

These winter sports

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HOME NEWS



FEDERAL.

THE SWISS CENSUS.

The result of the Swiss census, taken on December 1st, though not yet available in full, is disappointing to those who expected a marked increase of the population. Many villages even show a slight decrease, and the figures show that the depopulation of the mountain valleys is progressing rapidly, except where there are holiday resorts.

Only the large towns are increasing, the list being headed by Zurich, which has now about 250,000 inhabitants, the number having gone up by nearly one-fifth in the last ten years.

AN APPRECIATION.

On the recommendation of the Swiss aeronautical office, the Federal Dept. of Post and Railways has addressed a letter of congratulation together with a cheque of 1,000 francs to M. Hans Schner, chief pilot of the Balaire. This aviator has flown 500,000 kilometres without the slightest accident. It is the first time that such an award has been made in Switzerland.

SWISS AUTOMOBILE SHOW.

The Swiss Automobile Salon, which is to be held in Geneva from March 6th to 15th next, is expected to attract between 100,000 and 150,000 visitors. There will be about 250 exhibitors and they will show probably 70 to 80 different makes of motor-car and commercial vehicle of numerous designs and capacities.

FOREIGN CAPITAL IN SWITZERLAND.

Switzerland is completing a very active financial year. Altogether new capital issues have been three times larger in 1930 than in 1929, the total down to the end of November being £62,000,000, against only £21,600,000 in 1929. Included in these issues have been a number of foreign loans, one being for Chile, a second for Germany, and a third for Belgium, while capital has been raised for two French railways. The interest on these foreign loans has ranged from 4½ to 6 per cent., which rates demonstrate the easy character of the new capital market from the borrower's point of view. Foreign issues in the 11 months amounted to £15,000,000, the largest issues being for Germany and the French Midi Railway. But the most interesting feature of Switzerland's experience in the past year has been the investment in that country of large amounts of foreign capital, some of which went there for safety's sake from countries where capital was, owing to political uncertainties, considered to be insecure. These foreign funds, which come from various sources, helped to swell the amount of Swiss francs available for foreign investments. Holland also has floated more foreign loans than in 1929, but her total capital issues are smaller. While foreign issues increased from £11,767,000 to £19,125,000, domestic issues decreased from £32,742,000 to £22,125,000. The total issues were £41,250,000, a decrease of £3,250,000.

WATCH INDUSTRY.

In view of the selling difficulty experienced in the Swiss watch and clock industry which has reduced the 1930 turnover by about 25 per cent., the industry, it is reported, intends to effect a partial transformation by adapting some of its works to the manufacture of typewriters and calculating machines, which up to now have been principally bought from Germany and America. It is hoped that the Government will protect the industry during the transformation period by the imposition of import duties.

It is reported from La Chaux-de-Fonds that various large watch manufacturers will suffer heavy losses owing to the failure of an important watch and clock importing house at Tokio.

RAILWAY STRIKE SETTLED.

The strike of the staff of the Swiss Dining Car Company, which lasted for one week, has been settled and the service was reopened on Sunday last.

BROADCASTING IN SWITZERLAND.

According to the revised Swiss broadcasting scheme, the new Berne station which is testing

on 403 metres, and the Munchenbuchsee plant, which up to the present has acted for this city, is to be transferred to Geneva. The site of the latter station has been moved to the Plateau of St. Georges, where aerial masts 250 feet high have been erected.

AN UNDESIRABLE.

The Swiss Consulate at Berlin has refused a passport to M. Munzenberg, communist and member of the Reichstag, who was to have addressed a meeting of the "Internationale" at Basle.

FOOTBALL.

At the international match played on the ground of the Grasshopper F.C. in Zurich between Admira F.C. Vienna and Grasshopper F.C. Zurich, the visitors won by four goals to nil.

LOCAL.

ZURICH.

