**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:** - (1923)

**Heft:** 130

**Rubrik:** Notes and gleanings

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# The Swiss Observer

Telephone: City 4603. *Published every Friday at* 21, Garlick Hill, London, E.C. 4. Telegrams: Freprinco, London.

No. 130 LONDON, DECEMBER 1, 1923. Price 3d.

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## HOME NEWS

A not very far-reaching reduction in the postal charges comes into force on the 1st of January next: a postcard sent abroad will cost 20 centimes, instead of 25.

* * *

By a unanimous decision the Federal Tribunal has declared void the election of the members of the Communal Council of Knutwil (Lucerne), it having been proved that at the election on July 29 a considerable number of voters hailed from neighbouring districts, their names having been unlawfully entered on the local register.

* * *

By a small majority the voters of the canton of Zurich endorsed an initiative request for the imposition of a special tax on foreigners, residing in the canton, although the authorities recommended rejection on account of such taxation being unconstitutional.

* * *

Swiss emigration to oversea countries is steadily increasing; in October last no less than 1,169 compatriots leaving their homes. The total number of these emigrants for the ten months of the current year amounts to 6,202, against 4,069 in the same period last year.

* * *

The Basle section of the Swiss Republican Union is inviting the other sections to unite with them in taking joint action, in order to present to the Federal Council a petition, asking for legislation against German immigration, the repatriation of German nationals enjoying in Switzerland unemployment benefits, and adequate measures for receiving the many necessitous compatriots who are arriving from abroad and who have, owing to political and economic developments, lost their situations and savings.

* * *

During a demonstration, arranged by the Basle Communists, on Tuesday (Nov. 20th) to protest against the acquittal of Conradi, the building of the *Basler Nachrichten* became the target for a volley of paving stones.

* * *

Some commotion has been caused in Lucerne by the provisional arrest of Dr. jur. Kramis, who ignored a summons to appear before an investigating judge. He stands accused of a number of professional offences, and has been liberated on bail of Frs. 1,000.

* * *

Unconfirmed telegrams report that all Swiss have been expelled from Russia, and that a general boycott of Swiss goods has been decreed.

* * *

"L'Exposition Internationale d'Hygiène" recently held in Strasbourg in honour of Pasteur, has awarded the Grand Prix (its highest distinction) to the S.A. Chocolat Tobler, in recognition of the latter's efforts in the sphere of social welfare.

* * *

In taking the inventory on the death of an old lady, living in St. Blaise (Neuchâtel), who was always regarded as a pauper, the authorities discovered a hoard of Frs. 165,000, mostly in gold.

* * *

Dominic Strambi, a native of Neggio (Ticino), celebrated on Tuesday, Nov. 20th, his hundredth birthday. He still enjoys the best of health. He spent a good deal of his life abroad, fought in the Sonderbund War, and for the last 30 years has lived with his son (the only one left out of a family of ten) at Neuchâtel.

* * *

Dr. Aug. Châtelain, formerly director of the asylum at Préfargier and professor at the university of Neuchâtel, died at St. Blaise at the age of 85.

* * *

One of the most popular and prominent figures in the political life of the canton of Uri passed away, at the age of 79, in the person of alt-Landammann Florian Lusser, who for 25 years, till 1915, was a member of the Ständerat.

## NOTES AND GLEANINGS.

By "Kyburg."

I have heard that my "Thoughts on Armistice Day" have ruffled the feelings of some of my readers, who seem to think that my 'Notes and Gleanings' have one chief object only, i.e., attacking gallant France. Will such readers please accept my assurance that they misunderstand me entirely? Rather, perhaps, I am too jealous of the real glory of French Culture, and, therefore, try to fight against anything which, in my view, tends to destroy such glory. I do not forget that we owe *les droits de l'homme* to French Culture, neither do I forget that the birth and growth of Liberalism in the 19th century was due to the French Revolution.

On the other hand, I cannot shut my eyes to facts. I cannot and will not write comments which, to my mind, are not true. I will not, even at the risk of offending some people, refrain from writing what I think ought to be written.

But—and again I ask my readers to believe me—I never write anything for the love of offending anybody, nor do I ever consider whether my writing could be said to be *pro* this or *anti* that. I write from a purely humanitarian point of view. I try to follow in my comments Christian principles as I am able to understand them.

