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# The Swiss Observer

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## HOME NEWS

The Commission of the National Council has, in regard to the main points, approved the revision of the military tax proposed by the Federal Council. The personal tax has been fixed at Frs. 12.—, and the new measure of imposing this tax on the members of the Landsturm has been endorsed. The re-casting of this law, which is expected to increase the revenue under this head by about 4½ million francs, is meeting with some opposition. The much-attacked tax on possible inheritances has been retained.

The proceeds of the 1st of August postcards, which are now being sold in Switzerland, will be devoted exclusively to support and finance the several Swiss Institutions for the Blind. The pictures are the work of Iwan E. Hugentobler, A. Giacometti (Grisons) and Karl Bickel (Zurich).

The Turkish Peace Delegation paid an official visit to Berne, where they were received by Federal President Scheurer. At the customary luncheon the mutual wish was expressed of establishing permanent diplomatic relations between the two countries. Before the war, Swiss interests were safeguarded by the German, French or Italian diplomatic representative, according to the language of the suppliant.

The 17th Swiss Musical Festival was opened in Zug last Saturday with the handing over of the central flag, which had been held since 1912 by the "Lyre de Vevey," which latter town was the scene of the last musical festival. About 200 societies with 7,000 musicians are taking part.

A movement is on foot in the canton of Thurgau which desires to abolish the system of proportional representation (for cantonal elections), which by a large majority the Swiss people accepted in the plebiscite of October, 1918.

Ecclesiastics from all over the world are meeting in Zurich at a Conference of Reformed Churches. This Conference is endeavouring to discover or devise ways and means of protecting religious minorities in countries reputed to be somewhat intolerant in this respect. About forty delegates from Great Britain are attending.

Col. Charles Edouard de Meuron (Lausanne) has resigned his command of the First Division for reasons of health.

Owing to the premature explosion of a charge in the Rockstein quarry near Mühledorf (Solothurn) two brothers, Hans and Fritz Sommer, were severely lacerated, the first of whom is not expected to recover.

A remarkable accident happened on the Lake of Thun. As a sailing boat was seeking shelter from the storm, near Einigen, the mast came into contact with the high-tension wire of the Bernese Electricity Works. A loud detonation followed, and the three unlucky sailors were hurled into the air, dropping dead into the water some distance away. The names of the three victims are: A. Frieden (Berne), E. Frieden (Thun) and Otto Steimle (Berne).

## EXTRACTS FROM SWISS PAPERS.

**La Furkabahn.**—Lors d'une conférence, entre les représentants du Tribunal fédéral, du département des chemins de fer et des gouvernements des cantons d'Uri, des Grisons et du Valais, les trois cantons intéressés s'étaient engagés à faire savoir au Tribunal fédéral dans quelle mesure ils pouvaient participer au financement supplémentaire de la ligne de la Furka. Ces rapports viennent de parvenir au Tribunal fédéral. Seul le canton du Valais s'est déclaré prêt à faire un sacrifice et à mettre à disposition la somme d'un demi-million de francs. Le canton d'Uri déclare que sa situation financière ne lui permet pas de songer à une cotisation. Quant au canton des Grisons, il demande à attendre que la question ait été portée devant le Grand Conseil à la session d'automne. On sait que la Confédération prendrait à sa charge 3 millions de

francs, à la condition que le reste, soit 3 millions environ, soit couvert par les cantons intéressés. On ne saurait plus guère songer à une participation suffisante des cantons, en présence de ces réponses. Le Tribunal fédéral statuera définitivement sur cet objet après les vacances judiciaires.

(La Revue.)

**Le mal de mer à... Neuchâtel.**—Passablement de promeneurs se rappelleront de la journée du 15 juillet de cette année! Le temps superbe qu'il faisait avait incité pas mal de personnes, de la Montagne surtout, à profiter du lac et des nombreuses courses organisées par la Société de navigation à vapeur, mais un "grain" inquiétant qui a commencé vers 3 heures de l'après-midi, pour se brusquer aux environs de 5 heures, a vivement alarmé les riverains qui s'attendaient à assister à des noyades et à des incidents tels que notre lac si fantasque parfois, nous cause.

