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HOME NEWS

The unemployment figures for the month of May show a further appreciable decrease, the number being 30,228, against 33,512 to end of April. The total amount disbursed for this purpose amounts now to 469 million francs, the larger part of which has been contributed by the Confederation; the shares of the Cantons vary according to local requirements; the canton of Neuchâtel, for instance, has spent under this heading 142 francs per head of population, whilst the quota of Unterwalden amounts to 1.42 franc only.

The Federal workshops at Yverdon (for overhauling and repairing electric locomotives) are to be extended at a cost of Frs. 1,700,000.

At a meeting of the Communal Council of Lausanne strenuous opposition was offered to the official proposal to abolish Sunday deliveries, the opinion prevailing that with increased postal rates the public service is becoming more indifferent.

A new taxation law, said to contain the first income tax imposition in the canton of Grisons, has been passed, after twelve years' discussion, by the town council of Chur.

An accountant of the Federal Department of Works, Hermann Gass, has been arrested for defalcations, said to exceed Frs. 100,000.

In Geneva five persons have been arrested for cocaine trading; they are said to belong to a well-known gang who for the last six months have done a considerable business in this article all over Switzerland.

The Catholic church in Nofels, near Altstätten, has been broken into by burglars, who carried away sacred vessels and other valuable appurtenances.

A Swiss master-dyer, Hans Schlech, has been shot dead in Dortmund by a French sentinel.

NOTES AND GLEANINGS.

By "KYBURG."

By the time these Notes appear in print I hope to have heard of the complete recovery of the President of the Swiss Mercantile Society in London, our friend Mr. G. DeBrunner, who, as we have all heard with dismay, I am sure, is ill with a bad attack of influenza. There are far too few Swiss who take such a continuous and intelligent interest in the welfare of the Colony as Mr. DeBrunner does, and we can ill afford his being ill. I raise my glass to drink your health, Mr. President, and wish you a speedy and complete recovery! And so, I am sure, say all of us.

The Economy Axe at Work.

The Times (11th June):—

On Sunday, June 3rd, the electorate of the town of Zurich accepted a Bill, reducing the salaries of the town employees by amounts varying between £12 16s. and £16 per annum for high officials, and from £24 to £26 8s. for clerks and workers.

Political Awakening at Geneva.

The Christian World (7th June):—

In Switzerland, just as in the United States and in England, there is a steady progress in the admission of women to fuller authority and to more accurate education in matters of religion. The electorate of the National Church of the canton of Geneva has just now voted, by 1,947 against only 410, that women shall henceforth be eligible for membership of the parish councils. And at the University of Geneva there are now a dozen lady students, taking a two years' course of training under the Divinity Faculty with a view to fitting themselves for public religious work. Professor Breitenstein reports of them that they study hard, and that they acquit themselves with remarkable success in their half-yearly examinations.

It is interesting to note that several comments on the recent Alcohol Referendum express the view that the "Ayes" would have had it had women had the right to vote! Seeing what a frightful mess mere men have made of the world during the last 2,000 years or so, I think we might safely give the women a fair chance. In the worst of cases they could not but make a better show than, as I have said, as History shows, men have made so far. I think the old theory about the men being the "Lords of Creation" is now as dead as mutton.

International Fencing.

Morning Post (31st May):—

The contest for the military championship of Europe for individual swordsmanship (épée), in which only Switzerland, Belgium and France were represented, resulted as follows: 1, Commandant Perrot (France); 2, Lieutenant Empaya (Switzerland).

I suppose the Belgian was third! And a very useful sport, too, fencing is. Apart from keeping you fit, it enables you to call your opponent's bluff and get him off the map in a gentlemanly fashion. Who said "Mensur"? Because "Fencing," I would have you know, is not at all the same thing, being much more refined a way of killing or wounding your opponent. Somebody reminded me the other day that Christianity was nearly twenty centuries old. Just fancy!

A Charming Article on Switzerland appears in the *Daily Dispatch* (29th May) by Gerald B. Hurst, K.C., M.P., and I think my readers will be pleased to have it in full:—

There is no prettier custom in all Europe than that which leads the Swiss to inscribe on the familiar facades of their chalets maxims in prose or verse inculcating domestic virtues, or invoking upon these simple homes the blessings of Heaven.

The same groping after ideals animates Englishmen when they call mean streets "avenues" and lodging-house keepers of every nationality when they christen houses with a distant glimpse of water "Sea View" or "Ocean Prospect." But the Swiss families who carve these couplets on their house fronts are immeasurably less sophisticated.

Here are a few gathered at random in a little village near the Lake of Thun:—

"Schweizerland und Schweizerland

Schirm es Gott mit Starke Hand."

This can be translated:

"Home of Swiss and Switzerland

God protect with His strong Hand."

