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HOME NEWS

On Monday last, Federal Councillor Motta delivered at the graveside the following speech, in honour of the late Minister G. Carlin:—

" Avant que la terre maternelle n'ait accueilli dans son sein le corps de l'homme qui lui est revenu de la terre étrangère, je voudrais remplir ici un pénible devoir: Au nom du Conseil fédéral et au nom du peuple suisse tout entier, j'envoie à celui qui fut parmi nous le ministre Gaston Carlin, le doyen de notre corps diplomatique, l'hommage de notre gratitude et notre dernier adieu.

Gaston Carlin venait de quitter la Haye; il venait à peine de présenter ses lettres de créance au président du Reich allemand: ses débuts à Berlin se faisaient dans une atmosphère réconfortante de sympathie; il jouissait de la pleine confiance du Conseil fédéral et du gouvernement allemand. Que sa veuve, si digne et si malheureuse, que ses filles, gracieux rayons dans son existence, si chéries par leur père, que tous ses parents veuillent bien accepter l'assurance que leur peine et leur deuil sont aussi les nôtres.

Gaston Carlin était né pour la diplomatie. Aussi, à côté des missions permanentes qu'il eut à remplir, le Conseil fédéral lui confia-t-il à plusieurs reprises des missions spéciales très délicates et importantes dans les conférences et les congrès internationaux.

La diplomatie est un art difficile. Le talent et el le savoir à eux seuls ne suffisent pas. Il faut encore une expérience consommée des choses et des hommes, même les qualités les plus brillantes peuvent y devenir un danger. Le tact, c'est le don souverain. Or, le tact est un don qui ne court pas les rues; il dépend en partie des traditions de famille et d'éducation; il suppose une possession parfaite des matières à traiter, l'agrément personnel, la maîtrise absolue de soi-même, le sens de la limite, la capacité de distinguer les nuances et de comprendre à demi mot, l'habileté à saisir le moment opportun pour battre en retraite ou pour déclencher une offensive.

Gaston Carlin connaissait son art. Il avait à un degré supérieur la vertu du travail. Il avait l'esprit pénétrant, précis et clair du juriste; il possédait la culture étendue de l'homme qui a bu aux sources de plusieurs civilisations et de leurs littératures. Son horizon intellectuel s'était élargi au contact de peuples très différents. Il se sentait attiré par le calme, l'esprit de suite et le bon sens infaillible des races anglo-saxonnes. Il avait appris que la diplomatie d'un petit Etat comme le nôtre ne peut pas s'appuyer sur la force matérielle; elle doit en imposer, par conséquent, par sa valeur intrinsèque et sa probité. Mais, avant tout, Gaston Carlin était un patriote. Au-dessus de toutes les autres préoccupations il plaçait la dignité et l'indépendance du pays. Le citoyen auquel était échu l'honneur de représenter son Etat à l'étranger était à ses yeux le témoin de la patrie. Certaines polémiques que sa nomination récente au poste de Berlin avait fait surgir, lui semblèrent et étaient effectivement bien injustes; il en fut affecté, mais n'y prit garde. L'homme qui tient un rôle élevé dans la vie de l'Etat doit savoir accepter sans amertume toutes les critiques. Sa devise restera toujours: ' Bien faire et laisser dire.'

Dormez en paix, mort vénéré. Reposez dans la miséricorde de Dieu avec la certitude du devoir accompli. Veillez sur les destinées de notre patrie. La Suisse, mère commune, s'incline devant votre tombeau, car vous l'avez servie fidèlement comme un des meilleurs de ses enfants."

* * *

The Swiss Government has concluded an agreement with the Norwegian Government, mutually cancelling the visa demand for passports of travellers other than those in search of employment. The agreement comes into operation to-day, the 1st of July, 1922.

* * *

M. Lakhowsky, engineer, of Paris, has commenced an action in the Federal Supreme Court against the Swiss Confederation.

Plaintiff alleges breach of contract in connection with the chartering of vessels for the Swiss Government during and after the Great War. He claims 32 million francs as damages and interest for non-fulfilment of the contract entered into with him. Indirectly this action arises out of the disastrous "Union maritime" affair, which has been the subject of so many heated passages in the Federal Chambers and in the Swiss press.

* * *

That the chemical industry of Basle has suffered acutely in consequence of the universal trade depression is evident from the following export figures pertaining to colours and aniline dyes, which are published by the Basle Chamber of Commerce:—

1913	1919	1920	1921
	(In million francs.)		
28.9	135.8	211	67

* * *

The representatives of twenty Luganese Societies met recently and strongly condemned the vile act of a few individuals who threw into the Lake of Lugano a wreath, placed at the foot of the William Tell monument by a number of Italian societies from Varese who were passing through Lugano. They further urged the communal authorities to employ every means for tracing and punishing the perpetrators.

* * *

Lightning struck a herd of cattle on an Alp above Lungern which had sought shelter during a thunderstorm beneath a huge pine tree.

The "Senn" having descended to the valley for the night, only discovered next morning the havoc wrought among his charge, when he found six valuable cows dead.