I am fully aware that I may often err, that my judgment, especially in these 'Notes and Gleanings,' may often be unsound. I do not claim pontifical wisdom, but I claim that when I do comment on any matter which crops up, political or otherwise, my comments are honest and given without any consideration for the feelings of one section or another.

I have, so far, been under the impression that this was what my readers wanted, and until stopped, I intend continuing the Fight for the Might of Right.

**Conradi Trial.**

*Morning Post* (20th Nov.):—

Every now and then history records a revolt, based on moral indignation, against the logical processes of judicial procedure. The Swiss jury which found that the Russian Conradi had killed the Bolshevist emissary Vorovsky, but at the same time declared both him and his accomplice Polunin not guilty, were literally driven to their verdict by the appalling revelations, made during the trial, concerning the atrocities and misgovernment of the Bolsheviks in Russia. The proceedings, indeed, developed from the trial of two Russians into an examination of Bolshevism, and it ended in such an indictment of its iniquities that the jury acquitted the prisoners, their verdict being received with general approval by the Swiss nation.

*The Westminster Gazette* (20th Nov.):—

It is not possible to congratulate Switzerland on the outcome of the Conradi trial. Here is a man who kills a foreign delegate in cold blood, and he goes scot-free, because his victim was a representative of the Bolshevik Government, and he and his family had suffered severely at the hands of the Bolsheviks.

His sufferings and the consequent state of his mind might have been a reason for mitigation of sentence, but the acquittal is difficult to regard as anything but an expression of prejudice.

I heard the verdict when going to my train one evening, and glancing up to the electric light newspaper in Trafalgar Square, I confess, when I read that Conradi had been found not guilty, I felt very uneasy and ashamed, although I reflected that the verdict may be taken as an extension of the right of asylum, accorded by our country to political law-breakers. All the same, such a verdict opens up unpleasant possibilities.

**Winter Clothing.**

Now that Winter is upon us, the following article from the well-known Dr. C. W. Salceby will be of interest, and its inclusion in 'Notes and Gleanings' may, I hope, be instrumental in saving some of my readers' lives.

*Daily Chronicle* (20th Nov.):—

The winter is upon us, and for our country as a whole the times are hard.

We should learn how to clothe ourselves and how to feed ourselves with the best economy of health and of money. The two subjects go together, for the greater part of the bulk of our food is nothing more or less than fuel, used partly for muscular work and partly to keep us warm.

If we go about almost unclothed, like the tuberculous patients undergoing the sun cure in Switzerland, we needs must eat enormously; but if we most foolishly spend the winter in heavy woolen clothing, crouched over the fire, the less we eat, within limits, the better. In this article, however, I have no space to discuss winter feeding as well as winter clothing, which is well worth considering on its own account.

We have in this country the foremost student in the world of all the problems of clothing from the standpoint of health. That assertion is not misplaced patriotism. Any authority on the subject, in Germany or America, who read it would instantly think of Dr. Leonard Hill, F.R.S., Director of the Department of Applied Physiology, under the Medical Research Council, and would agree with it.

Dr. Hill and his fellow-workers have shown, beyond question, that most of us tend to fear the cold unduly and to overclothe ourselves accordingly. Polar expeditions are not here in question; the discussion is as to our very moderate winters in this country. The evidence steadily accumulates to show that, if we are suitably fed, the cold is not our foe at all.

The death-rate in our winters is largely raised by their notorious dirt and artificial darkness; but to confuse their action with the action of cold is mere stupidity. Dr. Hill's dictum is that "Cold is an enemy of the half-starved; it is a stimulating friend of the well-fed"—and well-sunlit, I would add, after what I have seen in visits to Switzerland, Canada, and Finland.

Further, Dr. Hill has proved that we pay relatively too much attention to the material of our clothes and too little to its texture. Wool, for instance, has a high reputation as wool; but whereas the woollen texture of a chest-protector makes that article of wear nothing else than a chest-destroyer, by its dense, unventilated, skin-congesting-and-smothering embrace, the woollen texture of, say, a Shetland spencer is ideal—practically as perfect as the woollen coat of the sheep itself.

