

Zeitschrift: The Swiss observer : the journal of the Federation of Swiss Societies in the UK

Herausgeber: Federation of Swiss Societies in the United Kingdom

Band: - (1922)

Heft: 65

Rubrik: Home news

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Download PDF: 13.08.2025

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The Swiss Observer

Telegrams: FREPRINCO, LONDON.

Published weekly at
21, GARLICK HILL, E.C. 4.

Telephone: CITY 4603.

No. 65

LONDON, SEPTEMBER 2, 1922.

PRICE 3D.

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HOME NEWS

THE FEDERAL RHINE NAVIGATION COMMISSION IN STRASBOURG.

A rumour had gained currency on Wednesday last that Federal Councillor M. Motta, the leader of the Federal Parliamentary Commission which was returning from Strasbourg by train, had been the victim of a murderous attack.

The cause for the alarming news was a stone thrown by mischievous children against the train which conveyed the Swiss delegation from Strasbourg to Mulhouse. The stone smashed the window of the compartment in which M. Motta and other Councillors were seated, happily without causing any injury to the occupants. The incident is not to be regarded as the outcome of any untoward demonstration against the Swiss Delegation, as was at first reported.

The following speeches were made at a banquet provided by the Strasbourg authorities to the Swiss Parliamentary Commission.

M. Peirottes, Mayor of Strasbourg, welcomed the guests in the name of the municipal authorities and the population of Strasbourg. Recalling the century-old good relations which had subsisted between Switzerland and Alsace, M. Peirottes continued:

"Je suis heureux, que vous puissiez vous convaincre vous-mêmes des efforts que nous avons faits dans l'intérêt de la généralité, et de nos préparatifs pour procurer à la navigation suisse toutes les facilités dont elle a besoin. La présence de chalands suisses dans notre port vous en est la meilleure garantie."

The Mayor of Strasbourg also extended special greetings to the members of the Société Suisse de Remorquage, pointing out that Alsatian tradition had always recognised that the sun shines for everybody and that—

"aussi les Strasbourgeois ne seront-ils jamais jaloux des avantages économiques que d'autres pays peuvent réaliser, et, dans la mesure de leurs moyens, ils s'efforceront toujours de leur accorder une collaboration efficace. Soyez donc assurés, messieurs, que la navigation française et la direction du port s'efforceront autant que possible d'être utiles à la navigation suisse, et qu'il ne manquera pas de s'établir une collaboration basée sur la confiance entre le port de Bâle et celui de Strasbourg, entre la navigation suisse et la navigation française..."

Comme Etats riverains du Rhin, nos deux pays ont des intérêts communs. Soyez sûrs qu'ici personne ne l'oublie ni ne l'oubliera, Messieurs, je vide mon verre à la prospérité de la noble république helvétique, des membres des commissions du Conseil national, et du Conseil des Etats et de leur honoraire président!"

After heartily thanking the French authorities for the splendid reception which had been accorded to his Commission, M. Motta added:

"La question du Rhin émeut le peuple suisse dans ses profondeurs. La liberté du Rhin est un postulat de la politique suisse et elle est profondément enracinée dans la conscience populaire. La Suisse, qui habite un pays sans côtes et qui, pendant la guerre, a profondément senti sa dépendance économique, veut avoir un accès à la mer. C'est pourquoi le futur régime international du Rhin devra en tout état de cause garantir la liberté du fleuve historique.

"C'est dans cette conviction que le Conseil fédéral a adhéré au compromis de Strasbourg. L'Assemblée fédérale aura à prendre position au sujet de son attitude et de sa politique. Les deesses de Bâle et de Strasbourg sont d'ailleurs non pas opposées, mais solidaires. Les divergences présentes, nous chercherons à les aplanir; les intérêts communs, nous nous en servirons pour fortifier notre amitié traditionnelle."

M. Motta terminated his address with the following words:

"Alsaciens et Suisses aiment avant tout la liberté. Les Zuricois qui naviguaient jusqu'à Strasbourg, apportèrent une fois au XV^e siècle, une soupe chaude et dirent: — La soupe est encore chaude. La distance est donc courte et l'aide réciproque est possible. — Aujourd'hui, nous n'apportons pas de soupe, mais la vieille et chaude amitié est restée la même. Vivent la France, l'Alsace et Strasbourg!"

