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# The Swiss Observer

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## HOME NEWS

By a large majority the National Council agreed to the proposal of the Federal Council to the effect that the official Swiss declaration agreeing to the abolition of the Savoy neutrality should be made dependent upon the ratification by France of the "Free-Zones" compromise concluded with that country as long ago as October, 1924. This decision is, of course, subject to the referendum, but President Moita expressed the hope that in the interest of a speedy solution of this long-drawn-out controversy no such demand would be presented.

The subsidy of Frs. 120,000 for the Olympic Games, 1928, was the subject of an animated discussion in the National Council where Federal Councillor Scheurer warmly supported the proposal which ultimately was confirmed by a very small majority (66 to 64).

The Federal Tribunal in Lausanne has condemned a Geneva lawyer to the payment to a former client of Frs. 4830, which amount, representing medical expenses, he omitted to claim during an action for damages following an accident.

Following the fruitless election for six members of the Lucerne municipal council the political parties have now come to an agreement with the result that the constitution of the council will be the same as before, i.e., four Liberals, one Conservative and one Socialist.

The accounts of the city of Zurich for 1926 show an income of over 57 million francs, i.e., five million more than was originally budgeted for. All the municipal undertakings (gas, water, electricity and tramways) finish the financial year with a considerable surplus.

Amriswil (Thurgau) is to have a new post office, for which purpose a credit of Frs. 110,000 has been voted by the National Council.

A recruit, Anton Marty, from Maltes, lost his life during exercises in connection with the engineers' training college, held at Airolo. He was one of a party occupied in constructing a foot-bridge across the swollen Ticino when he fell into the river and, though extricated without much delay, subsequently died from his injuries.

The level crossing between Lyss and Aarberg was the scene of a fatal accident. During night time, when the customary guard is withdrawn, an express train crashed into a hay wagon, killing two of the occupants, M. Bosshard and Ed. Bürgi, whilst a third, a young son of the latter, had the presence of mind to jump clear in time and escaped unhurt.

The bodies of the two brothers Lang, members of the Zurich section of the Swiss Alpine Club, who have been missing since Easter, have been discovered in a frozen condition near Lake Ritom in the Gothard region. It is surmised that in an endeavour to reach the Cadlino cabane they were overcome by exhaustion and fell asleep.

## EXTRACTS FROM SWISS PAPERS.

**Un ministre suisse dévalisé.**—M. Martin, notre chargé d'affaires en Turquie, vient d'être victime d'une fâcheuse mésaventure. Il a été attaqué aux environs d'Angora, en compagnie de deux autres personnes, par une bande d'individus qui ont malmené et entièrement dévalisé les trois promeneurs. A leur retour à Angora, M. Martin déposa une plainte auprès des autorités qui organisèrent une battue. On arrêta la bande, composée de huit individus, qui seront traduits devant les tribunaux.

*La Revue Lausannoise.*

**Une automobile pour le pasteur.**—La paroisse d'Agiez comprend les communes d'Agiez, Arnex et Bollens. Le village d'Arnex a récemment organisé, en vue de l'achat d'une automobile destinée à rendre moins fatigante pour le pasteur son activité, une vente qui a produit 4280 fr. Superbe résultat, magnifique témoignage d'affection et de gratitude donné au pasteur. L'automobile est

achetée et a été mise à la disposition de M. Theodore Engelmann. Cette manifestation fait l'éloge du pasteur et de la paroisse.

*Feuille d'Avis de Lausanne.*

**Un nouveau jardin alpin.**—Un comité d'initiative s'est formé à Interlaken, en vue de la fondation d'une association pour la création d'un jardin alpestre à la Schynige Platte. Dans ce jardin devrait être rassemblée et cultivée la flore, riche et rare, du massif du Faulhorn et de tout l'Oberland. Le syndicat d'alpage de Ausser-Selten a déjà mis à disposition un grand terrain qui devra être affermé.

*Gazette du Lausanne.*

**Les Fêtes en Suisse.**—Le Secrétariat central de la Société suisse d'utilité publique souligne l'abus des fêtes en Suisse et relève que dans la saison d'avril à novembre il y a eu deux fois plus de fêtes qu'en 1925: 803 au lieu de 403. Viennent en tête Zurich, Berne, Argovie et Vaud.

Dans ces 803 fêtes ne sont pas compris, naturellement, les matches de football, qui furent de 459!

On a bien raison d'appeler le tir notre sport national. Il vient en effet en tête des 803, avec 173 fêtes, laissant loin derrière lui cet autre sport suisse par excellence cependant, la lutte: 88 fêtes. Suivent ensuite: 85 fêtes cyclistes, 73 de gymnastique, 64 d'athlétisme, 52 hippiques, 41 de musique et 35 seulement de chant.

Le Secrétariat a mis à part les fêtes de bien-faisance, et aussi les innombrables fêtes champêtres et forestières, ainsi que les "kermesses." Il est borné à des sondages dans quelques cantons qui lui permettent d'affirmer qu'il dut y en avoir dans les deux mille. Ce qui nous donne un total d'environ 3260 manifestations estivales et festives, donc environ cent pour chaque dimanche de l'époque qu'on appelle la belle saison.

*Jura, Porrentruy.*

**Une mine de plomb.**—Une entreprise bernoise s'est mise en devoir, au moyen d'un outillage perfectionné, de récupérer les projectiles enfouis dans la glaise durcie de la butte de tir du stand de Bernex, à Genève.

A première vue, on estime que 75,000 kg. de plomb, représentés par 75 millions de coups de fusil tirés depuis 15 ans, sont là fichés en terre.

