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HOME NEWS

By a very large majority our people rejected the two measures which were submitted to their judgment last Sunday, the 17th inst. "Preventive arrest" (Schutzhalt) was repudiated by 8 to 1, and this result was a foregone conclusion; the voting on the Zones Convention, however, has astounded even those who anticipated rejection. We reproduce the official figures so far published; with the exception of Fribourg, Ticino, Vaud and Neuchâtel the "Noes" have had it in every canton for both proposals:—

	Preventive Arrest	Zones Convention	Yes	No	Yes	No
Zurich	9323	89267	5707	94622		
Berne	9986	61728	8640	64617		
Lucerne	1083	10387	1504	10015		
Uri	79	2829	86	2858		
Schwyz	438	5230	181	5539		
Obwalden	121	1374	314	1157		
Nidwalden	57	1206	166	1086		
Glarus	615	5140	174	5684		
Zug	227	2638	125	2787		
Fribourg	1172	16116	11082	6333		
Solothurn	855	11746	566	12389		
Basel-Stadt	2871	17043	1676	18388		
Basel-Land	968	8917	610	9537		
Schaffhausen	1036	8116	640	8810		
Appenzell A.-Rh.	640	8617	588	8618		
Appenzell L.Rh.	74	1579	72	1579		
St. Gall	3516	44930	3801	44651		
Graubünden	1395	13675	2185	12935		
Aargau	2789	44860	1933	46333		
Thurgau	2699	22688	3738	21607		
Ticino	1462	7532	5060	3677		
Vaud	8672	22064	22179	8790		
Valais	1327	11371	5923	5574		
Neuchâtel	1467	8388	7047	2807		
Geneva	2167	13019	8603	8879		
Total	54830	440495	92541	410227		

Slightly over half of the voters went to the poll, which, of course, did not reach the figures in the case of the Capital Levy. It is remarkable that in the cantons most interested in the Zones Convention the percentage of votes cast was far below the Federal average (Geneva 45%, Valais 35%, Vaud 38%). Speaking in round figures, the 'Suisse romande' has by sixty thousand votes to thirty-five thousand votes declared herself in favour of the Convention, whilst in the remaining part of Switzerland 370,000 against 30,000 have recorded their veto. The surprising result in the canton Ticino, where only 25% took the trouble of voting, is probably due to the personal influence of Federal Councillor Motta.

Some piquant comments on the voting have appeared in the French Press. The *Gaulois* asserts that the result is due to a systematic and ruthless propaganda, assisted by immense sums on the part of Germany. The *Action Française* opines that it is simply a protest against the French occupation of the Ruhr and that the Alemanic part of Switzerland is, for this reason, not inclined to entertain friendly relations with its western neighbour! The *Temps* is more to the point and says that the Treaty of Versailles has practically settled the matter. The *Journal des Débats* believes that the considerable adverse vote represents an expression of protest and dissatisfaction over the unsatisfactory economic conditions in existence since the armistice and for which misguided public opinion in Switzerland is blaming French militarism.

A number of other cantonal legislative measures were submitted to the plebiscite. In the canton of Zurich, out of five proposals only one (Automobilgesetz) was accepted; the suggested reduction in the number of cantonal councillors and the admission of woman to vote on church and "poor" matters was declined.

The canton Basel-Stadt rejected two initiatives which intended to admit members of religious orders as teachers in the public schools, and to secure financial assistance from the State for private schools. The much-discussed establishment of a

public club-house (Volkshaus) was sanctioned by a small majority.

Schaffhausen passed two new laws, one regulating the sale of cattle, and another imposing taxes on motor-cars.

The Grand Conseil of Fribourg proposes to enact a new law to counteract strikes. Civil servants and employees of municipal enterprises will be liable to summary dismissal if they join a strike movement, and anyone inciting State employees to strike may be prosecuted and imprisoned.

Unemployment in Switzerland has shown a slight increase during the month of January, the total figure being 76,143, as compared with 73,892 for the month of December last. The worsening is chiefly due to unfavourable conditions in the textile, wood-working and chemical industries.

Swiss watch manufacturers continue to hold their own in the world's markets. The official figures recording tests, made by the Naval Observatory at Washington, extending over a period of three years, have just been published. Longines, Nardin and Vacheron et Constantin top the list with their deck-watches and torpedo-boat watches.

Fernand Tavel, a well-known genealogist, died at Lausanne at the age of 67. He was one of the architects employed at the construction of the Eiffel Tower, and the author of many important works on genealogy.

Mistaken jealousy is said to have been the cause of a crime which was enacted on Thursday evening (Feb. 15th) in the Bremgarten Forest, near Berne. Paul Tschudi, a law student of Sissach, was enjoying a walk with his fiancée, Ruth Kocher (from Oberwil), when the latter was accosted by an unknown individual, who pretended to recognize in her an old acquaintance; after a heated altercation he pulled out his revolver, shot her dead on the spot and took to his heels. Her stupefied companion, after remaining with the body till darkness fell, left for his home to write a report to the police, and subsequently returned to the scene of the crime, where he then committed suicide.