On Tuesday, the 24th December, the 28-year-old butcher Th. Huber, arrived at the Hohlstrasse clinic with five bullet wounds in his body. He told the house surgeon that he had been attacked by his landlord, E. Willi, an Austrian subject, when entering the house. The police were informed and on arriving they found the doors locked. After having forced a door they found the body of a woman, Gertrud Kleiner, on the floor and next to her the landlord Willi with a bullet wound in his head. The latter, still showing signs of life, was transported to the hospital but died the same evening. It is expected that Huber will survive. A preliminary investigation leads to the assumption that the man Willi was a homicidal maniac.

BERNE.

Owing to a skid a motor-car coming from the Kirchenfeld fell over the Kirchenfeld bridge. The driver, a Mr. Thut, estate agent, was killed outright, whilst his passenger, Mr. Egger, was removed to the Insel hospital in a serious condition.

SCHWYZ.

The municipal authorities of Lachen have given their consent to the sale of a plot of ground, measuring some 16,000 square metres, to the Compagnie d'Aviation Michel, a French firm established in Strassbourg, for an aircraft factory. A further area of 70,000 square metres is to be leased to the same company as a flying ground.

BASLE.

M. Karl Joel, Professor of Philosophy at the University of Basle, has tendered his resignation to the cantonal Government. His successor is Dr. Julius Stenzel, at present Professor of Philosophy at the University of Kiel.

A serious accident happened on a level crossing between Pratteln and Muttenz where a train ran into a motor lorry, killing both driver and mechanic of the motor vehicle. The driver of the train was injured.

GENEVA.

The death is reported of Mr. Ad. R. Armleder, doyen of the Geneva hoteliers and proprietor of the Hotel Richmond. The deceased was one of the founders of the Société Suisse des Hoteliers.

A burglary took place at the Swedish Consulate, Boulevard Georges-Favon, where a cash box containing about one thousand francs was stolen. The thief was arrested shortly afterwards and was identified as a former employee at the consulate by the name of Marc Grobet.

The Federal Council has promoted Colonel de Loriot of Geneva to the rank of an army corps commander.

ST. GALL.

According to the result of the recent census the population of the canton St. Gall has decreased by 9,670 persons.

SCHAFFHOUSE.

The population of the canton Schaffhouse on 1st December amounted to 51,227 souls (1920—50,428).

GRAUBUENDEN.

Colonel Schué, instructor of cavalry, has been promoted to the command of the 4th Division.

St. Moritz and Arosa, two of the teams which are to play the British Ice Hockey Association's team which has left London for Switzerland, played a keen match which resulted in St. Moritz winning by one goal to nil.

(Continued on back page.)

NOTES AND GLEANINGS.

By KYBURG.

By the time our Readers are enjoying their Swiss Observer, 1930 will belong to History.

Few there are, I fear, who will regret the passing of a year of universal tribulation, economic suffering and hardship, but as the new year progresses and things are getting better again, as we all hope they will, and as the memory of 1930 becomes less clearly defined in our minds, the hard times will be forgotten by most and we shall remember only the good things which that year brought us.

And of course, there were quite a number of really good things, even in 1930. There were those days of glorious spring when it felt good to be alive, there were the days of summer and those wonderful and very long evenings which made it possible for most of us to go to bed and to arise again in daylight almost.

There are the achievements of woman in a variety of new fields: aviation and marksmanship, to name only two.

There were happy people who had babies born to them, always a most wonderful event. There are others who made good in this or that enterprise; in short, while 1930 will belong to the "dark years," it brought us, all the same, some good things too.

And for those good things, let us be grateful!

Now we are looking forward to the New Year. Again we are full of hope, full of enthusiasm, sure in ourselves that this New Year must be better in every respect, than the one just gone.

We all hope so. We pray that it may be so. But we will search our hearts too and see whether, perhaps, some of the expected and hoped for salvation from our present ills ought not to come from within ourselves!

And so, wishing all my Readers a

VERY HAPPY AND PROSPEROUS
NEW YEAR!

I will proceed with my weekly task.