Les quatorze ouvriers employés à cette besogne arrivent à extraire 1500 à 2000 kg. de plomb par jour. Tout doit être terminé pour la Pentecôte. Des 70,000 kg. de projectiles venus labourer la terre et s'y incruster, l'entreprise a bon espoir d'en retrouver au bas mot 30,000 kg.

La glaise contenant le plomb est chargée sur des brouettes et roulée jusqu'à une machine spéciale permettant le lavage à grande eau jusqu'au moment où seul le plomb, séparé de la terre, tombe dans un récipient aménagé à cet effet. Pour alimenter cette machine munie de neuf bras et actionnée par un moteur, 300 litres d'eau sont nécessaires à la minute.

Le plomb récolté est mis en tas dans la ciblerie, puis passera au creuset pour être transformé en lingots.

Des travaux semblables ont déjà été exécutés sur les places de tir de Bâle, Lucerne, Zurich et Winterthur.

Obtiendrait-on un résultat si l'on en faisait autant au stand de la Pontaise, à Lausanne, ou à Mauvrenaz, où les écoles de recrues tirent depuis fort longtemps?

*Moniteur de la Boucherie, Lausanne.*

## NOTES AND GLEANINGS.

### Juliette Wihl.

Though Juliette Wihl is Belgian by birth she has so many associations with Switzerland and our Colouy in London that I cannot resist reproducing the following critical notes from the *Musical Courier* (May 26th) in reference to two charity concerts she gave at Locarno while staying there during the winter to recover from an illness. Unfortunately, soon after arriving in London she has had a relapse, preventing her from giving the recital already arranged and I hear that there is no likelihood of her appearing in public this season.

Juliette Wihl, renowned Belgian pianist, who for some years now has made London her home, is still recuperating in Locarno, where she has spent the entire winter to recover from a bronchial complaint which has compelled her to cancel her engagements during the last half of the winter. Mme. Wihl is very popular in Switzerland, for in war's troublous years she found refuge there and gave concerts throughout the width and breadth of this beautiful country.

## ANNIVERSARIES OF SWISS EVENTS.

June 27th, 1352.—Zug joins the Confederation.

June 29th, 1798.—Glarus, St. Gall. and Graubünden introduce the Gregorian Calendar.

July 2nd, 1749.—Henzi Conspiracy in Berne, i.e., an unsuccessful attempt to overthrow the rule of the patricians.

"Among the banished was Samuel Henzi, the son of a pastor, a man of varied talents and wide culture. Having been pardoned after a few years he returned to his native town, but finding that all prospects of advancement were cut off, he joined in 1749 with other discontented spirits in a regular conspiracy. The plan was to overthrow the Council by a *coup d'état*, in case of need to abolish it, and to introduce a government by the guilds like that which prevailed in Zurich or Basel."—*Oechsl.*

Despite her precarious health, Juliette Wihl gladly seized the opportunity of her stay in Locarno to aid the suffering populace so far as was in her power, and gave two charity concerts in the hall of the Grand Hotel Palace on March 17th and April 13th.

The first recital was under the patronage of M. Motta, President of Switzerland, for the benefit of the Anti-tuberculosis League of the Tessino. Her programme included Chopin's Sonata in B minor, Nocturne, op. 27, three études and the scherzo, op. 39, as well as two items by Beethoven. Daquin, Couperin, Debussy with his charming Clair-de-Lune, were likewise represented, and the Liszt-Paganini Campanella completed the evening.

The impression she created is aptly summed up by the terse remark of a well-known musician in the *Locarno Fremdenblatt*: "It is a gift of the gods when Juliette Wihl plays." *Popolo Liberto* writes that she possesses a large and velvety sonority of tone, a delicate and caressing touch, impeccable accuracy, an irrefragable technique and casts a lustre of innate perfection over every work she approaches. *Il Cittadino* stresses the exquisite and intellectual treat her recital afforded the enthusiastic audience that thronged the large hall to capacity and that again and again demanded an encore from this brilliant player.

The second concert, for the benefit of scrofulous children, was a similar success, both artistically and financially, each of the charities on whose behalf Mme. Wihl played reaping a large and unexpected addition to its income. Her selection was interesting and varied, ranging from Handel and Bach to Schubert, Chopin, Brahms and Liszt, and including, by special request, the Daquin and Couperin works played on the first evening.

Musical genius, unceasing gifts of recreation and entrancing charm all unite in Juliette Wihl, writes the *Südschweiz*, which goes on to state that she "solves the musical tasks given her with masculine power and grandeur, manifestations of a forceful and incomparably harmonic personality."

Juliette Wihl will return to London at the end of May to prepare for her London recitals. Her large and growing circle of friends is eagerly looking forward to this opportunity of welcoming her back to the concert platform of England.

### The Selzach Passion Play.

Selzach seems to emulate Oberammergau; the claron call which is sent out into our materialistic world by these passion plays does not seem to be in vain, to judge by the wide publicity it enjoys in the Press. The following particulars are reproduced from the *Shields Daily News* (June 4th):

Fauline Gisiger, the beautiful young daughter of a local farmer, has been chosen to play the part of the Madonna in the forthcoming Passion Play in the little Jura village of Selzach.

The play, which opens on June 5th, will be held every Sunday throughout the summer until September 25th. During the intervening week-days Fräulein Gisiger will work as usual at her bench in a watch-making factory.

The part of The Christ is to be taken by Adolf Schaad, the son of the Mayor, who in private life is a cooper. The Apostle John will be played by Fräulein Gisiger's brother Walter.