

It happenend in the canton of Berne

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turner" (older men) arrived in three columns and showed convincingly that their gym days were by no means over.

After their displays came the crowning of the victorious societies and individuals. The festival reached its climax with the arrival on the field of 23,000 gymnasts. Soon the big area was covered in white. The Federal "Oberturner", their technical chief, from his lofty command tower conducted the general exercises which were executed so perfectly as if there had been a dress rehearsal — a most imposing spectacle of movement and rhythm.

Amongst the official speakers was the President of the Confederation, Federal Councillor Spuehler, who addressed the giant assembly. He congratulated the gymnasts on their splendid work. "An active gymnast and sportsman", he said, "is also an active citizen." He appealed to them to administer the political heritage in Communes, Cantons and Confederation as assiduously as they had competed in Lucerne.

The exercises were then repeated and the end of an unforgettable "Federal" had arrived. The societies

returned more or less triumphantly, but all happy and satisfied, to their respective towns and villages, where festivities continued.

* * *

A few sidelights on the Lucerne festival: The Swiss Federal Railways transported 60,000 gymnasts and spectators to and from Lucerne, and thanks to excellent organisation and disciplined behaviour of the travellers this undertaking could be carried out without any hitch. The S.B.B. expressed thanks to the public, the organisers, the traffic police and their own staff for enabling such smooth working.

In the Canton of Lucerne, fifty special radio stations were established for traffic control, forty motor vehicles from patrol car to police transport van were in use, six hundred special traffic indicators were put up, and a helicopter watched from the air.

(Based on "Schweizerische Turnzeitung", "Basler Nachrichten", "Luzerner Neueste Nachrichten", A.T.S. and "Der neue Tip".)

IT HAPPENED IN THE CANTON OF BERNE

ECONOMY

A few weeks ago the Swiss Mercantile Society in Berne reached an agreement with commercial and industrial employers which should ensure excellent schooling of young apprentices. The aim is the best possible training, and all considerations of remuneration and the interests of the employers should come second. Shortly before this agreement was reached the Cantonal Association of Commerce and Industry (Bernese Chamber of Commerce) and the Cantonal Organisations of Employers on the one hand and the Swiss Mercantile Society of the Canton of Berne on the other ratified an important agreement on principles of social, political and legal nature. This agreement is considered another paving stone on the path to perfect relationship between employers and staff.

COMMUNICATIONS

The 130 taxis in Berne are to have a new regular rate which will put up the price, and a number of railway lines in the Canton of Berne have been or are being improved. Thirty million francs are Berne's contribution to various technical improvements which will benefit eight railways and shipping lines: Chemins de fer du Jura, Montreux-Oberland-Bahn, United Berne-Worb-Line, Biel-Taeuffelen-Ins-Bahn, Oberaargauerbahnen, Sensetal-Bahn, and the communications on Lakes Thun and Bienne. The melioration project of the Solothurn-Zollikofen-Bern-Bahn alone will cost thirty million francs. In February 1960 the 1,200-metre-long tunnel was started and it is hoped that the complete resetting of the line underneath the new main station will be completed in 1965.

Several of the lines in the Bernese Oberland have also been improved, notably the aerial cableway Wengen-Maennlichen and the Brienz-Rothorn-Bahn. The first part of the Schilthornbahn at Muerren is hoped to be open to traffic in a year's time. The Wengernalp- and Jungfrau-bahn showed a new record of passenger traffic in its jubilee year 1962.

CONFERENCES AND FESTIVALS

The Capital has been host to many associations, national and international, during the past months. The "Pro Helvetia" Foundation had its annual meeting there and its Council reported on the cultural work subsidised

by the Confederation: exhibitions of art and literature, musical and theatrical performances, lectures by prominent Swiss personalities, scholarships and contributions towards educational visits, production and distribution of literature, cultural propaganda by radio and television and many other activities.

The International Association of Geologists met in Berne for their 53rd annual assembly, and a week later the International Council for Visual Information, which comprises 150 personalities from Universities all over the world, held a meeting in the Capital. 350 cheese-makers from the Canton met for their annual gathering early in the spring.

Brienz was the place where a new association was founded, "Mys Schwyzerdeerfli", which has as its aim the conservation of the old part of the village. At their first meeting they also resolved to try and get Brienz to become the seat of the Swiss Open Air Museum.

At the end of April the International Working Party of German Theatres held their spring meeting in Berne. Three days later some 300 delegates of the Swiss Girl Guides' Association met; membership had again increased and counted now 177 groups with 13,591 guides.

A congress on special heating methods was attended by 500 engineers and heating experts from many countries. One of the subjects treated was waste incineration.

An educational course for welfare workers took place in Bienne, and the Swiss Railwaymen's Union, the third largest with its 61,427 members, met at Interlaken late in May. A few days later Interlaken welcomed the Association of workers in commerce, transport and food industry, another powerful member of the Swiss Trade Unions.

Spiez was the venue for the meeting of the Bernese Sanatoria Heiligenschwendi and Saanen, and a working party of the experts on occupational therapy met in Berne on the occasion of their jubilee (10 years). The Korea Association also met in Berne at the end of May for the tenth time. Its members have all belonged to the Neutral Commission in Korea.

Old Boy Scouts met at Kandersteg early in June, and later in the month ALPAR, the Bernese Airways Company, met for their A.G.M. Adelboden was chosen by the Swiss master joiners and cabinet makers for their general meeting.

