

Notes and gleanings

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HOME NEWS

The Federal accounts for the year 1924 close with a deficit of 21.6 million francs, the amount anticipated in the budget being 38.2 million francs. The deficit in the preceding year—1923—exceeded 45 million francs.

For the first time since 1918 the number of factories subject to the Swiss Factory Law shows an increase; they had been decreasing year by year. At the end of 1924 the number was 8,103, employing 357,507 workers; the watch trade has been chiefly responsible for this improvement.

In the new code of civil procedure, which is now being elaborated by the Grosse Rat of the Canton of Thurgau, poor litigants may have their legal costs remitted if the local authorities or guardians certify that beyond the necessary income for the needs of his family the litigant does not possess any other means.

The Glaris Landsgemeinde decided to maintain the present restrictive motor traffic regulations; during the summer months the speed limit on Sundays must not exceed 18 kilometres per hour.

* * *

In order to encourage the building of houses, the Lucerne municipal council has voted a further credit of about Frs. 380,000, which brings the total earmarked for this purpose to over five million francs. Most of this amount is secured by mortgages and loans.

The results of the universal aliens restrictions are illustrated by the official figures just published by the Swiss Emigration Office. Whilst in 1923 8,006 persons left Switzerland to seek a livelihood abroad, the number fell during last year to 4,140. The United States, Canada and Central America have received about 75 per cent. of that number, the remainder, just over a thousand, showing preference for Africa, Asia and Australia. As regards their different callings, half of them are farmers and skilled workmen; the commercial side is represented by 18 per cent., and the hotel line by just over 5 per cent.

On the occasion of its 92nd anniversary, the Zurich University has conferred the degree of Doctor *honoris causa* on Mr. Louis Colmobi, of Bellinzona, in recognition of his eminent services in translating into the Italian language standard books dealing with the Swiss legislature and jurisprudence.

M. Jean François Lacroix, a former bill broker in Geneva, has bequeathed the whole of his fortune, with the exception of a few minor legacies, to the local Hospice Général, which will thus receive an amount of about Frs. 700,000.

During an altercation in the Geneva courts between two rural councillors it was disclosed that the maire of a local suburb was the president of a little social club founded for the sole purpose of enabling its members to obtain regular supplies of absinthe. The sale and consumption of the "Fée verte" is, of course, prohibited throughout Switzerland.

AUSLANDSCHWEIZER-TAG.
SOME REFLECTIONS.

For the last eight years, ever since the movement was initiated culminating in the annual conference under the above title, we have kept our hopes at a high pitch in the expectation that something tangible would result sufficiently engaging and practical to rouse and rally the spirits of the close on half-million Swiss who, away from their country, are scattered over the whole of the globe. Far be it from us to belittle any achievements, but the progress has been slow enough to stifle the original enthusiasm. We gather that the expenses of the central secretariat in Fribourg exceed Frs. 40,000 per annum, and that its existence and activities are largely due to the personal efforts of Dr. A. Lätt, who for this purpose had collected no less than Frs. 60,000. The several lectures delivered during the two days April 19th/20th are mostly of an "academic" nature, and hardly capable of stimulating the in-

terest of those delegates who travelled from abroad in order to benefit by them: the hall was anything but overcrowded, and the only foreign representatives of note whom we noticed—and who were officially referred to—were Monsieur de Pury, the Swiss Minister in Paris, half-a-dozen Swiss Consuls from French towns, and the Consuls from Frankfurt and Stuttgart. It was announced that a school or reference book dealing with Swiss history and ideals, and specially compiled for children educated abroad, was in course of preparation; it is to be published in German and French, and possibly later on in Italian and Spanish. An English edition does not seem to be in contemplation, which will be regretted by the large colonies in English-speaking countries; maybe, this is a compliment to the unbiassed and liberal spirit in evidence at British educational institutions.

