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# The Swiss Observer

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## HOME NEWS

Federal Councillor Motta has been received by the British Prime Minister at his villa in Genoa.

During conversation Mr. Lloyd George did not conceal the fact that he attaches great importance to obtaining the agreement of neutral countries, particularly that of Switzerland, with regard to his Russian plans.

\* \* \*

The French Government has remitted £50,000 to the League of Nations as the contribution of France for combating typhus in Poland.

\* \* \*

Following the example of the Bernese Government, the cantonal Governments of Vaud and Glarus have also prohibited automobile traffic on Sundays between the hours of 1 and 6.30 p.m.

\* \* \*

The Catholic clergy of Uri, several members of which have been scholars at Milan of the present Pope Pius XI, have presented to His Holiness an elaborate writing table-set made of St. Gothard marble.

\* \* \*

Thirty aviation meetings were held in Switzerland in the course of 1921. Pilots of privately owned aeroplanes carried out 4,900 journeys, conveying 6,600 passengers to their destination, without a single accident or mishap having to be registered.

It is the intention of the Ad Astra Company at Zurich to establish a regular air service Nuremberg-Zurich-Geneva for passengers, mails and parcels, which line it is hoped to extend later from Geneva to Lyons, Marseilles, Toulouse and Rabat, and from Nuremberg to Berlin and Riga. The Federal Air Office and the Federal Posts would be willing to subsidise the enterprise to the extent of some 50,000 frs. if the promoters succeed in establishing the projected service.

\* \* \*

For the murder of Mrs. Baenziger, from Oberegg (Appenzell), her husband and a young woman named Bertha Bischoff were sentenced to imprisonment for life in December, 1912.

After having served nearly ten years of the sentences passed upon them, the woman now confesses that she committed the murder without the husband having been an accessory to the crime.

The latter has constantly asserted his innocence, and a new trial of the case has now been ordered by the Court.

\* \* \*

After having been entombed for nearly two days and two nights in a subterranean gallery in course of construction at Klosters, for the Grisons Hydraulic Power Company, seven men out of a working party of ten were successfully brought out to daylight again. The other three unhappy victims were crushed on the spot by the masses of rock and earth which had suddenly given way without the slightest warning.

Forty-three hours of frantic and difficult mining work were needed to pierce the 5 metres of rock which imprisoned the seven survivors; fortunately for them, a small pipe running from the gallery to the surface remained intact, and thus afforded means for communicating, during the many hours of suspense, to the imperilled men the encouraging news that efforts for their liberation were progressing, while at the same time also serving for the passing of nourishment for the men underground.

Although greatly exhausted from lack of sleep and numbed by the cold water which slowly but incessantly accumulated in the cavity, the rescued men were otherwise uninjured when at last they were extricated from the death trap one by one.

\* \* \*

The meat supply for consumption in Switzerland during 1921 absorbed nearly one million animals, viz., 174,000 bulls and cows, 305,000 calves, 116,000 sheep and goats, 327,000 pigs, etc.; in addition, 15 million kilos of meat and 3 million kilos of fish, poultry and game were imported from abroad.

\* \* \*

To the Swiss imports, which totalled 2,296 million francs for the year 1921, Europe contributed 1,838, America 512, Africa 73, Asia 57, and Australia 16 million francs.

Of the European countries exporting to Switzerland, Germany heads the list with 440 million francs, then follow France with 321, Italy with 200, Great Britain with 156, and Spain with 64 millions.

Swiss exports for the same year amounted to 2,140 million francs; of these Europe took for 1,249 millions, America for 703, Asia for 136, Africa for 34, and Australia for 18 millions.

Switzerland's best customer proved to be Great Britain, who imported Swiss goods to the tune of 349 million francs, France following with 239, Germany with 195, Austria with 88, Italy with 74, and Spain with 61 millions.

The number of applications for import permission addressed to the Swiss authorities totalled 164,000, about 51,000 of which were refused; the fees taken for import licenses which were granted amounted to 1,752,105 frs.

The exact figures dealing with transportation to and through Switzerland of foreign military and refugees during the years of 1915 to 1921 have now been definitely established, and show a grand total of 863,930 persons.

277,284 officers and men were carried by Swiss railways, 61,853 of whom were interned in Switzerland. Of these, 34,395 were French, 3,633 Belgian, 4,030 British, and 19,795 German.

Transports of wounded soldiers totalled 47,229 for Entente Powers, and 26,663 for the Central Powers.

108,867 prisoners of war released after the Armistice also passed through Switzerland to their respective countries.