On 1st July the special festival of the University took place, which had been organised to raise funds for the new Hostel which should relieve the shortage of accommodation suffered by university students. The festival was a great success.

Finally, the traditional Bienne festival, the "Braderie", early in June, was favoured by excellent weather, and showed a specially large participation; Miss Jemima and her Cook's Tour of 100 years ago attended the "Braderie".

EDUCATION AND SCIENCE

It has been reported that the Canton of Berne is short of 220 primary teachers. The new scholastic year started with 54 newly opened classes. Special credits have been granted by the Cantonal Parliament for additional training facilities.

Two girls and two boys left school in Bienne and two "Lake District" communes (Bellmund and Orpund) with a remarkable record: All four never missed a single lesson during the nine years of attending school, and they all received prizes from the Commune authorities.

In April grammar schools ("Gymnasium") were inaugurated at Langenthal and Interlaken, a teachers' training class was opened in Bienne, and a new school and swimming pool at Ostermundigen.

The Bienne watch factory, OMEGA, have decided to give new scholarship grants to talented students in many parts of the country, especially for engineering and commercial sciences.

A scientific exhibition was opened in May at the high alpine research station, Jungfrauoch.

ART AND CULTURE

On 17th June 1913 the first evening concert was held in the Cathedral of Berne, and for fifty years these performances have been given regularly. On 22nd June this year, the Cathedral Square was the stage for the by now famous "Münsterspiele", which brought a first performance of the "Totentanz" after Niklaus Manuel with music by Heinrich Sutermeister and a participation of 500 artists.

Also in June the first performance of Mozart's "Betulia Liberata" was given at the Berne Municipal Theatre, and some 1,300 members of the "Caecilien" choirs met at Porrentruy for their central festival. Interlaken organised a Mozart week, and the Yodellers of the Canton of Berne held their contest at Muensingen.

The old town of Thun is to have a cellar theatre, and a Swiss premiere, "Heiraten ist immer ein Risiko" by Iren Saul O'Hara, was given an enthusiastic reception at the Studio Theatre in Berne.

The number of Art Exhibitions was so high that it is impossible to mention them all, and only a few will be enumerated. There was an interesting show of Utrillo works at the Berne Art Museum, and a large selection of Viktor Surbek's drawings was exhibited at Thun. In Bienne Federal Councillor Tschudi opened an exhibition of works of art which had received prizes under the Federal Art Grants Scheme. Some sixty Bernese women artists held an exhibition at the Kunsthalle in Berne. At St. Imier Roman Catholic Church a remarkable piece of art has been put up — fourteen stages of Christ's Passion hewn in slate by Georges Schneider, a local artist living in Paris.

The church of Vermes has been declared a protected monument, and the church of Kleinhochstetten, the cradle of Bernese Reformation, will be restored.

After the Castle of Hindelbank had been renovated last year, the lovely Schloss Oberhofen has been improved, too, and new acquisitions are now on show. One of the

most beautiful of Bernese Castles, Schloss Jegenstorf, housed an exhibition in June: Lamps of four millenniums.

NATURE

Parts of the shore of the Lake of Bienne near the Zihlkanal have been declared a protected area. The Alpine Garden on the Schynige Platte attracts more and more visitors from all parts of the world and the technical directors of Western European botanical gardens paid it a visit.

At the Schulwarte in Berne a special exhibition, "Our Forests", was opened on 31st May. It will remain open till the autumn.

NEWS AT RANDOM

Early in May the new power station Sanetsch started production of energy at the Innergsteig station near Gstaad.

Langenthal has a new Children's Home which was inaugurated early in July. When the little Roman Catholic church at Langnau (Emmental) received its four bells which had been provided by the Catholic and the Protestant communities jointly, the Protestant church rang a welcome with all its own bells. The Emmental is to be the seat of the International Protestant Radio Transmitter.

Eight hundred boys from the Alsace visited Bienne on a tour of the Suisse Romande early in July.

Sad news came from Berne a few weeks ago about foot-and-mouth disease in many parts of Switzerland and it was reported that 2,200 animals had had to be slaughtered.

On 2nd May the geranium market was held in Berne for the seventh time when 18,000 plants were sold. The sale was combined with festivities..

*(News received by courtesy of the
Agence Télégraphique Suisse.)*

A FESTIVE AUGUST FOR GENEVA

The pulse of international life beats strong in Geneva and never more so than during the three days of the "Fêtes de Genève" (9th to 11th August), which culminate in a procesion and fireworks. At the Palais des Expositions at Geneva the commemorative exhibition entitled "Cent ans au Service de l'Humanité" is being held from 15th August to 15th September in honour of the Red Cross, which was founded there a hundred years ago. The Picasso exhibition at the Athénée, which will continue until 21st September, is also certain of enthusiastic patronage. Greek folk art will be on show at the Musée d'Ethnographie.

[S.N.T.O.]

ZERMATT REOPENED

After the completion of the necessary repairs and improvements to the water supply system and the thorough disinfection of hotels, pensions and restaurants, the authorities gave the green light for the reopening on 1st June 1963.

The International Hotel Association decided recently to hold their next meeting in Zermatt in September 1963.

VACCINATION

Contrary to recent reports, vaccination is not required for visiting Switzerland. There has been no new typhoid epidemic since Zermatt. In view of this, and as a result of increased vigilance everywhere, the danger of infection is now no greater in Switzerland than in other countries.

[S.N.T.O.]