The "Leitmotiv" of practically all the speakers was the maintenance of the Swiss *cachet* of our compatriots and the prevention of their children being assimilated to foreign surroundings and notions. The orators—several of them probably have never resided abroad for any length of time—had studied the subject thoroughly, and their conclusions were prompted by the highest ideals. There is, however, another side to this question, and one which has been fully realized by our own authorities in Switzerland. We all know that great efforts are made at present to encourage and even force foreigners permanently residing in our country to embrace Swiss nationality. The lasting presence of aliens—aliens in spirit and fact—who enjoy the protection and privileges of the country of their adoption is considered a danger to the State and an eyesore to the population. We have experienced a striking example in the canton of Ticino, where some of our own compatriots hailing from beyond the St. Gothard have established a community of their own, religiously adhering to customs foreign to the native population, until the latter violently protested against this affront. If the—no doubt well-meant—tenets and recommendations of our educationalists at home are carried out abroad, the same thing will happen, with results that are not only disastrous to the particular alien, but also to our mother country. We are not thinking of small isolated patches of Swiss in the tropics or elsewhere, but of the large colonies where the success of the individual largely depends upon his ability to adapt himself to prevailing conditions, and if in this process we and our children become "assimilated," we cannot discover any harm. Emigration is for Switzerland a safety-valve without which our very existence is jeopardized. We know scores of Swiss whose families became assimilated, and who have left their mark in the country of their adoption, incidentally contributing more to enhancing the prestige of their own country than if they had diligently followed those counsels. We also know not a few—though their double nationality imposed other duties upon them—who in the hour of danger *voluntarily* rushed back in order to defend their old country. We think our patriotism is sufficiently deeply implanted without the necessity of having it annually revived by official fatherly reminders and exhortations that we and our children are in danger of losing the Swiss *cachet*. Our well-wishers at home are also apt to forget that the material future of our children is of more concern to us than the fostering and nursing of ideal considerations for a country which only in exceptional cases can offer them the possibility of remunerative livelihood in later life.

The annual gathering closed with the traditional banquet and concert at the Stadtkasino. The Federal Council was not represented, and it seemed to us that the meeting was not as representative as in previous years. We also missed our old friend Stucki, who had been so closely identified with the movement. The social part was in the hands of Dr. Emil Schaub, whom we wish to compliment on the excellent patriotic programme which he had been able to marshal with the help of musical, choral and gymnastic societies. Apart from the yodler turns, the gala number was, no doubt, the tableaux representing marble groups which, under the direction of Mr. F. Estermann, portrayed historical events, the conception and execution of which aroused general ecstasy.

Before concluding our "critical" remarks, a little suggestion for the future may not be out of place. Every year Swiss societies and clubs abroad are urged to send delegates to this conference. For obvious reasons the response is not very great, but the reception of those few who do not grudge the time and expense is not such as to encourage a second visit. We do not suggest a formal reception, but as the names are previously

communicated, we submit that the local committee or a member of the latter should at least enquire whether these delegates have safely arrived, and perhaps welcome them with the conventional questions whether they had an agreeable journey and whether they were interested in cross-word puzzles.

NOTES AND GLEANINGS.

By "KYBURG,"

Our Swiss National Sport.

During the week-end, on an all too short visit to my native town of Winterthur, it was my good fortune to spend an evening with my friends of the Stadtschützen. The chief topic of conversation was the selective rifle match which took place on Sunday, the 3rd May, at Solothurn, and from my friends who were about to take part in this shoot I learned some very interesting details anent the methodical, careful, scientific and exacting training to which they had subjected themselves for months in order to have a chance of qualifying. Shooting, as a sport, is not an easy affair when it comes to the top of the list, I gathered, and in one instance, just to give my readers an idea, the question as to the probable success of one of the members revolved almost entirely around the discussion as to whether his age was not too great to allow of the pupillae of his eyes being able to contract and distend sufficiently quickly! The point being that, in taking aim, the eye has to focus in rapid succession on three points which are separated by great distances. For a lover of the sport, but one who knows the easier side better than the really serious one, the discussion carried on by really experienced marksmen, whose names are well known wherever rifle shooting is talked of, was really illuminating. Well, I do not yet know what actually happened at Solothurn, and whether my friends topped the 1,040-point mark or not, as I had to return to my second home on Sunday evening again. But I do hope that our Swiss team will be successful at St. Gall when the international match takes place this summer, and that they will then earn the reward of their dogged perseverance.