NOTES AND GLEANINGS.

The Cresta Run

has provided English newspaper readers with two excellent pen-pictures, one, from the sportsman's point of view, by Sir John Fraser in the *Daily Dispatch* (Feb. 9th):—

"It is a fine sight to see the young fellows, in attire somewhat suggestive of airmen, assemble to take their turn. The telegraph signals that the course is clear, and the runner stands ready for the starter to shout: 'Are you ready?'

With a few swift strides the toboggan is pushed, the rider throws himself flat, and the invisible thread is broken. With a dull roar the steel runners tear over the ice. There is a grand stand at Battledore-Shuttlecock, where, with the gathered impetus, the racer does not keep to the trough, but swerves up the wall, drops, and in a twinkling is sweeping along the side of the other icewall.

Now the pace is terrific. Like a flash the racer goes tearing down the 'straight' across the road under the railway arch, another violent fling and a throw, next a breathless leap—and then another visible thread has been snapped, the time registered, and the rider has his rakes tearing the ground as he is hurried uphill to a stop.

It is all a matter of tenths of seconds. Men practise day after day, and are tremendously 'bucked' if, during several mornings, they can cut their time by half a second."

—and this other, from the point of view of the fair sex, by Lady Diana Cooper in the *Daily Mail* (Feb. 9th):—

"If a Victoria Cross and £100,000 a year were the rewards for going down the Cresta, the number of people who do it daily would not be surprising. But that anyone should do it for pleasure is as astonishing as the performance of an Indian fakir who voluntarily buries himself alive.

Even to watch it is terrifying. A rattle and clash like the sound of an express train, and round the corner, at an angle of 45 degrees, whizzes into sight a fellow-creature, stretched upon a slab of iron, with anxious face uplifted and waving feet. Before you can recognise him, he is gone, and you wait anxiously for the signal that he has safely arrived at the bottom. The machine on which he travels is grimly called a skeleton."

But, lest anyone take fright, let us hasten to add that dancing and the more gentle sporting activities, such as curling, skating and skiing, are still going strong in all our Swiss winter sport centres. There is still time, *mes amis!*



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The "White Gentleman."

With our mind fixed on the glorious snow of our mountains, and battling hard to fight down that insensate longing of which the old song "Zu Strassburg auf den langen Brück" reminds us, what more natural than to pass on to one of our compatriots who achieved the ambition of his youth? In the *Evening News* (Feb. 9th) we find W. Crawford Snowdon paying tribute to the memory of Henri Dunant, the founder of the Red Cross, telling the glorious fight Dunant started with his terrible "Souvenir de Solferino" and brought to a successful issue when on February 9th, 1863, at a meeting at Geneva of a body devoted to philanthropic causes, he proposed that voluntary relief societies to help the wounded in time of war should be formed. Thus began the Red Cross.

Why is it that our compatriots of Calvin-town do not celebrate this event, surely, as fatal as the "Escalade"?

Dr. Spahlinger.

Another Swiss bids fair to become a great benefactor to suffering humanity, namely, Dr. Spahlinger, for whose Serum Treatment for Tuberculosis a Doctors' Appeal for £100,000 is made to provide a Consumption Cure (*Daily News*, Feb. 9th):—

"An appeal for £100,000, to provide for the development of the Spahlinger treatment of tuberculosis, is to be made by a number of British medical men who are compelled to remain anonymous owing to the General Medical Council's ban on 'oblique advertisement'."

The proposal is supported by the Archbishop of Canterbury and General Sir Frederick Maurice. The British Red Cross Society have made a substantial contribution."

With the knowledge of the enormous ravages, caused by this terrible illness, one dare not even contemplate ultimate failure. So far this treatment has achieved very promising results.

Dr. Röntgen.

Our little country may justly claim credit for a part, at least, of Dr. Röntgen's scientific equipment, for he was educated partly in Switzerland. His death has brought forth a very interesting article in *The Daily Telegraph* (Feb. 12th), which states that "the scientific world, which does not acknowledge the narrow boundaries of nationalism, will unite in regretting the death of Prof. Röntgen, the discoverer of the famous X-rays, which also bear his name."

Why can't we all be of a scientific mind and forget the narrow boundaries of nationalism? If this be Utopia, surely Science, according to the above, moves in Utopian circles! Which is absurd, which etc....until we come to the *quod erat demonstrandum*.

Rights of Foreigners in France.

According to the *Financial News*, reporting on the Annual Meeting of the British Chamber of Commerce in Paris, the French Chamber of Deputies recently passed a Bill, which, if it became law, would make it necessary for foreigners to obtain a special permit to be allowed to possess