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# The Swiss Observer

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## HOME NEWS

### FEDERAL.

#### INTERNATIONAL RIFLE MATCH AT ANTWERP.

The Swiss team competing at the International Rifle Match at Antwerp secured second honours with 5,407 points. The following is the order of merit of the competitors:

America first with 5,441 points (maximum 6,000); Switzerland second with 5,407 points; Finland third with 5,341 points. As reported, the world championship in revolver shooting was awarded to M. Revilliod de Budé from Geneva with 538 points. N.Z.

#### LOST!—150 YEAR'S WORK.

In the first six months of 1930 there were in all 22 strikes and lock-outs in Switzerland. The disputes affected 197 factories and involved over 4,000 workmen, and the loss in working days is given as 45,281. The building trade takes first place in the number of strikes. The principal reason for striking was in 9 cases wages questions, in 6 cases engagement or discharging workmen and in one case an agreement for piece-work. Measured by the numbers of days lost, the biggest strikes were those of the wood-workers in Lugano 17,280 days, the building trade in Bâle 14,000 days and the stoppage in the Metal Works in Bâle 8,843 days.

#### RENTS IN SWITZERLAND.

Since 1925 the Department for Industry, Trade and Labour has collected the statistics of rents paid in 39 Boroughs. Here are some interesting facts:

For the year 1929-30 an average increase in rent of 2.1% has taken place. Zurich 1.7%, Bâle 2.3%, Geneva 2.5%, Berne 0.6%. The increase of rent in the great towns works out at 98% since 1914 whilst that of the boroughs shows an increase of 85%.

In Zurich the index figure has exceeded 200, Bâle only just touches it, Langenthal shows an increase of 214 already 3 years ago. In Berne the figure of 190 has been reached 5 years ago. A continuous increase has taken place in the following towns: Geneva, Lucerne, Schaffhouse, Vevey, Baden and Bienne the figures varying between 180-200, whilst in the following towns practically no increase since 1925 has taken place: Porrentruy, Liestal, Glaris, Herisau and Chur. Chaux-de-Fonds, St. Gall, Arbon and St. Moritz have not yet reached the figure of 150. Rorschach and Le Locle have only just passed 150. These figures show the great difference existing amongst the various towns and how difficult it is to establish an average index figure which gives a true picture as to the total increase of all towns and boroughs. N.Z.Z.

#### SWISS ANSWER TO MONSIEUR BRIAND.

The Federal Council has now published the official reply to Mr. Briand's proposals for the creation of the "United States of Europe." The long document is a masterpiece of diplomatic phraseology. Whilst generally agreeing with the tentative suggestions of the French Foreign Minister, the note does not commit our country in any way. Stress, however, is laid on the desirability that any such scheme should not endanger the neutrality of Switzerland.

### LOCAL.

#### ZURICH.

A lady clerk in Zurich told her friend that she expected the visit of a wealthy gentleman friend from India; tales of fabulous wealth induced her to part with sums totalling the amount of 11,000 frs. As the arrival of this Eastern potentate was postponed from time to time the lady became suspicious and after some investigation it was found that no such "friend" existed. The inventor of this tale has been arrested.

Two tourists from Zurich were spending a holiday on the Alp of Kaesern in the Kloental, from there they undertook an excursion to the Pfannenstock. One of them, named Meier, 24 years old, slipped and fell in full view of his friend for about 300 metres. A party of six guides set out to find the body as there was no doubt that he was killed outright. N.Z.

Continued on back page.

## NOTES AND GLEANINGS.

By KYBURG.

### Basle Students' Visit to Southend.

"Know Thyself" was written over the Oracle at Delphi in old Greece and if this wise saying were taken to heart by modern people to-day, those fortune-tellers, who, in spite of the police, still practise their nefarious trade in most sea-side places, not to mention others, would soon lose their stupid clients.

However, "Know Others as Well" might be added to the above excellent maxim, because by getting to know others, you will be able to appreciate their ways, their motives, their actions and by appreciating them, you will be on the way to finding out that they, too, those others, those foreigners, are just very much the same as you are and that there is no reason at all why you should not love them instead of distrusting them, as he who does not know is likely to do.

And that is why I think the exchanges of young students between various countries, during holiday time, is such an excellent institution, if I may call it such. At least, I hope it will grow into a regular institution! Just recently, Southend-on-Sea had the visit of 17 Basle students. They were officially received by the Mayor, wearing his official robes and chain of office, and they had an opportunity of visiting beautiful Essex and studying the ways and manners of their English hosts. They were made to feel that they were "one of the family" and will, I am sure, look back with great pleasure on their experiences in that delectable part of England.

N.B. for Londoners—Essex is not only that rather dreary stretch you see by travelling from Fenchurch Street to Southend! That's the worst part of Essex and there are other parts which compare with any in England, I think, for unspoilt beauty. Readers wishing for an itinerary for a real beautiful trip through unspoilt Essex, please let me know and I will oblige.