Death of the Bishop of Basle

Universe and Catholic Weekly (24th April):—

Mgr. Dr. Jacobus Stämmli, Bishop of Basle, Dean of the Swiss Episcopate, died at Soleure, his episcopal residence, at the age of 85. His Grace was one of the oldest dignitaries of the Catholic world, and celebrated two years ago the diamond jubilee of his ordination to the priesthood.

The deceased bishop was well known and appreciated as a man of great learning and ability, respected and esteemed by all denominations. While never yielding on points of principle, he was successful in maintaining good relationship with the non-Catholic local governments he had to deal with.

His diocese, over which he ruled for 18 years, is by far the largest in Switzerland. It comprises eight German-speaking Cantons and the French-speaking Jura, with a Catholic population of nearly 600,000 souls, some 430 parishes and about 800 priests. R.I.P.

International Child Welfare Congress

Bayswater Chronicle (25th April):—

The first International Congress on Child Welfare (organised by the Save the Children Fund International Union) will be held at Geneva next summer from the 24th to the 28th August. Its comprehensive character marks the greatly increased importance which has been attached to the question of child welfare in all countries since the war.

The Congress is under the patronage of the Swiss Federal Government and influential Patronage Committees, including many men and women of great distinction, have already been formed in connection with it in a dozen different countries. The British patrons are Lord Eustace Percy (President of the Board of Education), Mr. Neville Chamberlain (Minister of Health), and the Duke of Atholl, who is President of the Save the Children Fund. The British Organising Committee includes representatives of all the organisations which are concerned with different aspects of the subject.

It is anticipated that at least a thousand delegates, drawn from fifty different countries, will attend the Congress, and a large number of eminent specialists will participate in the discussions. The Ministry of Health has sanctioned the sending of delegates by Local Authorities.

Previous to the Congress, the Save the Children Fund International Union will hold an International Summer School at Geneva. This will afford a delightful holiday in beautiful surroundings, at very moderate cost. Full particulars

with regard to this Summer School may be obtained from the General Secretary, The Save the Children Fund, 26, Gordon Street, London, W.C.1.

More power to their elbows! Saving children is much more important than converting negroes and other so-called savages to the blessings of a religion which brings whisky and the sword in its wake. True Christians will know in their hearts, I should think, that the saving of poor neglected children is a Christian duty which ought to come long before the teaching of the Gospel in darkest Africa and such-like places. I hope that *Swiss Observer* readers will cut out Missions to the Negroes, etc., and substitute grants to those Societies which do useful and Christian work among the poor and the poor children at home instead.

The Amalgamated States of Europe.

I can almost hear some of my readers exclaim when seeing this heading: "Aha, there 'Kyburg' is off again on one of his favourite hobby-horses!" But wait! Says the "Man About Town" in the *Evening News* (May 5th):—

"America can help only those who help themselves" was a phrase in the American Ambassador's speech at the Pilgrims' last night.

And round the table at which I sat there ran the idea, expressed by a thoughtful man of business, "If we had a United States of Europe we could meet this vast growing competition from the New World. If, instead of tariffs against each other, we developed greater freedom of transport and greater freedom of ideas in trade, we should rid Europe of a lot of the present financial foolishness."

Well, well! If that is not preaching rank Utopian and Bolshevistic rubbish, I should say that 'Kyburg's' previous ideas were not, either. Of course, the "Man About Town" was so flabbergasted at the idea that he probably thought he had heard something wonderfully new and epoch-making. Little did he realise that this same thought is shared by millions of earnest and sincere people who have seen long ago that parochial patriotism and nationalism are two great enemies of Europe and ought to be killed. After all, why should the task of different nationalities living peacefully together under a central authority, under one flag, be too difficult for Europeans, who claim to be the stalwarts of Twentieth Century Christian Civilisation?