Members of the civil population of the nations then at war, who were repatriated and for that purpose had to pass through Switzerland, numbered 568,646, the greatest proportion of these, 483,138, belonging to the North of France.

\* \* \*

Eggs laid on a farm near London on Saturday morning last were, by the new air service via Paris, delivered at a poultry farm in the neighbourhood of Lausanne (450 miles from London) at 4 o'clock the same afternoon, and placed under a hen ready for sitting.

\* \* \*

The Basle Samples Fair closed its doors on Tuesday afternoon. There are indications that this year's results, when finally established, will show a considerable improvement on last year's.

Official figures and details will be published as soon as they become available.

\* \* \*

The First of May celebrations passed off throughout Switzerland without any untoward incidents.

\* \* \*

The jury of experts, nominated to select two designs for the new silver coin of 5 francs from the 102 works submitted by 21 artists who were invited to compete for the limited second contest, have chosen the designs of Paul Burckhardt (Zurich) and Maurice Sarkisoff (Geneva).

Both models show in varying execution on the obverse the head of an ancient Swiss shepherd, and on the reverse the escutcheons of the Swiss cantons.

The Federal Council will now have to pronounce for one or the other of the two models, both of which are considered as equal and of the highest merit by the experts.

\* \* \*

A correspondent of the *Engadiner Post* does not mince matters in exposing the growing tendency of his countrymen to make "Valutareisen" to adjacent countries with miserably deflated currencies. He writes:—

"Wer Geld hat, geht jetzt in die Ferien, und bis Ostern wird St. Moritz leer sein, und die stille, tote Saison das Regiment führen. Wohin in die Ferien? Nach Weggis Lugano, Montreux? O, nein! Valutaferien werden gemacht, über die wir letzten Sommer so viel geschimpft haben, weil keine Schweizer heraufkamen, sondern über den Rhein wanderten. Jetzt macht man's selber so. Kannst aber nichts ausrichten. Alles Predigen hilft nichts, jeder wird jetzt nach seiner Fassung selig. Macht nur so weiter, bis uns alle noch der T . . . oder der Betreibungsbeamte holt, dann schimpfen wir wieder wacker über die einfältigen Schweizer, die keine Solidarität kennen und ihr Geld ins Ausland tragen!"

\* \* \*

It is highly satisfactory to record that the Fifth Auslandschweizertag, held in Basle on Monday, April 24th, under the auspices of the Nouvelle Société Helvétique, has been attended by unquestionable success, mainly due to the excellent organisation which lay in the hands of Messrs.

Dr. W. Meile, H. Stucki, A. Kurer, Dr. E. Martz, Dr. E. Steuri and Robert de Traz.

Nearly 200 compatriots were present at the opening ceremony at 10 a.m. in the Grand Conference Hall of the Basle Fair, about which initial function and subsequent events of the day our readers will gain comprehensive information from Dr. H. Matthey's report in the *Bulletin Officiel de la Foire Suisse d'Echantillons*:—

La Journée des Suisses à l'Etranger a été l'une des plus importantes manifestations de la Foire nationale. L'ampleur de l'organisation, l'intérêt croissant des autorités fédérales et du Conseil d'Etat de Bâle-Ville, représenté par MM. Im Hof et Hauser, la présence de nombreux membres de notre corps diplomatique et consulaire, entre autres de notre ministre de Paris, M. Dunant, la qualité des orateurs et l'importance des sujets traités, enfin, la place que la presse consacre ou consacra à cette réunion et aux questions qui s'y sont agitées, voilà tout autant de preuves des progrès accomplis par le mouvement, du rôle toujours plus grand que joue dans nos préoccupations politiques ce qu'on a heureusement appelé la Quatrième Suisse.