* * *

Accompanied by the alpine guide Walter Risch, Messrs. Gyger and Katzer, from St. Moritz, accomplished this season's first ascent of the Piz Bernina, 4,055 metres, under perfect weather conditions.

* * *

The funicular leading to the "Reichenbach-Fälle" in the Aareschlucht, which has been lying idle ever since the

outbreak of the European War, has recently been overhauled and will resume traffic to-day.

* * *

Charles Bonvin (Valaisan), the author of numerous confidence tricks, has just been sentenced to four years' imprisonment by the Criminal Court at Nyon.

He posed as the Director of an imaginary "Comptoir intermédiaire de la Société des Nations" and succeeded in fleecing quite a number of "enthusiasts" or greenhorns at Berne and Zurich.

HERE AND THERE.

By J. H. Corthesy.

One of the results of the war has been the impetus given to flying. Men now compete very well with the birds, and as every day brings forward new developments in this art, birds will soon be outdone in their own element. Rising vertically in the air is a performance few of them can accomplish, and while Mr. Louis Brennan is still working very hard on his model helicopter, the Americans have not been slow in showing that the thing can be done. In fact, successful trials of a helicopter have, it is announced, been carried out in the environs of Washington in the presence of experts of the United States Navy Department by Mr. Henry Berliner, its inventor. The machine has the appearance of an aeroplane, except that on either side towards the front there are two lifting propellers, while the forward motion is secured by a tilting propeller in the rear of the fuselage. The machine was capable of rising and descending vertically. It did so a few feet, and also remained poised in the air, after which it circled around.

This new feature in aeroplanes is of immense importance, and although in this as in every other sphere of science "know-all" detractors declared it impossible of realization, it is probable that the British "air" departments were awaiting its practical development in order to satisfy, at a later period, the carping critics of the present means available for the defence of the British Isles, means insufficient as compared with the French air force of 220 squadrons.

The direct-rising aeroplanes would naturally possess obvious advantages. Danger in landing would, for example, be considerably lessened, which is of interest, especially in mountainous countries like Switzerland.

* * *

After the heat wave the cold one. Chimneys again pour forth some of their poisonous and destructive fumes. Things are not so bad now as they will be in the autumn, when the remarks of Mr. Stephen Leacock—another Mark Twain—will be opportune: "London people are a little sensitive on the point and flatter their atmosphere by calling it a fog; but it is not; it is soup. . . . One night about four o'clock in the afternoon I saw the sun distinctly appear through the clouds. . . . In practice daylight is but little used. Electric lights are burned. . . . This . . . is called Daylight Saving."

Private chimneys, says a recent official report, produce five-sixth of the total smoke. Industrial chimneys provide the other sixth. Now, if for a given amount of heat the relative costs are 12/9 for electricity, 3s. for gas, and tenpence for an open fire grate, using coal, it is evident that the direct use of coal is the cheapest method of heating, the method which will retain its field for quite a long time to come, irrespective of its inherent present wastefulness through incomplete combustion.

Waste, however, can be cured, and we hear of new legislation on the subject. Anyway, "Brighter London" is asking to be able to partake of its own share of sunshine.

* * *

With the heavens enriched by the appearance of a new double star, discovered by Dr. Plaskett, a star of a mass one hundred times larger than that of our sun, and whose light has taken ten thousand years to reach us, and Mars being at a point nearest to the Earth, the astronomers have their attention much divided. Ingenuity is displayed on various ways to find out whether our near neighbour planet is inhabited by human beings. If the new telescopes, now being built both in France and America, answer their purposes, the confirmation of a great hope would add to our interest in the Universe.

Really, there is no reason to think that the Earth alone has the privilege of being inhabited by human beings.

* * *

If any language is likely to become universal it is certainly English, for it is daily gaining ground. The Bavarian Parliament has decided to make the learning of English compulsory throughout the Middle Schools of the country, and to make French optional.

THE GRASSHOPPER ROWING CLUB AND HENLEY REGATTA.

July 5th—8th.

The main body of the Grasshopper Crew duly arrived at Victoria Station on Sunday last at 3.55 p.m. and were received at the station by Messrs. Georges Dimier, P. F. Boehringer and Henry Senn.

After partaking of a meat tea at the Union Helvetia Club, offered by Mr. Dimier, our sportsmen-compatriots took train at Paddington for Henley, where they are staying at the Catherine Wheel Hotel, as mentioned previously.

The spokesman of the crew, Dr. R. Bosshard, would not be drawn into giving any prognostics, nor would other members of the crew, they simply stated that they were proud of being able to represent Switzerland for the first time at so important a meeting as Henley, and that they would all try to do their best in the strenuous contests which they will have to face in the coming week.

We learn from Henley this morning that the crews are daily practising on the Thames, in the morning from 10 to 12, and in the afternoon from 3 to 5 o'clock.

Once more we wish our plucky compatriots the best of luck, and trust that our appeals for a strong attendance at Henley by the members of the Swiss Colony, will not have been made in vain.

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