The Franco-Swiss Arbitration Treaty—

is commented upon by Mr. H. Wilson-Harris as follows in the *Daily News* (20th April):—

Take as an example of the French type the Treaty between France and Switzerland, signed exactly a fortnight ago. Under this agreement all differences between the two States will be submitted to a standing Conciliation Commission. Questions not disposed of by this process will go to the Permanent Court of International Justice, if they involve those legal or "justiciable" points with which the Court deals. If they are not of this character, they will go to an Arbitral Tribunal of five members, constituted on lines laid down by The Hague Convention. If there is any difficulty about agreement on the composition of the Arbitration or Conciliation Board, its members will be appointed by the Queen of Holland. No loophole is left here. If conciliation does not bring a settlement, a final ruling must be given either by the Court or by arbitrators. Switzerland has already constructed a Treaty on broadly similar lines with Italy, and France on similar lines with Czechoslovakia.

Preparations to make Swiss Students welcome at Cambridge

are mentioned in *Granta* (24th April):—

The C.U. Council for the Entertainment of Foreign Students has invited six Swiss students—four men and two women—for the week April 27th to May 4th. Like the Czechs last term they come not as tourists, but as friends, to gain as much experience as possible of our University life. Any who are interested can give help in the following ways: bed and breakfast for all or part of the week; lunch or tea; dinner in hall—for the women private invitations will be needed unless Newnham and Girton entertain them each night; suggestions for employing time and invitations to meetings; money—there is a small debit from last term which it is hoped to remove.

What I think is so charming in the above is the indication that these students are not to be treated as tourists, but as friends! Such interchanges between countries, done in the spirit which the above clearly shows, must do an enormous amount of good international work, and they have 'Kyburg's' hearty support.

Distinguished Swiss Jurist.

The *Times* (22nd April):—

Dr. Carl Jaeger, member of the Supreme Federal Court of Switzerland, occupied a seat on the Bench at the opening of the April Session of the Central Criminal Court yesterday. The Recorder of London (Sir Ernest Wild, K.C.), addressing the Grand Jury, said that one of the most pleasing functions of the Court was to receive distinguished foreign jurists, and that day they were honoured by the presence of

Dr. Carl Jaeger, who had for a quarter of a century adorned the judicial Bench of Switzerland. The Recorder tendered a very warm welcome to Dr. Jaeger.

Snowbound on Mont Blanc.

The *Star* (29th April):—

Two young Geneva Alpinists, Hans Wyss and Heinzel, have just returned to Geneva after being snowbound for two days and nights on Mont Blanc.

They left Geneva on Saturday afternoon on a climbing excursion, intending to return on Sunday night.

Reaching Chamonix by train, they set out in the early evening, and passing the Mer de Glace, Lechean and Talefre glaciers, reached the Refuge du Couvercle (9,000 feet) at 5 a.m.

Most of the way had been painfully traversed through snow and icy winds.

Falling asleep in a cabin, they were soon awakened by a terrible storm, which grew in intensity, and ultimately they began to hear the roar of falling avalanches.

The sound of avalanches continued at intervals throughout the day, and they dared not attempt to leave the hut.

The cold was intense, but they were forced to stay there throughout the night.

On Monday the tempest continued, and they were held up for another night, which proved even wilder than the first.

On Tuesday morning the storm began to abate, and they decided to return.

Guided by compass through snow and mist, they made their way painfully back to Mont-evens, whence they took train, arriving at Geneva last night.

FINANCIAL AND COMMERCIAL NEWS FROM SWITZERLAND.

