

Gaiety and colour

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Gaiety and Colour



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It would take a whole volume, a full-length sound film to give a proper idea of the colourful splendour and gaiety of this procession of folk costumes, customs, songs and dances, whose 5,000 performers paraded for 3 hours through the streets of Lausanne before more than 100,000 spectators in holiday mood.

On the occasion of the Swiss National Exhibition in Lausanne, the National Federation of Swiss Costumes organized its Federal Festival in this town at the end of August. It should be remembered that Switzerland's cultural heritage, consisting of her regional costumes, folk songs, dances and theatre, as well as traditional customs, all stemming from different origins and periods, is fostered and protected by the above-mentioned federation, which has been at work now for some forty years. This organization, based on the federalist principle, seeks above all to stimulate and coordinate the efforts of the cantonal and regional federations, themselves formed of local societies. This federation, which at present numbers over 16,000 members, organizes a Federal Festival of Costumes every ten years, at the same time taking part in other events held at more frequent intervals.

The Lausanne Festivities consisted first of all of a Federal Folk Dancing Festival, in which some 2,000 dancers of both sexes took part to the accompaniment of eight orchestras, selected by regions and according to the types of dance included on the programme, then a pageant presented by 1,000 actors and actresses entitled «Four Languages — One Country», with songs, music and dances, showing typical scenes from all parts of Switzerland, and finally the splendid procession «Switzerland in Festive Mood», in which 4,800 men and women took part, together with 30 floats, 30 bands, with pipes and drums, presenting the costumes, customs and big historic moments of the 25 Swiss cantons. Opposite we give a very brief glimpse of this splendid show, the like of which had never been seen before.



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1. Canton of Ticino
2. Saas-Fee (Canton of the Valais)
3. Folk Dances of Mission (Canton of the Valais)
4. Dulliken (Canton of Solothurn)
5. Canton of Schaffhausen
6. Canton of Basle-Country
7. Canton of Basle-Town
8. Outer Rhodes, Appenzell: the embroideresses' float
9. Inner Rhodes, Appenzell: with their huge fan-shaped head-dresses bedecked with red ribbons, their big fluted collars and black velvet bodices with white and gold dickeys, the women of Appenzell in costume have a regal look. This is a costume worthy of a region where the textile industry enjoys pride of place.
10. The Ladies of Sion (Valais), noble delegates of the cathedral town
11. Mission (Valais)



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