Le vapeur "Hallwyl," venant de Cudrefin, à 6 heures, débarqua environ 300 passagers; il tangua de façon peu ordinaire et son arrivée fut marquée par des épisodes plutôt comiques, vu que le mal de mer si bizarre en eau douce, faisait ses ravages inquiétants, surtout chez le sexe aimable! Des figures ravagées par ces affres douloureuses, des plaintes de gens hâves et défaits qui, sur terre ferme avaient de la peine à reprendre le dessus, bref, tout cela fit une arrivée mémorable.

Une seule victime un peu douloureusement atteinte, une dame, dut être transportée à l'hôpital, son état étant quelque peu inquiétant.

Le soir, le vent s'était calmé, les nombreux promeneurs qui avaient passé le lac purent rentrer normalement, mais les alertes furent chaudes sur les vapeurs de la société ce dimanche-là!

(Echo du Jura.)

**Un tireur qui a du sang-froid.**—A une fête de tir saint-galloise, un tireur avait fait quatre cartons au concours de groupes et il était justement en train de chercher à faire une mouche pour améliorer son résultat au cinquième coup, ce qui pouvait lui valoir une couronne, quand on vint lui annoncer que sa maison brûlait. Notre homme assura son arme et la mit en bandoulière en deux temps et trois mouvements et disparut. Mais il réparait après quelques instants au stand, déclarant laco-niquement qu'un commencement d'incendie avait éclaté dans une chambre, mais qu'il était éteint. Il se remit en place et tira la mouche manquante. Voilà un bonhomme qui ne doit pas connaître les crises de nerfs.

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**Un agriculteur meurt piqué par une guêpe.**—Un accident aussi rapide que tragique s'est déroulé à Meyrin. Un agriculteur, M. Julien Duchosal, 44 ans, cueillait des cerises dans la propriété de M. Dubculoz, à Meyrin. Comme il venait de porter un fruit à sa bouche, M. Duchosal sentit à la gorge une atroce douleur: une guêpe, logée dans la cerise qu'il venait d'avaler, l'avait piqué à l'arrière-bouche. Le malheureux tomba inanimé sur le sol. On s'empressa, mais en quelques minutes il mourut étouffé.

(La Suisse.)

**Vieux drapeau.**—On vient de confier au musée du Collège industriel mixte du Chenit, au Sentier, le drapeau dont s'étaient doté, en 1852, comme signe de ralliement, les carabiniers du val de Joux et qui avait fait sa sensationnelle apparition les 27 et 28 août 1921, à la fête de Vallorbe de la Société militaire des carabiniers vaudois. On y voit, d'un côté, deux carabines en sautoir brochant sur une couronne de chêne: en exergue, ces mots: "Carabiniers No. 5, Vallée du Lac de Joux, 1852"; de l'autre, des mains enlacées dans une couronne de laurier, qu'encadre ces mots: "L'union fait la force."

A la suite de la dissolution de la société locale des carabiniers, il avait été remis chez l'un des anciens sociétaires et avait fini par être oublié. En 1921, des gamins le dénichérent dans un hangar, près de la gare du Sentier. Il leur servit de jouet jusqu'au moment où certains carabiniers de la place recueillirent la précieuse relique. Quelques mois plus tard, il déroulait ses plis à Vallorbe, porté par un vétéran, M. Edgar Rochat.

(Journal d'Yverdon.)

## NOTES AND GLEANINGS.

By "KYBURG."

1st August, 1923.

"Wir wollen sein ein einzig Volk von Brüdern, In keiner Not uns trennen und Gefahr." For many days past I have been thinking of these two lines and have been worrying whether Schiller said "ein einzig Volk" or "ein einzig Volk," and



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I have purposely refrained from looking it up in my "Wilhelm Tell," because the question of with "z" or without "z" has been very fruitful in stimulating thought appropriate to our Festival of Swiss Independence.