Another runs, "God defend this house and those who go in and out"; another, "Sing all praises to the Lord God if you want happiness and blessings"; another, "Everything comes to us by God's Grace"; another—perhaps the most charming—"Every home with its peace is a part of Paradise." Such legends are carved with the handcraft which one always associates with Swiss toys, cuckoo clocks, penholders and whistles.

Modern Switzerland has wisely tried to play but a minor and unheroic rôle in the world's affairs. Happy the country which makes no history if it be a country with a small population wedged in among great States. It is, however, a wonderful thing to preserve in these days so real a simplicity of heart.

Hence the extraordinary feat accomplished in Switzerland alone—the feat of moulding French, German and Italian people into one nationality. Two strokes of political genius have helped in the achievement of this great purpose. First, a system of national military training has broken down—as, when properly organised, it must always break down—barriers of race, class and creed.

Secondly, the schools teach what is called "civics"—the broad principles of citizenship, public conduct, and national duty. Perhaps we may one day arrive at this stage in England. People sometimes say that it is unteachable without importing party spirit—but is it true? We have so many greater and fresher rallying points for patriotism than the shadowy romance of William Tell.

Neither national service nor education alone, however, would have been adequate to solve Switzerland's racial problem. Character, not ability, is the pivot of a country's well-being. The homely and even childish homilies, cut on the fronts of these chalets, are true symbols of national worth.

I could add quite a number of such maxims which I remember having seen on Swiss houses. There is one at Flaach as follows:—

Quidquid agas,
prudenter agas,
et respice finem,

which might be translated into:—

Whatever you undertake to do,
do it with circumspection,
and bear the end well in mind!

And another one, which surely is the sweetest:—

"Moi et Toi,"

which does not require translation, I think.

Summer in Switzerland.

It will not be the fault of the British Press if Brits do not transfer temporarily their residence to one or other of our native valleys or mountains. In former issues of the *S.O.* I have given instances of well-written articles appearing in papers in all parts of the United Kingdom. This week I notice two splendid articles on the Lakes of the Ticino, one on Lago di Lugano in *The Evening Telegraph and Post*, of Dundee, 2nd June, and the other on the Lago Maggiore in the same paper four days later. They made me quite homesick, the second one especially, giving a vivid and charming picture of the delights of an evening near Isola Bella. Once upon a time "Kyburg" was fortunate enough to sip sparkling Asti at Baveno, not in one of the big hotels there, but at a shabby three-legged table outside the Ristorante degli Amici, where the butcher and baker and other notables of the bourgeoisie of the village



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foregathered of an evening and were pleased to let "Kyburg" into the secret as to how real Asti—there and at that time 1 lira per bottle!—ought to be enjoyed. And a hand-organ playing the old sweet melodies from the Trovatore. And the night dark blue and warm. And the air perfumed wonderfully, making you feel as if you were in a Persian garden and as if some Eastern potentate might come round the corner of the Piazza at any moment. Dear, dear, as Platen said, "Was sucht ihr mich heim, ihr Bilder, die längst ich vergessen geglaubt?"

The Surgical Clinics of Switzerland.

British Medical Journal (June 2nd) by H. S. Soutar, M.Ch. F.R.C.S., Director of the Surgical Unit London Hospital.

In a very long and extremely interesting article the eminent director gives his impressions gathered during a ten days' visit to the clinics at Basle, Zurich, Berne and Lausanne, and I strongly recommend anybody who is interested in these matters to get the article and read it. I can only quote the concluding remarks:—

The hospitals belong to the town or canton. So far as we could gather, they do not depend on voluntary support. A charge of about 6 francs (5s.) a day is made for each patient, but the whole or greater part is defrayed by a national insurance, to which the whole of the working classes contribute. The fees of the students are for the most part paid from national sources, and the cantons and towns vote large sums for new buildings and equipment, both clinical and educational.

Every hospital we visited was equipped with first-class operating theatres, and with clinical theatres (usually many) far superior to anything of the kind we had ever seen. I have seen nothing in England to compare with the anatomical department just opened or with the maternity department in course of erection at Basle.

It is most improbable that at the present day such equipment can be provided in England from private sources, and it was our unanimous opinion that our only hope of raising the equipment of our training schools to the level of Switzerland lies in the support of our hospitals by the State. The Swiss have recognized the health of their nation and the care of their sick as primary national duties, not to be left to the vagaries of private enterprise. And they have realized that a highly trained medical service is as valuable an asset as a nation can possess. I hope that we may soon be given an inspired glimpse into the obvious, and follow their example.

For the Ladies.

