

**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:** - (1924)  
**Heft:** 136  
  
**Rubrik:** Notes and Gleanings

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PRICE 3d.

are not the ice and the snow of which we have heard so much lately, but our Electric Power, or rather the natural water-forces which can be made to generate it. My readers know, of course, that this power, to call it by this short name, is a tremendous potential asset in our national resources, and our Government has very wisely taken steps to prevent greedy concession hunters from playing "ducks and drakes" with this asset.



Export was being strictly controlled, not with any Tariff Reform idea, but, as stated, in the interests of the country as a whole, it being felt rightly that the mere accident, by which some of our cantons enjoy more of this power than others, should not enable any of them to get rich by selling concessions to foreign or even Swiss syndicates for export purposes. Now I find that some arrangement has been come to by which some of the surplus power, generated in our Southern Canton Tessin, will be used for Lombardy. *The Financial Times* (2nd Jan.) states:—

The Swiss Government has authorised the export of 5,000 kilowatts of water power, contracted by the Società Elettrica Ticinese Bellinzona with the Società Elettrica Lombarda Piemontese, Milan.

Great importance is attached to this step, which is the first of its kind, by electrical trade circles, it being known that diffidence has existed, so far, in both countries regarding the importation and exportation of water power.

#### International Congress on Industrial Health.

The health of the industrial worker is engaging expert attention everywhere, and an International Congress on Industrial Health is to be held at Geneva this summer. *The Lancet* (29th Dec.) says:—

A group of Swiss medical men, interested in industrial health questions, met at Berne last October and constituted themselves as the Swiss Organising Committee for an International Congress on Industrial Health, to be held at Geneva from July 18th to 20th, 1924. The committee consists of Prof. von Gonzenbach (Zurich), Prof. W. Silberschmidt (Zurich), Prof. H. Zangger (Zurich), Dr. A. Rossi (Lugano), Dr. H. Carrière, Director of the Public Health Service, and Prof. H. Cristiani (Geneva), the last-named being chairman. This first congress will deal with the following questions: Industrial lighting and eyestrain; impure air in factories; the value of fatigue tests. The committee has asked prominent men of science who have given special attention to these questions to draw up reports on them, and three such reports will be presented for each question. The office of the committee is at the Institut d'Hygiène of the University of Geneva, and all persons wishing to take part in the congress should communicate with the committee at that address, from which further information may be obtained.

More elbow-room to them all!

#### Death of a Famous Abbot.

*Catholic Herald* (29th Dec.):—

Swiss Catholicity is in mourning, following upon the death of Dom Thomas Bossart, Prince-Abbot of Einsiedeln. This illustrious ecclesiastic was born on September 17th, 1858, at Altschöfen, of parents who were noted for their great devotion to the Faith. Young Gaspard Bossart felt attracted towards the religious life at an early age, and he soon assumed the Benedictine habit at Einsiedeln under the name of Fr. Thomas Aquinas. He studied theology at the Gregorian University at Rome, and had the honour to have as his tutor the priest who is now known to-day as Cardinal Billot.

Upon returning to his monastery, Fr. Thomas occupied the Chair of Theology. In 1905 he was elected Prince-Abbot in succession to Dom Colomban, and from that day he applied himself to the development of all the traditions of the Benedictine Order. He eventually became noted far and wide on account of his piety, and on certain days, when it was known that he was celebrating Mass, great crowds used to visit the abbey.

Through his mediation many Protestants were led to the true Faith. The merits of Dom Bossart attracted the attention of Pope Pius X. and also Cardinals Mathieu and Rampolle. There was no doubt that the authorities at the Vatican would have welcomed his elevation to the Cardinalate.

The funeral of Dom Bossart was attended by four bishops and three hundred priests. Delegates were also present from the cantons of Schwyz, Lucerne and Unterwalden. The Protestants of Zurich sent a special message of condolence.

A special message of sympathy was received from the Pope, who stated that he was offering special prayers for the eternal repose of "this worthy servant of the Church."

Dom Ignace Staub, of Munsingen, has been elected Prince-Abbot of Einsiedeln Monastery in succession to the late Prince-Abbot, Dom Thomas Bossart. The new Prince-Abbot was born on Dec. 19th, 1872; he took the vows on Sept. 8th, 1893, and was ordained priest on July 16th, 1899.

You will notice that "the Protestants of Zurich sent a special message of condolence," which is as it ought to be. Listening-in last Sunday to the Sermon broadcasted from St. Martin's-in-the-Field, I was much struck by two things which were said by the eminent preacher. One was to the effect that if the theologians were taken off altogether, there would remain no theological crisis; the other thing was an expression of very anxious enquiry, to which it was easy to divine the preacher's own answer, as to whether the Church would not attack Christ if He were to come among us once more, just as did the Church in His time?

Faith is what is required, and Faith alone can lead to progress in humanitarian and religious thought. All the rest is byplay, clever, but, oh! so very irrelevant! And strife between Christian Churches is an irrelevant thing altogether.

#### A Step in the Right Direction—

is being made, it seems, by our Government in order to come into line on the vexatious question of Drugs. *The Star* (1st Jan.):—

The Swiss Federal Home Department is submitting to the Governments of Cantons a Bill regarding narcotics, enforcing the principle that morphinism and cocaine mania shall be classed among particularly dangerous diseases.

The Bill is directed against morphine, coca leaves, cocaine, all derivatives or salts, and all alkaloids of opium. It controls the manufacture and traffic in these products, which will be centralised in the Federal authority.