If "einig" is the right reading, Schiller, who was more a product of his time, must have thought that to have a Nation undivided against itself was already great progress and something to be desired. If "einzig," however, is correct, then it seems to me that Schiller in that passage approached nearer to the prophetic heights of Goethe or even Shakespeare, both of whom had wonderful gifts of vision, and I should love to think that Schiller, too, on occasion had a vision of mankind finally being welded into One Unique Society of Brothers.

It behoves us Swiss on the 1st of August to be thankful. Grateful we are to our ancestors for having fought for our Unity, our Freedom and our Democratic Liberties.

It behoves us Swiss on the 1st of August to look ahead. Are we worthy of our legacy? Are we working to build up further on the foundations so truly and wonderfully laid by our forefathers? Or, as it seems too often, are we letting our own greed, our own personal desires get the upper hand, to the detriment of our duty towards our brothers?

We need not, of course, work to absorb more and more outlying districts into our Confederation. The days when such absorption could be achieved to the benefit of all are past.

Greater problems are before us to-day, and they require that we Swiss of the Twentieth Century exhibit a political courage, a political acumen commensurate with the greater task. If we are to prove worthy sons of worthy sires, we can best continue the work begun by them by helping towards the building up of the Brotherhood of Nations. A short while ago, as time counts in History, most present-day Swiss fought each other under different flags. To-day we are One Nation, embracing several Different Nationalities. There are no more passports for travellers from one Canton into the other; no more bridge and road tolls; no more octrois.

And yet, even most of us Swiss find it quite natural that there should be passports and all the rest of the hindrances mentioned between France and Germany, between all the other Nations in Europe.

We find it quite natural, again, that Switzerland should have a very extensive Customs barrier, like so many other neighbouring countries.

On the 1st of August we Swiss ought at least to open our eyes and see that our task should be to work with all our might for the abolition of such antiquated means established for keeping the Nations apart. They are an anachronism to-day. Nearly all the money levied in such a way goes for the upkeep of national armies and fleets. If political frontiers are done away, if Nations Combine into One Nation of Different Nationalities, as we have it in Switzerland, national armies and fleets can be reduced to Police Force strength. Think!

Think of the enormous amount of labour and consequently capital, the accumulated fruit of labour which could then be released for productive purposes, for the economic and intellectual improve-

ment of nations! And, if you agree, as agree you surely must if you face the problem without bias, do you not think that it is your duty as a Swiss to work for such a goal, as did our fathers?

My readers will surely forgive me for preaching a sermon they may have heard many times before. In these "Notes and Gleanings" the writer has too often to publish articles which are very flattering for us Swiss—the temptation to put them before my readers is too strong. It will, therefore, also be pardoned for "Kyburg" for once puts a few thoughts before his readers which may, perhaps, make them a wee bit uncomfortable, but which, he hopes, will make them think!

And as we now, with swelling pride in our hearts, sing our patriotic Swiss songs on the 1st of August, so, I hope, may our descendants sing one day a hymn commemorating the foundation of the Federated States of Europe. And even then, we Swiss, provided we feel that we did our best to help struggling and war-worn Europe towards that glorious goal, may take legitimate pride in having been, for long, Europe Within Europe, the nucleus of the Brotherhood of Nations.

#### School Excursions.

Several readers have sent me an article by Sir Alfred Hopkinson, K.C., LL.D., entitled "The English Schoolboy Abroad," which appeared in the *Evening Standard* on July 23rd:—

There is an excellent modern movement in education which might with advantage become more general. It is the growing practice of taking the pupils in schools, whether boys or girls, for walking tours to districts and countries they would otherwise probably never visit at a time of life when the mind is most receptive and most likely to acquire treasures of memory which will be retained permanently in the years to come.

The movement has spread over a large part of Europe and is not confined to any one nation.

Two examples met with by chance this spring may be taken as typical.