Although the wintry summer we are passing through just now gives little scope for the ladies to bring out their loveliest and flimsiest frocks, it surely is good news that Swiss Embroidery is coming into its own again. *The Pall Mall and Globe* (5th June) writes:—

Lace carries all before it this summer, but some sorts of lace are anything but durable. That is where the new net application Swiss embroidery scores, for it is both economical and durable, and the materials can be washed indefinitely without injuring or impairing the delicate fabric. There is nothing more attractive for wear in summer than lingerie frocks, and one recently seen was made of this new net application Swiss embroidery, about which so much has been heard lately. It had an underskirt and sleeves and a short, jaunty, irresistible little cape hanging from the shoulders of net, while the rest of the gown was of plain clear muslin. A youthful looking affair was slim and straight in outline, the major portion of the dress composed of fine Swiss embroidery in a delicate gossamer design.

A suggestion of fulness on the hips was achieved by means of clever draperies, which continued their career by falling in long flowing paniers to the hem of the skirt. Dainty, girlish, and infinitely charming would this look among the fresh green of lawns and trees.

Lingerie, too, shows the fancy there is for Swiss embroidery. For crisp white lawn has superseded crêpe-de-chine in many linen chests. There are some extraordinarily lovely designs in motifs and medallions for inserting into dainty garments, while flouncings, edgings, and fine insertions which will withstand repeated visits to the wash tub make Swiss embroidery ideal wear for babies, growing schoolgirls, and their elders also.

Writing about ladies' summer frocks gives me an idea which may, perhaps, appeal to some of my readers. Everybody knows that the last day of the Richmond Horse Show and still more Ascot are the London Ladies' Dress Show. I do not know whether and how many of our charming Swiss ladies patronise these events. But it seems to me that the Swiss Colony in London could easily organise a Ladies' Day of their own, where all the ladies could show off their loveliest frocks, their daintiest hats, their sweetest smiles! Hubbies and "cousins," of course, would go there as well to form an admiring background. Well, then, why not fix upon a particular Sunday, say, first Sunday in July, or, if wet, second Sunday of that month, and, say, that all good Swiss ladies, with hubby, cousin or brother, etc., etc., will go and have tea at one of the nice tea places within about 20 miles or so of London? Deepdene, near Dorking, for instance, or, better still, Dorman's Park, or any other place. I am sure the ladies would enjoy it vastly. The gentlemen would be pleased to escort them and to pay—at least I hope so! And the social life of our Colony would be richer by a function which would neither be snobbish, nor very costly, and which would certainly be so charming and delightful as to be looked forward to very eagerly, year after year. Now then, Swiss Colony!

FINANCIAL AND COMMERCIAL NEWS FROM SWITZERLAND.

The Municipality of Zurich have this week been offering for subscription a 4½% loan of 15 million francs to provide funds for the redemption or conversion of the 4% loans of 1908 and 1909, which fall due on the last day of June. Conversion rights are offered at 99½% and the balance available for public subscription is offered at the same price. The loan is redeemable at par in 1935 or at the option of the municipality after 1933. It was concluded in many quarters that the amount left over for the public, after conversion rights had been satisfied, would be very small, but in fact it appears that a very large amount of the bonds of the maturing loans have been absorbed by the banks and discount houses as a useful short investment, and the amount converted may, therefore, be relatively small.

The Entreprises Electriques Fribourgeoises in Fribourg show a net profit for the past year of Frs. 511,257, as compared with Frs. 668,844 last year. The State exchequer will benefit to the extent of Frs. 470,000.

The Bernese Electricity Works show a slightly improved net profit of Frs. 2,449,142 for the year 1922, as compared with Frs. 2,142,189 in the preceding year. A dividend of 5 per cent. will again be paid on the capital of Frs. 44,000,000. The report states that the output of electricity to subscribers in the year under review was 246½ million kilowatt-hours, as compared with 212½ million in 1921. This is a satisfactory improvement of 15%. The revenue from electricity supplied has risen from 11½ to 12½ million francs. The improvement is distributed evenly over every class of consumer, with very few exceptions, which is very satisfactory showing for a year when the effects of the general economic crisis were still very evident. The amount of electricity which the company had to draw from sources other than their own generation was 21½ million kilowatt-hours.

The Laufenburg Power Works also show very satisfactory results, with a net profit of Frs. 977,439 (Frs. 591,232 in 1921) and a dividend of 6% on the preference and 4% on the ordinary shares. Last year the latter received nothing. The favourable state of the stream in the Rhine through the year enabled the company to increase the total output of current from 267½ million kilowatt-hours in 1921 to nearly 314 millions in 1922, which was very nearly equivalent to the record of 1918.

The Crédit Foncier in Basle closed the year 1922 with a credit balance of Frs. 167,488, as compared with a loss of Frs. 708,086 in 1921. The balance sheet shows a debit balance of Frs. 1,470,000 carried forward. The directors do not recommend payment of any dividend.

ROUND AND ABOUT.

I am sure everybody will be delighted to hear that Mr. G. De Brunner, the president of the Swiss Mercantile Society, is very much better; he intends to put in an appearance at his office on Tuesday.