No matter what material we wear, our clothing should be lose in texture, light in weight, tight nowhere, readily and thoroughly absorbent, readily and thoroughly washable. Those are the principles which each of us must apply, according to our individual experience and preference.

I remember being much worried by colds in the throat in my very young days, until our family doctor one day, to the horror of my mother, pulled off the heavy muffler which protected (!) my throat, and bade me run about in the cold without that woollen sea-serpent. From that day to this I do not remember having caught a cold in the throat. Touch wood!

It is not very long since I used to have an awful lot of articles on Summer Sports in Switzerland from which to make a selection for my readers. For the last few weeks articles on Winter Sports have appeared in the British Press, with beautiful illustrations some of them, and with highly alluring sub-titles, which make it very difficult indeed to sit down and write, instead of rushing to Victoria Station and taking the next train out to our glorious Mountains. This week I will give you the following on "The Lure of the Snow" from the *Daily Graphic*, and other articles will follow later on. I feel that I have to go slowly, otherwise most of my readers will go winter-sport-enjoying, and the extra postage required to send them the *S.O.* would be too heavy a burden on the exchequer of our paper, I think. Anyhow, such burden might affect "Kyburg's" Christmas box very considerably.

One of the most alarming of all the sights in Switzerland, worse, by far, than the funicular, which merely makes your blood beat in your ears, the nursery slopes, which merely make you quake at the thought of tackling anything steeper, and the roar of the avalanche, which merely deafens you, is the ski-jumping ground.

Jumping on skis is like slipping at lightning speed down the side of one vast roof, out into mid-air for 150 feet, and then going on down the side of another roof at incredible speed into a valley so far below that you dare not even look down into it from the jumping platform in cold blood.

When you take a running dive from a great height into deep water, you have very little to think about, and the sense of danger is practically non-existent.

In ski-jumping you have to crouch, lock your knees together, spring well out, tilt your body forward, stretch your arms out like the wings of a soaring bird, and do a hundred things in a moment of time, while you are simply livid with fear.

There is, of course, as little real danger of your hurting yourself as there is in diving, but the actual sight of the slope is so awe-inspiring that you make every pretxt to avoid learning the art. And yet, all the best ski-runners advise one to learn to jump as soon as you can turn and run.

As a final piece of advice, I should recommend you to enter, whenever possible, for the ski-ing tests.

There is no sport which so soon gives you a good conceit (wholly undeserved) of your prowess as ski-ing. Anglers' stories are contemptibly unimaginative in comparison with the newly-fledged ski-runners' yarns. It is a good thing, therefore, actually to have your capabilities judged by people who know.

The third-class test is quite difficult enough to search out your shortcomings in your first season. To pass this, you have to satisfy the examiners that you are capable of making three Telemark turns in succession, without stopping, and three stemming-turns in succession, without stopping. You have then to climb 1,500 feet of virgin snow, with a nine-pound pack on your back, in about an hour, and then come down in less than nine minutes. The ascent is easy; and, if you can avoid falling, the time allowed for the descent is ludicrously adequate.

If your skis come off, you stand no chance; if the snow is sticky, and you have forgotten to wax your skis, you stand no chance. You must be prepared to fail in this test three or four times. To get through it at one's first attempt, is almost a sign of genius.

The second-class test is to test the capacity of those who wish to essay long cross-country tours over untracked country for days at a time. It requires great skill and fine physique, and is only to be recommended to the few.

The holders of the first-class medals are very rare; they are men who are surer of themselves on skis than they are on horseback or on foot. To watch them gliding over the most terrifying slopes, effortlessly threading their way past boulders and through a forest of trees, swinging or stopping in mid-career as a bird sways or stops in a high gale, is to make one realise in some small degree how exquisite a thing is the Conquest of the Snow.

**Capital Levy.**

Switzerland is mentioned rather often just now in British newspapers in connection with the Capi-

tal Levy, and most of the papers print something like the following, taken from an article by Harold Cox in the *Financial Times* (Nov. 21st):—

Last year the Swiss Socialists, in obedience to their Marxian creed, put forward a proposal for a capital levy. Promptly many of the owners of capital removed their mobile capital out of harm's way, to the grave injury of Swiss industries.