These Winter Sports

I can't quite rid myself of that feeling of revelry, brought about, I presume, by eating Turkey! Again and again I find my thoughts wandering and every now and then I find myself looking at some beautiful postcard depicting Swiss Winter Sports Scenery. I think K. R. G. Browne and Alfred Leete of the *Evening News* must have been feeling the same when they produced the following:

At this time of year the advertisement pages of those glossy periodicals which keep me informed of the activities of my betters are studded with photographs of persons in peculiar and not frightfully becoming raiment.

They are never on view at any other season—these comely young men in clothes such as might be worn by an engine-driver with a weakness for deep-sea diving; these ravishing young women in garments that appear to have begun life as plus-fours and repented too late.

Almost every one of these dazzling creatures is equipped with a spiked stick, of the kind employed by seedy men in ragged trousers to gather cigarette-ends from gutters; and their appearance in our midst is an infallible indication that the Winter Sports season is at hand.

Very soon the Best People will be migrating in chattering herds to Switzerland, where their arrival will coincide with a sharp rise in the cost of Swiss living. In that frigid and knobby corner of Europe, where the height of the mountains is equalled only by the length of the visitors' bills, they will engage intrepidly in such exotic pastimes as snowballing, snowman-building, and sliding in all directions on the ice thoughtfully provided by Nature and/or the management. Meanwhile those who cannot afford to make the trip this year will remain at home, saying in a loud voice that Switzerland and Clapham Common are practically indistinguishable nowadays. Although I look marvellous in a woolly muffler, I have never actually done any Winter Sporting myself. But I have read so much about it, and have studied so many photographs of Winter Sportsmen in every conceivable and incredible attitude, that I feel I could acquit myself quite creditably if ever I got the chance.

Except, perhaps, on skis. Skis (this for the benefit of such as imagine them to be a small Swiss species of pleasant) are long, narrow planks, curved upward at the prow and designed to be affixed to the soles of the feet.

The theory is that a man so shod will never be at a loss for a toothpick and can traverse a Swiss snowscape more rapidly than one wearing gumboots or carpet slippers.

Theoretically this may be so; but I suspect that it is somewhat less simple than it sounds, and that the embryo Winter Sportsman would do well to rehearse the motions privily at home before mingling with those who were born, so to speak, with silver skis in their mouths.

Judging by the photographs, a ski-ster who has taken a bad toss bears a strong resemblance to one of those wire puzzles found in Christmas crackers and must be nearly as hard to unravel. In fact, I should say that it is considerably easier for the novice to commit felo-de-se by this method than for a rich man to pass through the eye of a camel.

My own taste, therefore, inclines rather towards tobogganing, which seems to be unskilled labour of the simplest type. At least, I take it that any man weighing more than two stone and having some slight knowledge of the Law of Gravity can lie on his stomach on a wooden tray and slide down a mountain.

But the snag here, no doubt, is that a toboggan is more easily started than stopped. More than one inexperienced solo tobogganist, I expect, has left Switzerland in a hurry and a cloud of snow without paying his hotel bill.

There is another and larger brand of toboggan, I understand, which is usually manned by a representative selection of the aristocracy and travels down a specially prepared track that makes the descent to Avenus look like a one-in-two up-gradient. I gather that there is no more stirring spectacle than one of these toboggans in full cry, shedding here an earl and there a viscountess, jettisoning an occasional knight, flinging a baroness or two into the next cantonment, and eventually bringing the mad frolic to a close by wrapping itself round a tree.

I should imagine that mixed tobogganing of this kind is very stimulating to the gentler emotions and liable to produce repercussions at St. Margarets, Westminster. Even a Modern Girl is apt to feel tender towards a man in whose company she has plunged into a crevasse or impinged against an Alp. And as the man is probably feeling pretty tender, too, the upshot or outcome is almost a foregone conclusion.

Indeed there would seem to be something in the very air of Switzerland that blunts the wits and induces a tendency to wedlock, judging by the number of Society Romances that blossom there every season.

Apart from those that are brought on by toboggan accidents, the majority, I fancy, blossom after dark, because comparatively few girls look their best in voluminous serge trousers and semi-football boots. If Cleopatra had been obliged to wear the uniform of a Winter Sportsman, she would never have gained more than a purely local reputation.