Mrs. C. A. Barbezat, who for over two months has been laid up with a severe illness, entailing considerable anxiety to her family, is improving; very best wishes for a speedy recovery.

Hearty congratulations to Mr. Alexandre Schupbach, who has just been appointed Manager of the London branch of the Crédit Lyonnais in place of Mr. E. Karminski, who is retiring at the end of this month. His success will prove of great encouragement to the younger generation when it is remembered that Mr. Schupbach started as a junior in the London office of the bank about 35 years ago. He has always taken an active part in the doings of our colony, having been president of the City Swiss Club some years ago.

Quite a number of Swiss appear on the English music-hall stage, but some of them, for reasons known to themselves only, camouflage their nationality. A notable exception is our compatriot, Mr. A. Maeder, a former leader of the Swiss Gymnastic Society at 1, Gerrard Place, W. Following a short engagement at the London Hippodrome, he has been appearing at provincial halls with the Julian Wyllie-Tate Co. with marked success. I hear that together with his professional partner, Miss Muriel Marise, he is giving an exhibition of acrobatic dancing at the Royal Albert Hall next Tuesday evening, the 26th inst., in connection with the Anglo-Russian Ballet. His turn will also be given next week every evening between 10.30 and 11.30 p.m. at the Grafton Galleries.

Bad weather has marred most of our Swiss gatherings this season, but it was a real godsend last Friday; had the weather been fine, the accommodation booked at Caxton Hall for the Swiss Fête would have been hopelessly inadequate; as it was, the large concert hall was crowded to suffocation. I was one of the early arrivals, in quest of "copy," partook of an excellent tea and watched for about two hours the magical disappearance of the delicious cakes and other dainties, supplied by the Anglo-Swiss bakeries; if ever I had a shilling's worth, I certainly had it on this occasion. In another column appears a report from a fair contributor about the concert, and I can only endorse what she says about the success of the organising committee in securing the active co-operation of the other Swiss societies in the many-sided programme. It is a great pity, however, that it is impossible to find at present as commodious and comfortable a place as the old "Portman Rooms" where the "Swiss Tea" used to be held in pre-war days; compared with the latter, Caxton Hall is cold, and one appears to stand in everybody's way when talking to friends. The many hundred Swiss girls, unattached to any society, wish to talk to old friends or make new ones; anyhow, in my time we used to look forward to the Swiss Tea just for the sake of meeting the girls and fixing up a quiet tête-à-tête. I saw a good many familiar faces which I remembered from the time of "La Fraternelle," and should have loved to have a chat, but it was impossible to get at them. One of the characteristics of this Swiss Fête is the fact that you find old acquaintances there that you never meet elsewhere. I left early, but I heard from every side that everybody enjoyed a glorious evening, with the exception, perhaps, of those who waited till the finish in presenting their cloak-room tickets. Somebody told me that a squad of boys must have taken possession of the cloak-room during the concert and played football with the hats and coats deposited there. Not everyone seems to have been able to get his own property back, and I can well imagine the discomfiture of a married man at having to appear, in the early hours of the morning, before the discriminating eyes of his better half in somebody else's headgear; no excuse would have availed me. Lucky for those who can discern the humorous side of such calamities! Several subscribers have telephoned and asked me for assistance in regaining possession of their wardrobes, and, in place of stamp-collecting proclivities, an arduous desire for swapping hats seems now to have got hold of some members of the Swiss Colony. I know of a few rare specimens which are offered in exchange for current issues, in fact, the doyen of our colony has had to be satisfied with a trophy that appears to give him points and a beating in the matter of age; he has been so downhearted over the affair that for the first time in 44 years he did not put in an appearance last Tuesday evening at his club. I have not heard of anybody who is over-delighted with what has been allotted to him, but it is utterly untrue that since last Friday the Editor of the S.O. is wearing a new hat!

HOLIDAY TRIP TO SWITZERLAND AT REDUCED PRICES.

Intending participants should make definite application at once, as the number of the party is strictly limited; we have received a good many enquiries, and we should not like to disappoint those who unduly delay their decision.

It should be noted that the date of departure (July 21st) cannot be altered, and that those who wish to return via Laon or Paris must state so in applying for the ticket. On arrival at Basle the party disperses, and the home journey will be completed independently any time within 33 days; those who have booked inclusive tickets (with hotel accommodation) will travel to their destination without staying at Basle.

Hôpital Français à Londres.

Une matinée exceptionnelle de "Aimer" de M. Paul Gerald sera donnée, sous le patronage de Son Excellence Monsieur l'Ambassadeur de France et de Madame la Comtesse de Saint Aulaire, au Lyric Theatre, le Jeudi 28 Juin courant, au bénéfice de l'Hôpital Français de Londres.

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