When staying a few weeks ago at one of the beautiful historic cities on the Loire, the three or four English visitors who happened to be in the hotel were informed by the friendly landlord that he expected a school party of about a score of English boys with their master to stay the night.

It is worth notice, by the way, how far from the truth are statements so often made that the English are generally hated abroad. Except at the time of the Boer war, the pedestrian traveller might, and may still, wander almost anywhere and not hear a disagreeable word or suggestion of unfriendliness among the country folk he meets.

He will find everywhere a note of common human interest if he will look for it.

But to return to our English boys in France. They came from an excellent school in the north of England, which has just celebrated the centenary of its foundation. How could they learn more in a few days than by their journey on foot through a country quite new to them, full of quiet, natural beauty and historic interest?

The result of such travel will, certainly not lead the young to care less for their own land if they know anything of it beyond the town or county where they happen to live.

The Swiss seem to realise this better than any other nation. The pupils of their schools have the best opportunities for seeing all parts of their own country at trifling cost, when most of the hotels are almost empty between the winter-sports season and August, when the English summer visitors usually arrive.

When the snow has just melted from the higher Alpine pastures and the meadows below are covered with a glory of spring flowers, happy parties of boys and girls from schools in the manufacturing towns set out for their walks among the mountains.

Even the devotees of solitude and quiet in the remoter places may almost welcome the sudden arrival some evening, when perhaps over two score of young people enter an hotel after a long day's tramp. They have come from an excellent commercial school in La Chaux-de-Fonds, the centre of the watchmaking industry, and are the children of high-class artisans or small traders there. They seem the embodiment of joyous health.

After supper the tables are cleared from the large dining-room, and the dance begins. There is no lack of variety in it. The teachers take part, and all spend a bright, merry evening.

But before seven o'clock next morning they shoulder their sacks again and start, in spite of the rain, to walk over a high pass or reach home by late train the following day.

To see their vigour and their happiness makes it possible to understand one, at least, of the reasons why, as Lord Bryce says in his last great work, the Swiss, in spite of differences of race, language and religion, "are not only a united people, but one of the most united and certainly the most patriotic among the peoples of Europe."

If our people, too, are to have this intense patriotism, and the love of their own country and the desire to serve it, they must learn, when young, to know and to enjoy its beauties. To many, however, wider opportunities may be given, also some direct knowledge of other lands and their people, which will be a solid basis for real international friendship.

#### Swiss Hotels and "Marriage Lins"

I am glad to see in the *Weekly Dispatch* of July 22nd the following:—

The Swiss Hotel Proprietors' Association denies a report that visitors to hotels in Switzerland are compelled to produce marriage certificates, and that the police make midnight visits to the hotels.

Visitors now enjoy the same freedom of movement as in pre-war days: the only formality is the production of passports when crossing the frontier. The more favourable exchange is making a great appeal to tourists.

#### Dr. Alfred Keller and European Protestantism.

*Christian World*:—

A startling picture of the critical condition of Protestantism in European countries was presented recently to a group of representative Free Churchmen, convened

by Rev. T. Nightingale, Secretary of the National Free Church Council. The speaker was Dr. Adolf Keller, of Zurich, Secretary of the European Central Bureau, which has been created to aid the Protestant Church institutions in their hour of acute need. This urgent need, which Dr. Keller thinks may continue for three years in certain countries, and even ten years in others, is an aftermath of the war, and an immediate consequence of the rapid disappearance of the middle classes, which have been the main supporters of Evangelical Protestantism in Central Europe. In Germany, which has been the pivot and prop of European Protestantism, the middle class is swiftly becoming extinct. The once prosperous professional families are reduced to penury. Many of them are becoming manual labourers, and in numerous instances, being too proud to proclaim their poverty, they go on quietly enduring under-nourishment, until some slight malady—a common cold even—finds them too enfeebled to resist, and they die.

