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SWISS CULTURAL EVENTS DURING APRIL

TIME-HONOURED CANTONAL MOOTS

The traditional constitutional procedure of holding Cantonal Moots, or general meetings of the entire franchise to hold elections and pass resolutions, has been preserved to the present day in the two Central Swiss Semi-Cantons of Nidwalden and Obwalden and the two East Swiss Semi-Cantons Appenzell Ausserrhoden and Innerrhoden, as well as in Glaris, where however the Moot is held a week later. This year again visitors from far and wide will certainly be attending these meetings on April 24 (May 1 in Glaris) to see this display of the exercise of popular democratic rights in its most original form. The beauty of the historic little towns in which these annual gatherings of rural voters take place enhances the attractiveness of the deliberations of these self-governing, independent States, deliberations that are full of patriotic ceremonial and yet politically highly significant.

In Canton Nidwalden a carefully marked-off square at Wil an der Aa—in the plain near Stans, in the shadow of the Buochserhorn and close to the Engelberger Aa stream—has been used for Moots since the 14th century. In 1805 it was planted with chestnut trees. The meeting-place of the men of Obwalden on the "Landenberg" rise near Sarnen, where the remains of a mediaeval castle can still be seen and the decorative shooting club-house dominates the scene, is just as full of tradition. This year the monumental village square of Trogen will harbour the Moot of Appenzell Ausserrhoden. On one side stands the Baroque church, while the others are bounded by the palatial houses of merchant families of the Trogen of yore. By contrast, in the town of Appenzell it is the decorative, gabled rustic houses that set the style. Yet another aspect is presented by the very large Moot Square at Glaris. It is part of the ward undamaged by the great fire of 1865 and provides the voters of this district of towering alpine cliffs with an imposing meeting-place.

FESTIVALS IN ALL PARTS OF THE COUNTRY

In Western Switzerland it is not only the cities of Geneva, Lausanne, Neuchâtel and Fribourg that have arranged important cultural functions; Montreux, too, achieving each spring a new brilliance, presents for the sixth time between April 22 and 30 the Festival of Television that will be broadcast far and wide. The international competition for the "Golden Rose of Montreux", presented for new television programmes, provides an incentive to touch new heights in this new medium.

In the Tessin, spring visitors will come across old Easter customs here and there in the villages, where they are deeply rooted in the way of life of the peasants. A special attraction to visitors from far and wide, but especially those from Lugano, are the two big processions on Maundy Thursday evening and Good Friday afternoon in Mendrisio. In German-speaking Switzerland the "Sechseläuten", the spring festival of the City of Zurich on April 17 and 18, will bring visitors flocking from all around to see the processions and take formal leave of winter.

THE FIFTIETH SAMPLES FAIR AT BASLE

Over half a century, the original building of the Swiss Samples Fair in Basle, which made a convincing demonstration of economic activity in Switzerland during the first World War, has been extended into a shapely exhibition complex with large and imposing buildings. In this anniversary year, in which the Fair will be opened on the Saturday after Easter (April 16) and will last until April 26, not only those with a special interest in the exhibits but also large numbers of visitors from Switzerland and abroad will throng the numerous halls, among which the massive Build-

ing Fair hall and the brick-built Rundhof with its surrounding circles of galleries are alone sufficient to rank as a sight worth the visit. The more systematically the individual sections are laid out for Trade purposes, the easier it becomes for general visitors to obtain a comprehensive view of the many-sided output of Switzerland.

SWISS TOURS BY MUSICAL GROUPS AND THEATRICAL COMPANIES FROM ABROAD

The Cologne Radio Symphony Orchestra will be giving a concert in Basle on May 10, in Lausanne on the following evening, Geneva on May 12 and finally in Zurich on May 15, made additionally brilliant by the fact that the pianist Arthur Rubinstein will be taking the solo part in Brahms' second Piano Concerto. Guest concerts by the English Chamber Orchestra with the pianist Ingrid Haebler are planned for the evenings from April 24 to 27 in Zurich, Geneva, Basle and Lausanne in turn. On April 25 the Zagreb Philharmonic Orchestra will be playing in Lugano, the Mozarteum Quartet from Salzburg on the same evening in Locarno and the Loewenguth Quartet will perform one classical, one romantic and one modern string quartet in Geneva on April 18 and Zurich on April 20. The Prague "Black Theatre" will appear in Frauenfeld on May 6 and in the "Kurtheater" at Baden on May 7. In Baden there will also be an appearance by guest artists from the Vienna "Burgtheater" on April 30.

A VERY VARIED PROGRAMME OF MUSIC, THEATRE AND DANCING

Performances of Anton Bruckner's Grand Mass in F Minor will be the outstanding events in the musical life of Coire (April 24) and Berne (May 6). A concert by the International Society for Contemporary Music is the special event planned for April 21 in Basle. The oratorio "King David" by Honegger provides the material for a guest concert by a Belgian chorus and orchestra on April 14 in Locarno. A theatrical company with important artists will appear on April 25 in Baden and April 27 in Zug. From April 14 to 18 the corps de ballet of the Geneva City Theatre will be giving a series of performances in the "Grand-Théâtre" in Geneva, with Ernest Ansermet conducting the famous orchestra. Dimitri, the clown from Ascona, will be delighting lovers of mime on April 16 in the Baden "Kurtheater", while the well-known dance duo Susana y José will offer their new programme in visits to Montreux on April 18 and Langenthal on April 25.

A SELECTION FROM THE MANY EXHIBITIONS

The International Exhibition of Drawing and Printing Draughtsmanship in Lugano, which has already grown into a firm tradition under the name "Bianco e Nero", and where prizes are also awarded, will again occupy the rooms of the Villa Ciani in the City Park from April 8 to June 5 and provide a topical review of creative drawing in a large number of countries. Another collective display is that of works by American sculptors being shown in the "Kunsthalle", Berne, from April 2 to May 8. In Geneva the memorial show for the charming Geneva painter Eugène Martin, who lived from 1880 to 1954, will continue until April 20. Tell April 17 the Winterthur Museum of Art shows a display of sculpture and drawings by the Zurich sculptor Franz Fischer. The St. Gall Museum of Art honours the memory of Maria Geroe-Tobler by presenting her colourful pictorial tapestries (April 16 to May 30) and the "Allerheiligen-Museum" in Schaffhouse opens on April 24 an exhibition by Kurt Georg Becker which also lasts until May 30.

ROAM THE CONTINENT — REST IN SWITZERLAND