* * *

The Swiss Chamber of Commerce in France will again represent Swiss industry and commerce at the Lyons Fair, which is fixed to take place from October 1st to 15th.

The Chamber undertakes, free of charge, the representation of those of its members who do not put in a personal appearance at the Fair. Its staff further answers any enquiry and gives exhaustive information to any visitor to the Fair desirous of receiving information on Swiss trade.

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The Swiss telegraph authorities contemplate laying a direct telephone cable between Basle and Brussels, via Nancy.

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During the first half of August 18,326 tourists sojourned in the Grisons, of whom 11,707 were Swiss, 1,318 Dutch, 1,242 British, 1,037 French and Belgian, 977 American, 859 Austrian and German, 411 Italian, 176 Spanish and Portuguese, 108 Scandinavian, 75 Russian and Polish, 66 Hungarian and Tschechian, 42 Balkanese, and 154 nationals of other states.

* * *

Commenting on the reimbursements claimed by the Federal Military Department from the Cantons of Zürich and Basle for military aid rendered during the Génral Strike of 1919, the *Glarner Nachrichten* says:

"... Im Jahre 1864 musste die Eidgenossenschaft nach dem Handgemenge von Chantepoulet im Kanton Genf einschreiten, und sie nahm damals die gesamten Kosten im Betrage von 433,000 Fr. auf sich. Was 1856 für Neuenburg, 1864 für Genf und 1893 für den Kanton Tessin recht war, das sollte im Jahre 1922 auch für die Kantone Zürich und Baselstadt recht und billig sein."

It is estimated that this year's table fruit crop from the whole of Switzerland will yield a surplus of 8,000 wagons for export, while the harvest of apples and pears for cider-making will exceed the needs of the home market by 15,000 wagons.

The seemingly ever-open farmyard cesspools have claimed two further child victims: in Thunstetten a little boy aged two, and in Bütschwil a girl of four years.

In a fit of frenzy Fulgenzio Borla (35), a peasant of Medeglia (Tessin), murdered three of his young children in their sleep by cutting their throats with a razor. He then took a rifle and killed his uncle, afterwards turning the weapon upon himself and inflicting a serious head wound. Two other of his children escaped the murderer's hand, one of them by taking to flight, and the other through having been taken in by neighbours to sleep.

Borla, who has been a widower for about two years, has always been an industrious worker, but for some time past has shown signs of mental derangement, due, it is stated, to the refusal of his sister-in-law to become his wife. When charged with the crime, he declared that his intention was to reduce the number of his children, whom he considered the obstacle to his marriage plans.

The *St. Galler Tagblatt* is pointedly reminded by the Zürich Press that it shows little neighbourly love and much thinly veiled egoism by publishing in its columns the following criticism shortly after St. Gall herself had, with much ostentation, courted the presence of Federal Councillors on the occasion of the recent Federal Gymnastic Festival:—

"Zwei Herren Bundesräte werden als Vertreter entsandt an das demnächstige internationale Flugmeeting in Zürich. Ohne Anwesenheit von Bundesräten, ersichtlich, geht es einfach nicht mehr. Jegliches Ding muss offiziell sein, und ganz und gar offiziell ist es erst, wenn ein Bundesrat dabei ist, mindestens einer, besser zwei. Dann gibt es das Höchste: einen offiziellen Tag. Uns erbarmen diese abgehetzen Wanderleute, die von Fest zu Fest, von Tagung zu Tagung ziehen und sprechen, sprechen, sprechen. Sie haben sicher sonst schon gar viel zu tun — die Zeiten sind darnach —; sind sie als Dekorationsstücke an allen Ecken und Enden tatsächlich unerlässlich? Ist es für das Vaterland nötig? Für die internationale Welt? Oder ist man ganz einfach in einen Unfug und in eine modische Maschinerie hineingeraten? . . ."

The final accounts of the 23rd Eidgenössische Sängerfest, which was held in Lucerne, show a net profit of 153,000 frs.

