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Usteri, ebbe tanto felice esito da esser replicata tre anni dopo. Gli alberghi d'Interlaken e dintorni accolsero in quella circostanza 560 persone finanziariamente ben fornite, venute da ogni dove. A predisporre conveniente alloggio per tutti aveva provveduto il pittore Franz Niklaus König, che può così esser considerato, in certo qual senso, il precursore dei direttori delle odierne aziende di soggiorno. Con istinto propagandistico sicuro ed abile mano, il König – promotore altresì del ricordo turistico di buona fattura – ha fissato sulla tela le scene dei primi giochi di Unspunnen. Quaranta scudi d'argento erano allora ricompensa ai vincitori delle varie gare: lottatori, lanciatori di una pesantissima pietra, tiratori, sonatori di corno delle Alpi, cantori e cantatrici. La pietra di 184 libbre è adoperata tuttora nella gara di lancio, siccome mezzo infallibile per accertare quale sia il concorrente più gagliardo. Tra gli spettatori della seconda festa, tenutasi nel 1808, spiccano la Signora di Staël, che ne ha

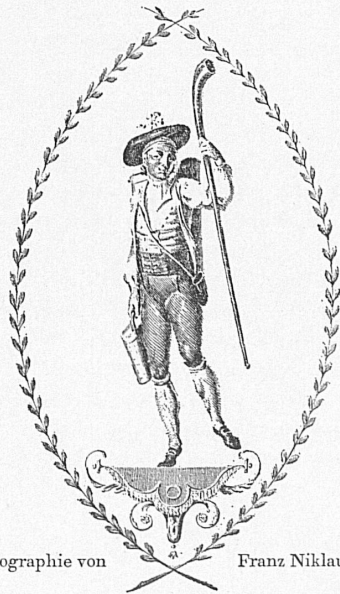
lasciato una commossa descrizione, e la sua amica Signora Vigée-Lebrun, pittrice allora celebre, alla quale si deve un ritratto di quello «spectacle – come usavasi dire – rustique et charmant». Verso la fine dell'estate, Interlaken rievcherà tali memorabili feste. Aprirà le manifestazioni uno spettacolo scenico di Hans Rudolph Hubler, musicato da Robert Blum. La prima rappresentazione verrà data il 29 agosto nel teatro all'aperto dove pure si recita il «Guglielmo Tell» di Schiller. Seguiranno le repliche nei giorni 30 e 31 agosto, 1º, 2, 6, 7 ed 8 settembre. L'ultimo sabato d'agosto 1500 danzatori in costumi popolari metteranno in scena uno spettacolo multicolore. La domenica 1º settembre, la distesa erbosa di Unspunnen, fiancheggiata da pendici selvose ai cui piedi scorre impetuosa la Lütschine, e dominata sullo sfondo dall'imponente sagoma della Jungfrau, vedrà svolgersi, successivamente, servizi religiosi, gare varie e, a chiusura delle manifestazioni, un grandioso corteo.

ON THE UNSPUNNEN FESTIVAL OF 1968

The Alps in winter became the arena of spectator sports only to meet the requirements of the modern tourist industry, but they have always been the background for the sporting events traditional among the local mountain-dwellers in the summertime. Rustic competitions of various kinds, however, have long excited the interest of visitors; and it was, in fact, a herdsmen's festival that really inaugurated the flow of summer visitors, increasing every year, to the Bernese Oberland. This festival took place early in the last century. At Unspunnen, not far from Interlaken, is the place where it was held, on August 17, 1805; a mown meadow bounded on three sides by gentle slopes constituted "a natural amphitheatre, in which around 10,000 people, without crowding one another", could watch the whole performance while remaining seated. The success of this event, which was also attended by the Zurich poet Martin Usteri, was so great that it was repeated three years later. Over 560 guests at that time found accommodation in Interlaken and in its vicinity, all arrangements being made by the painter Franz Niklaus König, a man who might be well regarded as the worthy predecessor of present-day managers of travel associations. It was König too who preserved for us a record of the occasion in his sketches and paintings. In 1805 awards amounting to 40 silver thalers went to the victors in the games, to wrestlers and shot-putters, marksmen,

alhorn performers, singers both men and women. To this day there is still in use the same 184-pound stone in the games of Unspunnen as was used by the shot-putters of 1805. In the guest list of the 2nd Herdsmen's Festival of 1808 we find the name of the brilliant Madame de Staël, as well as the painter Madame Vigée-Lebrun, to whom we owe a charming picture of the 2nd Unspunnen Festival.

In commemoration of these herdsmen's festivals, Interlaken is again organizing, in the late summer of 1968, an Unspunnen Festival. It will be opened by a festival play by Hans Rudolf Hubler, with music by Robert Blum, which will have its première on the evening of August 29 in the Tell Festival Theatre in Interlaken. (Other performances on August 30 and 31, as well as on September 1, 2, 6, 7 and 8.) On the last Saturday of August there will be a folk dance festival assembling around 1500 people wearing traditional folk costumes. The following Sunday (September 1) will be devoted to the Alpine competitions, divine services, a great parade and a festival production in Unspunnen. Once again, an Unspunnen thaler will commemorate for participants and visitors alike a folk festival which, as long ago, takes place on a meadow dominated by the Jungfrau, the wooded ridges above the Lütschine and also the ruins of a medieval castle.



Lithographie von Franz Niklaus König

DER PFERDEMARKT VON CHAINDON

Das bernische Juradorf Chaidon führt schon seit Jahrhunderten seinen Tiermarkt durch. Die ersten authentischen Zeugnisse hiefür datieren aus den Jahren 1658 und 1699; aber verschiedenes spricht dafür, dass die Foire de Chaidon bereits vor der Reformationszeit existierte. Um die letzte Jahrhundertwende zählte man bis zu 1500 Pferde, die in Chaidon zum Verkauf angeboten wurden. Der Ruf des Marktes wurde international. Aus Holland, Frankreich, namentlich aus dem nahen Elsass und selbstverständlich aus der ganzen Schweiz strebten die Händler in das

Juradorf, wo vor allem die Pferderasse der Freiberge immer stärker das Interesse weckte. Den Rekord brachte das Jahr 1944, als der Markt 3100 Pferde und 200 Rinder aufwies. Mit der zunehmenden Motorisierung in Verkehr, Landwirtschaft und Militär ging der Bedarf an Pferden mehr und mehr zurück. Chaidon schaltete als Ersatz eine Ausstellung landwirtschaftlicher Maschinen ein, und so bietet seine Foire nach wie vor ein bedeutsames und spektakuläres Ereignis, das auch eine starke touristische Anziehungskraft ausübt. Sie findet dieses Jahr am 2. September statt.