The evil would have been much graver but for the good sense of the Swiss people, who, on a referendum, rejected the Socialist scheme by an overwhelming majority.

The lines quoted give quite a good picture of the "patriotism" of most of our Swiss capital owners. There, as evidently here, patriotism and democratic principles are fine when you happen to be in the majority; but when there is any danger of the other side getting the majority, i.e., the right to decide, then it is time to clear out with your worldly goods! Do not be offended, dear reader! "Kyburg" at that time happened to keep his head, advised others to do so as well, and realised that, if the capital levy was to come by the vote of the majority of our people, we would have to make the best of it, or abandon our democratic principles, and "Kyburg," therefore, has a good right to deride those whose patriotism is too closely allied to their purse! What, however, most British newspapers fail to tell their readers—with good cause, of course—is that the Capital Levy, as proposed by the Swiss Socialistic Party in 1922, was something much more drastic than the Debt Redemption Scheme, proposed by the British Labour Party. The latter scheme differs as much from the former as does an air-gun dart from a Big Bertha shell! What British papers also fail to tell their readers is that we in Switzerland have, of course, a capital levy all the time in the form of our fortune tax. Well do I know it. Besides, what about our special capital levy war taxes?

I give you the above thoughts in case you happen to discuss these matters with English friends. Remembering some facts often prevents one assenting to absurd conclusions.

At the City Swiss Club, the other night, a friend of mine, who had evidently been unable to understand how I could smile in spite of my losses at bridge, said, after thinking hard for an explanation of that phenomenon, "Well, I am afraid 'Kyburg's' losing means that M. Poincaré is going to get it again in the next issue of *The Swiss Observer*!" Now, I wish to put it on record that I won very handsomely last Tuesday evening, so that I cannot be influenced by any such memories of a depleted purse.

And yet, I cannot help giving my readers the following from *The Observer* (Nov. 25th):—

Under the pressure of French policy another German Republican Government has tumbled. Herr Ebert and, during his term of office, Dr. Stresemann have battled against odds for the life of the infant Republic. M. Poincaré has left nothing undone to suffocate it in its cradle. Government from Berlin is becoming impossible. Democracy in Germany must be a factor of the highest importance for the future security of France. It has not had one chance. It has barely existed. First it was left exposed to the violence of the Communists, then to the depredations—half-sanctioned, as they were, by the financial impolicy of an absurd reparations scheme—of the industrialists, and now to the blind desperation of nationalism. M. Poincaré protests his respect for German unity and German democracy. Who wills the end must will the means. He has given, is giving, Germany one choice only, one outlet for the revival of the German race, one hope of salvation—militarism. Militarism follows anarchy with the certainty of mathematics. M. Poincaré creates what he dreads. He seeks by militarist means to erect against militarism the shaky obstacle of a French Rhineland. In so doing he abandons his control of unoccupied Germany. He leaves it at the mercy of the thing he fears. He bids it look for revenge, with the assurance that at his hands it has nothing else to look for.

Now ask yourself whether Mr. Garvin is right or wrong. Let me know your honest opinion, if you care to do so. I'll undertake to study your opinion honestly and carefully and to comment on it, unless you mark your letter "private." The whole matter is not a question of *pro* this or *pro* that, but a question of Humanity and Christianity, and as such affecting Switzerland very seriously. It behoves us, therefore, to study it and to endeavour to direct our thoughts and therefore our actions, however insignificant in themselves, into the right channels. *Think it over!*

## Association of British Members of the Swiss Alpine Club.

The Association of British Members of the Swiss Alpine Club held a most successful winter dinner at the Royal Adelaide Gallery on the 28th Nov., with Dr. H. L. R. Dent, the well-known pioneer of guideless climbing, in the Chair. Among the guests were the Lord Chief Justice of England, the Right Hon. Lord Hewart, Brig.-Gen. the Hon. C. G. Bruce, C.B., M.V.O., of Mount Everest fame, the Swiss Minister, Monsieur C. R. Paravicini, and the President of the City Swiss Club, Mr. Rueff.