Après que M. le Dr. Meile eut ouvert la séance, souhaité la bienvenue à ses hôtes et tracé le programme de la Journée, et que M. le Dr. Steuri, dans un rapport documenté, eut rappelé le travail effectué au cours de l'année écoulée, M. le Dr. Ludwig, procureur général de Bâle-Ville, nous parla avec sa clarté et son autorité accoutumées de la Protection juridique des Suisses à l'Etranger. Il détermina d'abord les bases sur lesquelles se fonde toute action dans ce sens: égalité des nationaux et des indigènes devant la législation du pays; réciprocité; inégalité en ce qui concerne les droits et les devoirs politiques (suffrage et service militaire); principes du droit des gens. Puis il indiqua les causes qui limitent les recours basés sur la législation du pays ou sur le droit des gens. Il insista sur le fait que le Suisse à l'Etranger a le droit de recourir à l'intervention de la Confédération, mais que si celle-ci lui doit son appui, elle n'est pas légalement tenue de réparer elle-même ses pertes; elle n'a à cet égard que des obligations morales. Enfin il illustra les principaux points ayant motivé l'intervention diplomatique, et leur seule énumération montra la diversité et la profondeur des dommages subis par nos ressortissants établis hors de nos frontières: procès injustes, expulsions, renvois entraînant rupture unilatérale de contrats, engagement au service étranger (Légion étrangère), rapatriements, réquisitions, impositions ayant un caractère de confiscation. Il déclara que la réciprocité devait être bien comprise, citant le cas d'un pays limitrophe qui n'accorde aucun secours à nos compatriotes et dont les ressortissants touchent chez nous les indemnités de chômage. Enfin il rappela que l'efficacité des réclamations dépend du prestige du plaignant et conclut que, puisque la Suisse n'a pas le prestige de la force, elle doit, pour mieux pouvoir protéger ses enfants, grandir son prestige moral. Ce magistrat exposé fut suivi d'une intéressante discussion. M. Delaquis, du Département politique, éclaira la question du côté de la pratique administrative. Le Dir. Küng, président de l'Association des Suisses à l'Etranger, parla au nom des victimes, ainsi que M. Salvisberg, de Nancy et Bubb, auxquels répondirent M. Schürch, du Bund, et Hanselmann, de Pro Juventute.

L'après-midi, le professeur E. Bovet traita avec maestria la question des rapports entre les Suisses à l'Etranger et la Société des Nations. Il ne ménagea les critiques ni à la Suisse qui ne correspond pas à l'idéal que se font d'elle ses fils de l'étranger, ni aux autorités fédérales qui restent moralement, sinon matériellement, indifférentes à la situation des expatriés. Il insista sur la nécessité de cultiver et de propager l'esprit large de la Société des Nations, l'esprit d'un idéal européen: l'Europe est un fait économique et intellectuel, elle n'est pas un fait politique et moral. Elle doit le devenir, par l'esprit, non de Gènes, où règnent les égoïsmes nationaux, mais par celui de Genève, où règne la solidarité. La Suisse doit donner l'exemple, rajeunir le principe démocratique qui s'ankylose, travailler à faire accepter l'arbitrage obligatoire de tous les litiges, mettre au développement de la Société des Nations l'énergie, la patience et la foi qui ont permis sa propre constitution.

Après quelques mots de M. Stucki, M. Schürch, président du Comité des Suisses à l'Etranger de la Nouvelle Société Helvétique, raconta ses Souvenirs des colonies suisses. Il rappela combien la différence de langues, excellente par ailleurs, empêche l'union des Suisses à l'Etranger, très enclins d'eux-mêmes à s'ouvrir aux influences du dehors et à s'assimiler à leur nouveau milieu. Puis, par une série d'anecdotes, comiques, graves ou touchantes, il nous transporta en Amérique, en Hongrie, en

Allemagne, à Milan, et par des pittoresques tableaux, il fit saillir la diversité des situations et des mentalités, les cas de dédoublement et de "bi-patriotisme." Ces fines analyses psychologiques montrent la difficulté de la tâche: des règlements uniformes ne suffisent pas; il faut prendre les Suisses de l'Etranger comme ils sont, avec leur âme complexe et parfois contradictoire.— La discussion qui suivit permit à M. Dobler, président de la Chambre suisse de commerce de Paris, et à M. Hieronymus, rédacteur du *Korrespondenzblatt* de Berlin, de nous apporter des échos directs de cette diversité.

Les deux banquets contribuèrent à rendre particulièrement chaleureuse et intime l'atmosphère de la journée; au dîner, agrémenté de chœurs de jeunes filles, le conseiller d'Etat Hauser apporta les saluts du gouvernement bâlois, et M. Nabholz les souhaits de la Nouvelle Société Helvétique. Le soir au Casino, dans la salle décorée aux couleurs fédérales et cantonales, sous la présidence de l'infatigable M. Stucki, productions musicales et discours alternèrent avec les services. M. le Ministre Dunant, au nom du corps diplomatique, M. H. Micheli, au nom de la presse suisse, M. Sutter, au nom des Colonies suisses à l'Etranger, célébrèrent les bienfaits de cette réunion. La musique de nos compositeurs bâlois, Huber et Suter, les chants patriotiques et populaires de la Liedertafel, les productions des jodleurs et des tambours, donnèrent à toute la soirée un caractère profondément national.