But Germany does not stand alone. In fourteen European countries, Dr. Keller says, the Evangelical Churches and the Protestant benevolent organisations—orphans, schools and sisterhood hostels—are no longer able to exist without foreign help. Last year the Protestants in five neutral countries, Norway, Sweden, Denmark, Holland, and Switzerland, set themselves to stay the ruin of European Protestantism, first, by establishing a central bureau for information and distribution, and, second, by raising funds. These five neutral countries raised £50,000 for this purpose—Switzerland being responsible for £20,000. Dr. Keller appealed to the Federal Council of the Churches of Christ in America and has just returned from the United States, where he has been addressing meetings of religious bodies, which have promised to take action this autumn. In London he sought the help of Anglican Churchmen and of the Free Churches. To the Free Church group, at the Memorial Hall, he described the Protestant situation in Europe as very menacing. It is a common saying on the Continent, he said, that the result of war was a military victory for France, a political victory for England, an economic victory for America, a cultural victory for the Jews, and a religious victory for the Roman Catholic Church. In France, Latvia and Galicia the most pressing need was the restoration of church buildings; in Poland, Roumania and Austria the preservation of schools; and in Germany and Austria the maintenance of the Evangelical charitable institutions. Hundreds of religious periodicals had died, and Protestantism without a Press was sorely hampered. The saving of European Protestantism was a matter in which all Evangelical Churches should be concerned, since they would all feel the consequences of its collapse.

After Dr. Keller had presented his case, there was a prolonged discussion as to how the Free Churches could help, and plans were adopted for bringing the whole question before the Federal Free Church Council at its September meeting, with a view to action after the holidays.

I hesitate to make many comments on religious matters. All the same, expressing, perhaps, the opinion of the Man-in-the-Street, I think that as long as the Christian Churches fight each other, as they do now, so long will there be no reign of Christ upon Earth, except in the bosom of those who do not belong to any Church and seek for the truth of Christ's Teaching in surroundings more resembling those in which He taught His disciples.

#### Alpine Climbing.

*Lancet* (21st July):—

Many medical men know the value of Swiss mountain air for holidays after heavy work, some make a point of spending a month every year there. For the strenuous mountain-climbing is an attraction, and it is of interest to learn that for the timid amateur who dreads being a drag on other climbers a scientific course of instruction, theoretical and practical, in mountaineering will be given at the end of July in the beautiful village of Klosters, in the Grisons district, at a fee of £6 6s., including board. Full particulars may be had from Gustav Walty, Klosters.

Of importance in this connection is an article on Muscular Exercise by Prof. A. V. Hill, F.R.S., in "Nature" of July 14th, in which recent work on muscle contraction and recovery is summarised, leading to the modern view that man's power of taking exercise, whether violent or prolonged, depends largely on his ability to run into debt for oxygen. In prolonged effort, such as that associated with climbing, the healthy man is limited not by the magnitude of "debt" into which his body can run—not, that is to say, by the lactic acid maximum of his muscles—but chiefly by the maximum rate at which he can take in oxygen. With regard to the economical use of muscle by the trained athlete, Prof. Hill writes as follows:—

"Clearly if a given movement can be carried out more economically—i.e., at the expense of less energy—then less oxygen will be required for it, and its maximum duration can be increased. . . . This economy of effort can, in part, be taught; but just as all the practice in the world will not turn some quite intelligent people into mathematicians, so all the practice in the world may never turn some quite powerful and well-developed people into first-class athletes. Training and practice are essential, but they can only build on an aptitude already there. If a subject uses his muscles uneconomically . . . he will need an excessive supply of oxygen. Consequently he will be an ineffective athlete . . . he is uneconomical. Athletic prowess depends not only upon a large oxygen supply, but upon a low oxygen requirement."

Skill, power and economy of muscular effort result, Prof. Hill says, from the effectiveness of the "quick, silent, overmastering, and generally unconscious reactions, dictated by the nervous system on the receipt of urgent messages from tendons, joints and muscles, or from the little sense organs associated with the ear. . . . The instinctive skill, quickness and economy of the gymnast or climber, of the mechanic, airman, tennis-player or athlete depend upon a vivid and readily reproducible picture in the brain or nervous system, a 'picture,' as Pear puts it, 'of muscular exercise in terms of the sensations which effective and successful movements produce.'"