After the loyal toast had been drunk with enthusiasm, the toast to the Swiss Confederation was proposed by E. R. Taylor, Esq., who commented upon the fact that four different races were living amicably together in Switzerland, and who expressed the hope, enthusiastically welcomed by the Assembly, that Switzerland might absorb France and Germany, and thereby put an end to present strife. He also spoke approvingly of Swiss postal arrangements, and paid a well-deserved compliment to Mr. G. Dimier for his unceasing labours in making the British public acquainted with the beauties of Swiss Alpine scenery.

Our Minister, rising to respond to the toast, paid a graceful compliment to that complete sportsman, Dr. Dent, and, turning to Brig.-Gen. Bruce, expressed his pleasure that, in spite of the General's flirtations with the Himalaya, he had not lost his youthful passion for the Jungfrau of Switzerland. In the course of a much-applauded speech, interspersed here and there with some original and witty passages, our Minister laid stress on the fact that it is due to the love of mountaineering drawing so many British lovers of this best of all sports to our country, that Great Britain knows Switzerland otherwise than from the commercial side, and that, therefore, the friendship between the two nations is so firmly established.

After Sir R. Leonard Powell had proposed "The Alpine Club and Kindred Societies," Brig.-Gen. Bruce, President of the Alpine Club, and R. S. T. Chorley, Esq. (Fell and Rock Climbing Club) responded, the former emphasizing the good work which was being done, and which ought to be intensified still more, in connection with the erection of Alpine Huts, the latter pointing out that mountaineering demands very serious training, for which the facile winter sport escapades now so much in vogue, especially among the younger people cannot be a substitute.

"The Visitors" were proposed by W. M. Roberts, Esq., who mentioned that he had had the pleasure of meeting Lord Hewart some years ago at a dinner party, when the present Lord Chief Justice, discussing certain matters with him, agreed with his own views, since when he, Mr. Roberts, had held Lord Hewart in increased esteem. Mr. Roberts also commented upon the pecuniary advantages accruing from membership of the S.A.C., for instance, rebate of railway fares, so that, if a member went to Zermatt for a few weeks, and travelled up to the Gornergrat every day, he would save enough to pay his subscriptions for several years.

Lord Hewart, responding in a most enjoyable speech, in the course of which witty and extremely neat points followed each other to the great delight of those present, commenting upon the difficulties and prowess related by previous speakers—although not necessary to be believed!—said that it reminded him of some parts of the British Constitution, of which it was said that they must be venerated if they could not be comprehended. Referring to the difficulty of making an *ex tempore* speech, although everybody knew that such speeches as a rule were very carefully prepared, he felt tempted to follow the advice, once given by Lord Palmerston, at one of the Ministerial Whitebait dinners, now unfortunately abandoned, down at Greenwich. Lord Palmerston, looking down upon a plate of whitebait lying on a table before him, expressed his opinion that he should follow the example of those wise little fish and "drink well and say nothing." However, Lord Hewart proceeded, to the delight of all present, and terminated by saying that, in spite of the financial allurements, held out by the previous speaker to prospective candidates for membership of the Association, and remembering the very excellent dinner, and the nice way the invited guests had been treated this evening, he asked the company to believe that "It is a far, far better thing to be a visitor."

J. A. B. Bruce, Esq., to whose untiring efforts the Association owes its present flourishing condition, referred affectionately to the past Presidents, and thanked Dr. Dent for having accepted office this year, assuring him of the affectionate regard of all members, which assurance was seconded by the Secretary, Capt. Andrews.

The Chairman, Dr. H. L. R. Dent, wound up this most enjoyable evening by testifying to his passionate love of the mountains, a feeling which, I am sure, the Swiss compatriots present were not the last to understand and to share. Kyburg.

## SWISS CONTEMPORARY MUSIC.

### CHAMBER-MUSIC CONCERT.

It speaks well for the enthusiasm of music-lovers that there was such a good turn-out on Monday evening (Nov. 26th) to hear some of the works of our modern native composers, for the weather was particularly inclement, being very cold and foggy, and our fireside armchairs were unusually inviting. But it was worth the effort, and those of us who found our way to Ashburton Hall, Red Lion Square, spent a most interesting and delightful evening.