However, to proceed. An interesting little intermezzo which took place during the visit of those Basle Students is described in the following from the *Southend Standard* of July 31:

A miniature *Entente Cordiale* was staged at the Pier Bandstand on Saturday morning, when the band of Swiss students from Bâle, who are on a visit to Southend, joined in the musical programme. The link between the countries in this case was Mr. Adam Seebold, the conductor of the Pier Orchestra, who was himself Swiss-born, though having lived for the last forty-five years in this country. "I think it a great compliment," he said chatting during the interval, "that these boys should have arrived in force when I suggested their giving me a 'turn' during the morning."

The impromptu choir attracted many listeners from the deck below, curious to hear more of the cheery voices which carried so clearly far beyond the band enclosure, and a good audience was soon gathered. Apparently quite unperturbed and not in the least self-conscious, the boys seemed to enjoy the singing quite as much as anyone, and evidently found it a task to keep straight faces during the songs. They could hardly have expected to meet a countryman so soon, and were talking and laughing with Mr. Seebold in their own language as though making the most of the opportunity.

The first song, an "Evening Hymn," sounded like a folk-song, and was described by Herr Joseph Meyer, who has accompanied the boys, as being in a Swiss dialect. "I wish to live in the mountains" was also applauded enthusiastically, and the yodelling song which followed transplanted one in mind far away from Essex. Mr. Seebold and Herr Meyer were both thoroughly amused at the last item, and the boys' laughter certainly made one wish to understand the words. After a while, however, it was not hard to recognize it as an old favourite, "Ten Little Nigger Boys," in Swiss dress.

As the boys descended from the bandstand, it was impossible to help wondering whether British students, too, would carry a song book as part of the needed luggage on a foreign trip such as this. Would they also be able to command a "scratch" choir so easily? If not, as the faces of the visitors showed, they would certainly miss a great deal of pleasure themselves as well as one way of making a host of new friends.

Now that most of our fortunate acquaintances are on holiday, those of us who are left behind, so far, may console ourselves with the thought that the weather may be much better by the time we are off, and we may meanwhile read about the holiday making and mountain-climbing almost daily. It has probably occurred to everyone of us at one time or another to ask ourselves that old question as to why people do climb mountains and the following article by Geoffrey Winthrop Young, in *The Listener*, July 30, may be of real interest to many.

### The Philosophy of Climbing.

Of course we can give a number of reasons for the mountain passion; and some of them seem quite good ones. On the whole they have grown more satisfying as mountaineering grew more popular, and therefore more widely discussed, and better reasons had to be produced to meet more rational criticism. The first mountaineers, the pioneers, enlarged upon the beauty of the views to be had from hill-tops, or upon the value of the scientific data to be collected; and no doubt they honestly paid as much attention as they could spare to these things when they were not absorbed in the delight of struggling with their great first ascents. Another wave of early climbers poo-pooed such aesthetic or scientific excuses. They said climbing was just a sport, a fine exercise, just like any other game. And, being honest men, too, they must have blushed like an alpine dawn on snow if ever they remembered what they had written when they experienced those moments of wonder and the like sensations familiar to the least imaginative of us in mountaineering. Later, we began to speak of the attraction of the insurgency of mountains, the charm of beautiful shapes rushing up into sight, and discovering all the colour and detail of earth's surface directly to our eyes, in contradiction to the eternal evenness and flatness of our usual human prospect. It was the revolt of hills against a dull order of things which we thought appealed to our rebellious youthful senses. And then again, as roads and transport increased, we discovered that in our mountain regions alone could we still easily escape into unspoiled beauty. Twenty minutes' climb up a hill-side, and we are alone with the earth as it was; with the edges of all the visible world touching the sky above us, and we ourselves the centre of all the world, as we all like to be.

Then, as the exploration of mountains, their scenery and their scientific novelties grew more complete and the mystery outside us grew less, our reasons were forced to become more complicated; we had to begin to poke about inside ourselves for more satisfactory explanations of the mountain fascination. So we began to say (and with much truth) that climbing could develop a man physically to his utmost, and attune his muscles and nerves and senses to the highest limit of their capacity; and that, when he was thus at the very summit of his power to absorb and to enjoy, it surrounded him with a wealth of glorious sight and sound and new adventurous experience, such as not only transfigured him at the time, but remained with him as an enduring enrichment of his nature.

It was only a step from this, you will see, to declare that mountain-climbing made its unique appeal because it gave a man the best opportunity of realising the very best in himself. A man physically at his best, and seeing, hearing and experiencing to the height of his capacity for sensation discovers not only what he is, but also what he is capable, in his finest moments, of feeling, doing and being.

These all seem quite good reasons. And yet they explain nothing, because they are all, you will notice, the kind of reasons that suggest themselves after we have found out what climbing does for us. They do not explain the puzzling fact that three members of a single family will listen to all that can be said about mountains, allow that it is all very nice, and go off to the seaside; while the fourth, from the moment he sees a hill, or reads about mountaineering, goes off to the hills at the first opportunity like a bird with the homing instinct; and if he ever hears about these reasons at all, he will only smile to find out how much more reasonable he was than he thought.

No. The love of mountains is an instinct. It is inborn, and unaccountable. Men may practise climbing, for the sake of exercise,