The provisions of Mr. Churchill's Budget in the matter of the export of gold may have considerable importance for bankers and high-financiers, but their effect on the everyday life of the Swiss people will only be indirect and therefore pass unnoticed. Two features of the Budget are, however, of outstanding importance for Switzerland, and have caused not a little consternation in the quarters most directly concerned—the proposed duties in silk and the restoration to force of the McKenna duties, including, as it does, a tax on imported watches and clocks, which Switzerland ships in large quantities.

In the case of the silk duties the exact position is, of course, not very clearly defined at present, and it would appear that certain modifications may be made before the Bill becomes law. Switzerland has a very large export trade in silk, and her total exports under this category in the first three months of the present year reached a total of nearly two million kilogrammes and a value of more than 95 million francs. The most important separate item under the heading of silk is silk ribbons, for which the Basle district is particularly noted. In 1924 the total value of Switzerland's export of silk ribbons was about 50 million francs, and of this no less than 27,598,000 frs. was accounted for by exports to Great Britain. The exports for the first three months of the present year have continued on approximately the same scale, and many orders were already on the books of the Basle manufacturers for further deliveries in the course of the year. The sudden introduction of the new tax, to come into force on the 1st of July, has caused British importers to insist on immediate delivery. An unprecedented state of activity thus exists at the moment in the Canton of Basle, and application has been made to the authorities for special permission to work two shifts a day in the factories. This in itself is satisfactory enough and will cause a temporary improvement in the local trade conditions, but it will be of very short duration, and by July 1st a serious falling-off is inevitable. In the case of other varieties of silk the proportion shipped to Great Britain is not so large, but in the case of these articles also the English duties will make themselves felt.

The reimposition of the 33 1-3 per cent. duty on imported watches and clocks will also have a considerable effect on this important branch of Swiss industry. To take one example only to illustrate the importance of Great Britain as a

customer in this line, it may be mentioned that of a total export of watches of nickel and similar metals in 1924, which reached a value of 39 million francs, about 20 per cent. went to Great Britain, and of the 8,577,000 frs. which represent the value of these latter shipments, 3,262,000 frs. came in the last quarter of the year, when the McKenna duties had been removed.

It is thus clear that Switzerland will not fail to suffer as a result of the new English taxes, and manufactures will doubly regret their imposition at a time when their trade was showing some signs of recovery from the slump, and markets abroad were again to some extent being regained.

STOCK EXCHANGE PRICES.

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BONDS.		Apr. 28	May 5	
Swiss Confederation 3% 1903	...	76.50%	77.30%	
Swiss Confederation 5% 1923	...	99.20%	99.37%	
Federal Railways A—K 3½%	...	79.00%	79.30%	
Canton Basle-Stadt 5½% 1921	...	100.95%	101.12%	
Canton Fribourg 3% 1892	...	71.87%	71.50%	
SHARES.		Nom.	Apr. 28	May 5
		Fr.	Fr.	Fr.
Swiss Bank Corporation	...	500	647	649
Crédit Suisse	...	500	697	701
Union de Banques Suisses	...	500	552	555
Fabrique Chimique ci-dev. Sandoz	...	1000	3440	3480
Société pour l'Industrie Chimique	...	1000	1985	1963
C. F. Bally S.A.	...	1000	1216	1212
Fabrique de Machines Oerlikon	...	500	672	665
Entreprises Suizse	...	1000	746	770
S.A. Brown Boveri (new)	...	350	337	346
Nestlé & Anglo-Swiss Cond. Mk. Co.	...	200	218	221
Choc. Suisses Peter-Cailler-Köhler	...	100	187	202
Comp. de Navig'n sur le Lac Léman	...	500	540	545

New Chancellor at the Swiss Legation, London

Monsieur LÉON FAIVRE, from Courtemaiche (Jura), who was appointed chancellor in succession to the late Mr. J. W. Sterchi, who died on Sept 20 last, took up his new duties at the Swiss Legation on the 1st of this month.

Monsieur Faivre has previously been at Strasbourg, where he held a similar appointment; he has already a large circle of friends in the London Swiss Colony, having in former years spent some considerable time in this metropolis.

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