Cette journée a rapproché les cœurs et les esprits. Puissent ses résultats pratiques répondre à l'ampleur des efforts que tentent nos autorités, la Nouvelle Société Helvétique et notre peuple tout entier.

NOTES & GLEANINGS.

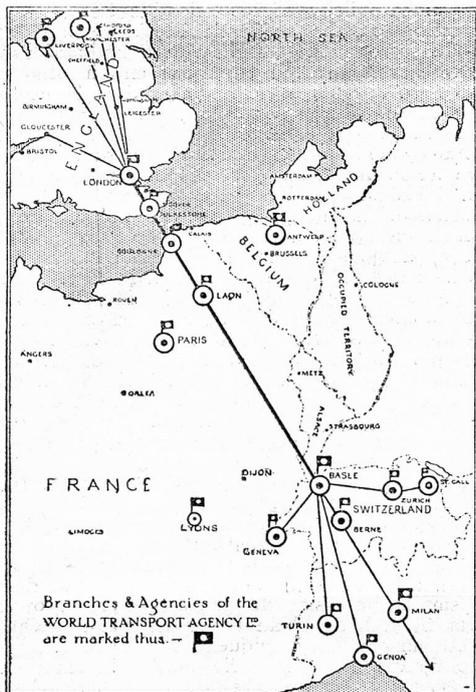
All our readers will have noted with satisfaction the rectifying statements which have appeared recently in the leading English papers from the pen of Mr. Henri Martin, Counsellor of Legation. They refer to the damaging report that German capital is absorbing many important Swiss industrial concerns, including the well-known firm of Sulzer Brothers in Winterthur. This sweeping general assertion is entirely incorrect, and as regards the firm referred to, the capital is in Swiss hands, and Swiss money is invested in its many foreign branches. Another somewhat amusing canard that Swiss watch manufacturers had transformed their machinery and were now manufacturing locomotives (see "S.O." 18th March) seems to have taken its rise in La Chaux-de-Fonds, where a firm has started to turn out mechanical toys. To a third statement that German capitalists have acquired the control of the entire Swiss cotton industry, Mr. Martin replies that "eighty-five per cent. of the spinning spindles operating in our country belong to Swiss capital, and that the percentage is even larger as far as the weaving is concerned"; the additional statement that Germany bought up in Switzerland, during the war, all the cotton she could obtain, is contradicted by the fact that the export of cotton was strictly prohibited during that time. As regards the latter, the *Daily News* (April 25th) retorts that the information was quoted from the *Neue Zürcher Zeitung*. The prompt steps undertaken by our Commercial Attaché will be as much appreciated as the readiness and fairness of the English press in publishing a correction of erroneous notices.

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The apathy which English official circles have displayed in the Rhine problem is at last making room for a sympathetic consideration. The *Engineer* (April 21st) deals at great length with the costs and prospects of the lateral canal, a proposal which France insists upon primarily to generate cheap (?) electric current for Alsatian factory owners. The *Pall Mall* (April 27th) follows the same argument in a leader, but the most ardent appeal is published in the April number of the *Review of Reviews* by no less an authority than Sir Joseph G. Broodbank. The writer introduces his subject by mentioning far-reaching events in commercial history, the full significance of which had not been apprehended at the moment of their happening, and the transactions which are now quietly proceeding with reference to the Rhine may, if a wrong step is taken, have eventually a disastrous effect on English industries and multitudes of workers. After referring to the absorbing political history of this river, which for centuries has been the scene of events which have moulded the destinies of Europe, Sir Joseph says:—

"The right to make this canal is derived from Clause 358 of the Versailles Treaty. The object of the French is to obtain water from the Rhine to be used for the production of electric power at several power stations along the route of the canal. As it was evident that the diversion of water from the river into the canal would leave the river (already shallow in many places) with insufficient depth for navigation, it is stipulated in the Treaty that the canal shall be navigable for traffic—that the facilities to vessels shall be equal to those now enjoyed on the river, and that there shall be no increase of existing tolls. These provisions no doubt commended themselves to our diplomatists as sufficient safeguards for the present users of the Rhine Channel. There is, however, an enormous difference between a clear passage on an open river and the navigation of a canal where transport is a secondary consideration, where there are numerous locks to detain the traffic, where ice may block the fairway in winter, and where the administrative influences are not likely unduly to favour the traffic of their British and Swiss

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