Of this amount 10,000 frs. have been allocated for special prizes of honour for the next Federal Glee Festival, and 18,000 frs. have been distributed as bonuses to societies and persons whose services merited special recognition.

The newly founded Orchestergesellschaft receives a subsidy of 15,000 frs.; 20,000 frs. will be handed over to benevolent institutions, while the residue of 90,000 frs. is shared in equal amounts of 30,000 frs. by the three Lucerne societies who bore the financial risks and contributed to the organisation of this successful festival.

Alpinism.

The Swiss Alpine Club, which will hold its annual General Meeting on September 2nd and 3rd at Zermatt, is now composed of 76 sections, with a total members' roll of 21,695.

The severe economic crisis has also impressed its mark on this splendid organisation, resignations from the

club attaining an unprecedentedly high number, while new admissions only registered 224 during the past year.

A brighter aspect, however, is shewn by the financial accounts for 1921, the revenue of 184,961 frs. being in excess of the expenditure by 8,609 frs., whereas 1920 showed a clear loss of 44,857 frs.

Worthy of particular mention is the effort of the Swiss Alpine Club to recruit and maintain an efficient and thoroughly reliable corps of 700 alpine guides, towards whose accident insurance premiums the S.A.C. alone contributes nearly 50%. Splendid service has been rendered by these devoted and fearless champions of the mountains to many an alpinist in danger and distress, fully justifying the financial sacrifices which are made on their behalf and amply vindicating the trust which is reposed in these gallant men.

The 89 huts of the Swiss Alpine Club gave shelter to 44,233 climbers during the year 1921, 36% of whom were S.A.C. members.

In the Grison and Tessin Alps the S.A.C. have erected and maintain 26 of these welcome refuges, in the Bernese Alps 22, in the Valais Alps 17, the Uri, Schwyz and Unterwalden Alps 14, and in the Glarus, Appenzell and St. Gall Alps 10.

OBITUARY.

The Swiss Hotel world has sustained a serious loss through the death of Mr. J. V. Dietschy, the owner of the Salinenhotel-im-Park, Rheinfelden, who succumbed to an insidious cancer disease in his 75th year.

The development of Rheinfelden as a curative bathing resort is largely due to his initiative and enterprise, which development he directed most disinterestedly for over 40 years. The deceased did not, however, localise his efforts to Rheinfelden; he took a leading part in the furtherance and perfecting of the Swiss hotel industry in general and he was the prime mover in promoting a combined effort to effectively propagate Swiss health and bathing resorts far beyond Switzerland's borders. This effort culminated in the publication of an extremely useful and well edited work, which appeared in the Dutch, English and French languages, dealing informatively with Swiss watering places and rendering useful guidance to the medical profession abroad.

Ex-Grand Councillor M. Adolf Boss, director of the Hotel Adler in Grindelwald, died last week at the age of 73.

He was the last survivor of the nine brothers of the well-known Boss family of the Grindelwald "Bären."

EXTRACTS FROM SWISS PAPERS.

La fresque de Bieler à l'hôtel de ville du Locle.—Hier, jeudi 17 août, un étrange branle-bas se faisait sur les échafaudages dressés contre la façade est de l'Hôtel de Ville du Locle. Un sapin, tout enguirlandé de serpentins, apparaissait bientôt sur l'immense toit. Des éclats de voix joyeux s'entendaient, et bientôt le sympathique claquement d'un bouchon hors du col épais d'une bouteille: Ernest Bieler, et ses quatre aides, fêtaient l'achèvement d'une fresque immense, — la plus grande de Suisse sur une seule muraille, — commencée le 27 juin, et menée avec tant de hardiesse, de sûreté et de joie que six semaines plus tard on l'inaugurait, ainsi, modestement.

L'Hôtel de Ville du Locle, commencé avant la guerre, n'a pu être achevé selon les plans primitifs, fort luxueux, que grâce à l'opiniâtreté et au civisme de la petite cité. C'est un vaste bâtiment qui rappelle un peu l'Hôtel de Ville de Lucerne: façades inspirées de la Renaissance et surmontées d'un vaste toit paysan. N'était une flèche, il s'harmoniseraient assez bien à l'architecture ambiante.