The concert opened with a piano solo by Mr. Ronald Chamberlain, who played Emil Froy's 2nd Sonata. Mr. Chamberlain has fine technique, and seemed, as far as one could judge without knowing the music well, to be in full sympathy with the moods of the composer. From the music itself, the Russian training of the composer could be easily detected, there being several passages in both movements of distinctly Russian flavour.

The four songs, "Frühlicht" (Walter Lang), "Die Einsame," "Erinnerung," and "Reiselied" (Othmar Schoeck) were admirably sung by Miss Sophie Wyss, who possesses a singularly clear and sweet soprano voice. Her enunciation and purity of tone are specially to be praised, and her expression is excellent. The melodies of Schoeck's songs, grave and gay, bring out to a marked degree the spirit that inspired the words to which they were written.

Miss Violet Clifford Austin showed excellent taste in her selection from the works of Volkmar Andreae, making it so comprehensive as to enable the audience to visualise the temperament of the composer. The "Præludium," for instance, with its rapid changes from the solemn, almost religious, note to the happy, care-free, lilting refrain, seemed specially to indicate this. Miss Austin also played a "Scherzo" by Walter Lang, and "Reigen" (Carnevalsszenen) by Hans Huber, the latter piece being vigorously applauded, as was her whole performance.

The Sonata in D (op. 16) for violin and piano (Othmar Schoeck), played by Miss Margaret Woodhouse and Mr. Ronald Chamberlain, left a good deal to be desired. To give due credit to the artists, we do not think a better rendering could have been given, except perhaps in technique. The music, particularly the first two movements, seemed a little incomplete and ill-balanced, while Miss Woodhouse was somewhat uncertain and her tone deficient. The whole renderinng appeared to suffer from lack of expression.

This concluded the programme, and, taken all round, the concert was a great success. We would welcome more such concerts, and perhaps on a larger scale, to bring these works into greater prominence. It should not be long before Swiss music is well to the fore, ranking with some of the best of the world's modern compositions.

R. D. M.

## Mr. ROD. GAILLARD'S RECITAL.

Mr. Rodolphe Gaillard is well known by most of *The Swiss Observer* readers, and, judging by the well-filled hall at Friday night's (Nov. 23rd) concert, many of his friends had the pleasure of enjoying his sympathetic baritone in songs by Bach, Strattner, Schubert, Schumann, Scott and Quilter. His rendering of Schubert and Schumann appealed to me most, the sentimental and often passionate passages suiting his voice perfectly.

Miss Marga Stella sang several solos and also some duets with Mr. Gaillard; she has a beautiful voice and knows how to use her clear, warm soprano to best advantage. Mr. George Reeves accompanied perfectly. G. N.

## STOCK EXCHANGE PRICES.

| Bonds. | Nov. 20 | Nov. 26 |
|---|---|---|
| Swiss Confederation 3% 1903 ... | 74.00% | 74.25% |
| Swiss Confed. 9th Mob. Loan 5% | 100.35% | 100.37% |
| Federal Railways A—K 3½% ... | 76.77% | 77.54% |
| Canton Basle-Stadt 5½% 1921 ... | 101.95% | 101.62% |
| Canton Fribourg 3% 1892... ... | 67.50% | 68.00% |

| Shares. | Nom. Frs. | Nov. 20 Frs. | Nov. 26 Frs. |
|---|---|---|---|
| Swiss Bank Corporation ... ... | 500 | 641 | 646 |
| Crédit Suisse ... ... ... | 500 | 673 | 675 |
| Union de Banques Suisses... ... | 500 | 535 | 540 |
| Fabrique Chimique ci-dev. Sandoz | 1000 | 3160 | 3197 |
| Société pour l'Industrie Chimique | 1000 | 2198 | 2235 |
| C. F. Bally S.A. ... ... ... | 1000 | 1092 | 1140 |
| Fabrique de Machines Oerlikon... | 500 | 617 | 622 |
| Entreprises Sulzer ... ... | 1000 | 600 | 600 |
| S.A. Brown Boveri (new) ... ... | 500 | 265 | 265 |
| Nestlé & Anglo-Swiss Cond. Mk. Co. | 200 | 167 | 170 |
| Choc. Suisses Peter-Cailler-Kohler | 100 | 107 | 106 |
| Comp. de Navig'n sur le Lac Léman | 500 | 485 | 480 |

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