore of the lake. In order to present a complete picture of rural life — however it may vary in different parts of Switzerland — a little village was constructed, and it is here, among these rural buildings, that the peasantry celebrate their own special costumes, sing their folk songs and dance their folk dances.

You can see at this exhibition all the strength of Switzerland which lies, surely, in her diversity. She is diverse in her scenery, in the occupations and life conditions of her inhabitants. She speaks many languages and has many varied customs and manners within her frontiers. But one spirit governs this little nation — freedom of thought for the individual and the independence of the State. You can find it here at Zurich, you can find it in all the odd villages among the hills.

Have I led you far enough, reader?

Admittedly, I have taken you over very little of the exhibition grounds, but I hope that I have led you far enough. For the Swiss National Exhibition at Zurich portrays before you all Switzerland, and it may be a long time ere such an opportunity presents itself again. It puts truth into the phrase which slips so lightly from our lips on some occasions: "The chance of a lifetime!"

Switzerland, believe me, has given of her best.

William Luscombe.

Finally I came across an article entitled

#### The Arbalestier — "Country Life," 22nd July.

In the Canton of Schwytz, which is that part of Switzerland which gives its name to the country, the local Bisley is held at Morgarten and, in the truest tradition of William Tell, crossbows are still used. Actually, it is not entirely a bow-and-arrow meeting, and proceedings open with a rifle shoot at relatively long range. One photograph we reproduce shows the competitors, and it will be seen that some are sitting, though the majority seem to prefer kneeling. Some are using their slings, while others do not make use of this excellent accessory. The rifles are Schmidt-Rubins. These are the official weapon of the Swiss Militia, and have a rather unfamiliar action with a straight pull bolt. The action is very little known over here, though I have on occasion seen it fitted to match rifles at Bisley. The calibre is 7.5mm., which is .295in., and the arms experts agree that it is one of the most accurate rifles in the world, although the standard military sights usually fitted lack refinement and a wind gauge. It is, however, very heavy, and its magazine only holds six rounds.

Switzerland is a decidedly conservative country, and their traditional skill in musketry is encouraged by the maintenance of these traditional *Schützenfests* and inter-cantonal competitions. This country is fortunate in providing many excellent sites for good ranges, and the terraced side of a small mountain forms an excellent butt. Another photograph shows the targets in groups of five in a slightly echeloned formation, and, as can be seen, the old-fashioned bull's-eye is retained. Actually there are three concentric circles in the black and two outside on the white. Arrangements for marking are also fairly primitive but quite efficient. Nevertheless, it is not simply the rifle

shooting which is the main feature. A great deal of local enthusiasm is shown for the traditional crossbow events.

The crossbow event is at relatively long range, something less, I should say, than a hundred metres. The target is a 12in. square pine shingle well over an inch thick, and it is marked with a big black bull with concentric invisible circles. The illustration shows a typical Swiss crossbowman with his weapon, which is typical of the modern target arbalest, and it shows the mechanism in considerable detail. Just above the marksman's left hand is, on the top of the stock, an arrangement not unlike the hammer of a gun. In front of it is a shorter hook. The "hammer" is actually a rather complicated form of target sight, and the "hook" is the nut which retains the bowstring under tension of the bow when the arm is cocked. It is not possible to cock these bows by hand by a direct pull on the cord, for the wide, flat steel bow has probably a pull of over a hundred pounds. On the bench in front is lying a wooden lever. This is known as a "goat's-foot." Its forked forward end engages with projections just behind the bow and the short attached lever with the cord of the bow. The leverage afforded by the long wooden handle allows the cord to be drawn back till caught and retained by the nut. The trigger is usually a double set trigger affair with a pull of only a couple of ounces or so, and the front trigger, inside the trigger-guard and almost covered by the marksman's left hand, is solely for cocking the trigger-lock. The *Stecker* or true hair-trigger is a fine steel wire projection just behind the spur bow of the trigger-guard. The precision of these arms is equal to that of a light rifle at ranges up to some seventy yards. The penetration is about three-quarters of an inch, and the full range at maximum elevation over two hundred and fifty yards. These arms are toys compared with the big Genoese cross-bows, which had to be bent with a crane and windlass arrangement. One of these, when tested in modern times, needed over twelve hundred pounds "pull" to bend the weapon to full cock, and had a range of over a quarter of a mile. The advantage of the big war crossbows was their penetration. At sixty paces they would send a three-ounce bolt through all but the best armour, and even at longer ranges the shock effect of the impact would unhorse a mounted man. It is not known when or where it was invented.

#### The Retriever.

I guess that the above will remind some of us, anyhow the old Winterthurers of the Armbrust-shooting in the old Turnhalle under the able guidance of Turnvater Michel! Those were the days, lads! It is a long time since, but when I read the above article, I could feel my eye "tuning in" as it were and getting that steadfast, steely look which bodies ill for the Bull!

In those days, we took it for granted that we had to be trained to shoot, etc., the Armbrust came first, then the Cadet-Rifle — remember the old Vetterli which had a nasty habit of going off when least expected because the safety catch was somewhat loose! — and finally with the Ordinance rifle. Some of us also, during our Cadet time had a go at the Guns which could be loaded with turnips and other stuff to produce a lot of smoke and a big bang. And did those exercises make us into Militarists? Not on your life, we never even thought about it, albeit, of course, we knew that if anybody should ever foolishly attack our Country, WE would be there to stop him. Those were the days, eh?

Kyburg.

#### SWISS NATIONAL DAY CELEBRATIONS.

The outstanding success of the 1st August celebrations at St. Pancras Town Hall is entirely due to the wonderful support given by all the colony, and the thanks of the organising committee go to all those who have so generously contributed towards that end, either by their presence or their financial support.

The committee also wish to express their gratitude to all attendants, stewards, the charming girls, both Swiss and English, who worked with such energy in the selling of souvenirs, programmes or tickets, the musical and choral artists who contributed so much to creating a patriotic atmosphere, and last but not least, all the ladies who made the effort to appear in their national costumes. To all of those who helped so much to make a success, we say thank you.

Our sincere regrets go to all those compatriots who were unfortunately turned away owing to lack of accommodation.

The attendance of nearly 2,000 was more than double the most sanguine expectations of experts in the colony, and the huge success of the evening has given the committee such encouragement that provision will be made for considerably larger numbers next year.

For the Committee,

H. Binguely,

Hon. Secretary.

EDITOR. — A full report will appear in our next issue.

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Dimanche 6 août 1939.

11h. Mr. le Pasteur Emery.

Les cultes du soir sont supprimés pendant le mois d'août.

Pour tout ce qui concerne le ministère pastoral, prière de s'adresser jusqu'à nouvel avis à M. le pasteur U. Emery, Foyer Suisse, 15 Bedford Way, W.C.1 (Phone MUSEUM 3100).

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(Deutschsprachige Gemeinde).

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(Near General Post Office, St. Paul's and Aldersgate Street Tube Stations (Central London and Metropolitan).

Sonntag, den 6. Aug. 1939:

11 Uhr vormittags: Gottesdienst mit Predigt v. Pfr. E. Bommeli.

Kirchl. Bestattung: Enrico Gaspard Ronzi, Hotelangestellter, v. Samaden, Kt. Graubünden.

Montag, den 7. Aug.: Ausflug nach Jordans. Day return ticket to Seer Green. Sammlung: 10 Uhr, beim Booking-Office, Marylebone Station. Abfahrt 10.20 h. Rückkehr 8.15, Marylebone Station.

Jedermann herzlich eingeladen!

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