But at night, when the moon has risen behind the Rölsterhorn and the plaintive yodel of the chamois echoes from crag to crag of the towering Röttenalp; when the guttural yelp of the saxophone blends with the faint cries of those visitors who have just received their bills—then it is that He comes all over sheepish and offers Her a ninety-nine years' lease of the back seat of his toboggan.

And She, bearing her mother's advice in mind, blushes hurriedly and says "Yes" with such rapidity and vehemence that it sounds like a tyre-burst.

Ah (as we oldsters say) me! All this, of course, is pure conjecture on my part, inasmuch as I have never been nearer to the Matterhorn than the seaward end of Worthing Pier.

But when my ship comes in, I intend to pop across to Switzerland and shake an enthusiastic ski, partly because I need the exercise, partly because I have always liked condensed milk, and partly because I long to see my muffer in the weekly papers: "Snapped In The Saddling-Enclosure At St. Moritz. From Left to Right: Sir Hugo Watt-Hoe, Miss Anaesthesia Yammering, Captain 'Bosh' Fotheringhamptonson, Lady Turnham-Greene and . . ."

Not a very unreasonable ambition, I think.

Putting the Blue in Stilton

That the consumption of cheese in Switzerland amounts to about 23 lbs. per head of the population, as well as a few other interesting bits of "cheesy information" are contained in the next article, culled from the *Manchester Evening Chronicle*, 5th December:

There are a good many jokes about cheese, most of which are rather more ancient than the cheese to which they refer. Here are a number of interesting facts about cheese gleaned from a recently-issued report of the Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries, which you may or may not have heard before.

Did you know that there is a cheese known as the Dunlop, not because of its resilience and hard-wearing properties, but because it is made at the village of Dunlop in Scotland?



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Did you know that the "cannon ball" cheese, the Dutch Edam, is scraped while rotating on a machine, that it is washed in hot water and that it gets its beautiful red polish through being stained and dipped momentarily in hot paraffin wax?

The holes in Gruyere cheese are not made by mice or the tester's knife. They are brought about by bacteriological action during ripening, and the holes in a perfect cheese are about one inch in diameter and one to three inches apart. Gruyere cheese incidentally are about six inches thick, and can be anything up to four feet in diameter or 220lb. in weight.

Gorgonzola is the most popular blue-veined cheese—and the subject of most jokes. The ripening process in its home in Lombardy is carried out by specialist ripeners, who carry off the cheese when it is quite young—as soon as it has assumed its shape. In their retreats in hillside caves, they drysalt it, perforate it to admit air and encourage the growth of the characteristic blue mould.

It takes about three months to train a really good Gorgonzola.

Our English Stilton, the most popular of the home-produced blue-veined cheese, takes about four to six months to ripen fully. For export each cheese is packed in a tin made to measure, as its shape is apt to be a little irregular. Incidentally most cheese are well bandaged in their youth in order to preserve their figure, which, in the case of the best cheese, is slightly more rotund at the waist than at either top or bottom.

But the most curious method of packing cheese is surely that adopted in the Netherlands for Gouda cheese for export to foreign countries, and in Italy with the Provoloni, for here the mature cheese are given a bladder covering, at first sight indistinguishable, which protects the cheese from insects and the like, and imparts no objectionable flavour.

In this country we eat about 9.5lb. of cheese per head of the population. In Switzerland the consumption is about 23lb., and in Canada 3lb.

The English consumption represents about 3,725,000 cwt., but of this 2,868,000 cwt. is imported, or 77 per cent., which is a great pity, for English Cheddar and Cheshire are models for the whole world in cheesemaking, while Lancashire cheese is pre-eminent for its toasting qualities, the ripe cheese melting down very easily into a smooth, custard-like substance, with a rich and appetising appearance.

I think I will leave it at that, because nobody, I think, is particularly interested in any more "food" news just now and I don't know anything else to write about myself, my grey matter still feeling somewhat sluggish!

Also, Guets Nöijaahr!

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