These considerations are very pertinent to the climbing course at Klosters, and a timely study of them by the would-be climber might save him disappointment.

#### A Compliment.

In January last Mr. E. Lawrence Levy lectured to the members of the new Church Guild, Handsworth, Birmingham, on "The Olympic Games, 1896–1924."

It was suggested at the lecture that in view of its success the regulations which govern the lectures, viz., that no lecturer be asked for two successive seasons, be suspended so far as Mr. Levy was concerned. What was at the time considered a graceful compliment has proved to be an accomplished fact, as Mr. Levy has received an invitation to lecture in the 1923-24 session on 'A Nation of Athletes' (Switzerland), and the date, 20th November next. Mr. Levy's thorough familiarity with the Swiss National Gymnastic festivals and the unique sets of slides he has collected in connection with them, combine to make the lecture one of the best in Mr. Levy's comprehensive curriculum of illustrated addresses.

#### FINANCIAL AND COMMERCIAL NEWS FROM SWITZERLAND.

A syndicate, headed by Messrs. J. P. Morgan & Co. in New York, offered there on the 1st of August \$20,000,000 of Swiss 3-year 5% gold notes for subscription. These notes were offered at 97.29 per cent. and thus give a yield of 6 per cent. The loan was quickly over-subscribed. The new notes are redeemable at 100 per cent. plus accrued interest, at the option of the Swiss Government, on the 1st of August, 1925, the 1st of February, 1926, or on three months' notice. It is understood that the proceeds will be used mainly in payment of grain bought in the United States.

The new Federal Loan in Switzerland met with a very favourable reception, and subscriptions amounted to some Frs. 15,000,000 in excess of the offered amount of Frs. 20,000,000. Allotments will probably be on a slightly reduced basis.

The decision of the Federal Courts to allow a reorganisation of the Loetschberg Railway calls attention to the very serious state into which this company's finances were brought as a result of the war. The line was completed not long before the war, and the disorganisation which followed made it quite impossible for the railway to obtain a fair financial start. The line was constructed with the idea of forming a direct link between Central Switzerland and the Simplon Tunnel. It is to be hoped that the drastic reorganisation scheme now planned will be the forerunner of a time of greater prosperity in the company's history.

The Maggi Company, which has its headquarters in Kempthal and carries on a very large international business through its numerous foreign subsidiaries, closed the year to March 31st, 1923 with a net profit of Frs. 1,374,694. This is approximately equivalent to the result of 1921-22, and the directors again recommend payment of a dividend of 6 per cent. on the share capital of Frs. 21,000,000. The activities of the company in foreign markets have naturally been very seriously affected by the exchange conditions which ruled during the year.

#### STOCK EXCHANGE PRICES.

BONDS.		July 24	July 31
Swiss Confederation 3% 1903	...	73.00%	73.35%
Swiss Confed. 9th Mob. Loan 5%	...	100.85%	100.40%
Federal Railways A-K 3% 1912	...	78.75%	77.75%
Canton Basle-Stadt 5½% 1921	...	102.37%	102.25%
Canton Fribourg 3% 1892	...	69.75%	69.00%
SHARES.		July 24	July 31
Swiss Bank Corporation	...	500	642 643
Crédit Suisse	...	500	676 676
Union de Banques Suisses	...	500	523 535
Fabrique Chimique ci-dev. Sandoz	1000	3212	3255
Société pour l'Industrie Chimique	1000	2184	2260
C. F. Bally & Co.	1000	1042	1072
Fabrique de Machines Oerlikon	500	670	672
Entreprises Sulzer	1000	668	662
S.A. Brown Boveri (new)	500	323	322
Nestlé & Anglo-Swiss Cond. Mk. Co.	200	174	171
Choc. Suisses Peter-Cailler-Köhler	100	111	108
Comp. de Navig'n sur le Lac Léman	500	485	485

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