Authorisation to export into countries which have

adhered to The Hague Convention will be subject to special license by competent authorities of the State interested. The penalties for infraction of the law are very vigorous.

#### An Appreciation of a Swiss Hospital—

appears in the *Nursing Mirror* (29th Dec.):—

A "busman's holiday" attracts most of us, so that the suggestion we should visit the local hospital while on our holiday in Switzerland met with our full approval.

Lugano, hardly knowing whether it is Swiss or Italian, boasts two hospitals, and patients appear to be admitted to either, regardless of nationality. Our visit was to the Swiss municipal one, but we found neither French nor German was of much use to us as a means of communication. Fortunately, our guide was a young doctor (we knew him as such by the inevitable stethoscope hanging out of his pocket!) who was able to act as interpreter when needed, and smiles did the rest. Certainly the "atmosphere" of the whole place was a very pleasant one, and we got a very definite sense of kindness from everybody.

The hospital is an imposing-looking white building, covering much space. The broad corridor runs the whole length, making a great deal of walking for the sisters (who are religious as well as nursing sisters) and their assistants in their care of the patients. The hospital is a two-storied building, with two sisters on each floor, and it is fortunate that of the 25–30 beds for which each is responsible rarely more than half are occupied. Moreover, patients stay at the hospital till they are far advanced in convalescence. This, of course, lessens the work, otherwise it would not be possible for the patients to receive much nursing, when each sister has only two untrained assistants to help her. The assistants are male and female, and there seems very little attempt to make a training school of the hospital.

The whole place is built with a lavish disregard of space, and has every possible labour-saving device. Possibly the lack of discipline and very comfortable-looking beds make up for the somewhat barrack-like appearance of the whole. But we English sisters certainly missed the wink of brass and the relief from white walls which flowers and screens give. Perhaps, too, "pros," would prefer the extra work entailed by trolleys and other requisites necessary for doing dressings in the wards, rather than having all these done in the beautiful little theatre provided for the purpose, with the alternative, apparently, of scrubbing the bath-room floor, as we saw a nurse doing.

The wide verandas in the main building, as well as in those of the separate blocks comprising the wards for pulmonary tuberculosis and the children's wards, left nothing to be desired. There was an exquisite view of the mountains, and the smiling, sunny peace without seemed reflected within and left a lasting impression to the visitors to the Swiss Hospital at Lugano.

#### Winter Sports—

are still given great prominence in the British Press. I think it would tire my readers to quote from those articles. They are very much alike, and, besides, my readers are now thinking of business and other matters. It is funny, I think, how such articles lose their charm for the stay-at-home person, once one is in harness again and when it is no earthly use toying even with the idea that perhaps, and provided that so-and-so, etc., etc., one might all the same manage a short run across Europe in order to join the happy crowd winter-sporting. So I think I will leave this subject alone this week, all the more so as Winter Sport, in my mind, is closely allied to visions of some of us sitting happily round a table in some jolly old Bündnerstübli, drinking Veltliner! And this vision is too much for me to-night, especially after the tremendous disappointment concerning the "Dézaley Clos des Moines de Kyburg," to which I have already alluded.

#### FINANCIAL AND COMMERCIAL NEWS FROM SWITZERLAND.

A new textile concern has just been founded in Zurich under the title of the Setina Company, which is to interest itself especially in the manufacture of artificial silk.

An interesting supplement to the current trade returns is afforded by the statistics of goods, passing into Switzerland through Genoa during the year 1923. The total quantity amounted to 231,000 tons, the largest proportion being made up of grain, and its balance mostly of coal, cotton and foodstuffs. The quantity thus transported shows an increase of 62,000 tons, as compared with the figures of the preceding year.

The Swiss National Bank's figures of bank clearings for 1923 show an improvement of approximately 1,100 million francs on those of the preceding year, the increase having been spread fairly steadily over the whole period since March.

The latest monthly bulletin, issued by the Swiss Bank Corporation from their Basle office, contains the index number of the prices of representative securities quoted on the Swiss Stock Exchanges up to the end of November, as compiled by the Corporation. The November figure is 85.31 per cent., as compared with a nominal value of 100 per cent., and the calculations comprise 45 bonds of nominal value of Frs. 1,243 million and 21 shares of a total value of Frs. 592,900,000. The way in which prices have moved since the end of 1913 is illustrated by the fact that at that date the index number stood at 117.56 per cent., while in December, 1921, it fell to the low level of 70.79 per cent. In the case of the bonds taken separately the index number for the end of 1913 was 90.57 per cent., and the November, 1923 figure 79.88 per cent., while in the case of the shares the corresponding figures were 183 per cent. and 96.69 per cent. respectively.

#### STOCK EXCHANGE PRICES.

BONDS.		Dec. 31		Jan. 8
		Frs.	Frs.	
Swiss Confederation 3% 1903	...	78.25%	...	72.95%
Swiss Confed. 9th Mob. Loan 5%	...	100.40%	...	100.85%
Federal Railways A—K 3%	...	79.90%	...	80.65%
Canton Basle-Stadt 5½% 1921	...	102.12%	...	102.62%
Canton Fribourg 3% 1892	...	69.50%	...	72.00%

  

SHARES.		Dec. 31		Jan. 8
		Frs.	Frs.	
Swiss Bank Corporation	...	500	655	671
Crédit Suisse	...	500	692	711
Union de Banques Suisses	...	500	557	571
Fabrique Chimique el-dev. Sandoz	...	1000	3420	3547
Société pour l'Industrie Chimique	...	1000	2472	2573
C. F. Bally S.A.	...	1000	1076	1085
Fabrique de Machines Oerlikon	...	500	627	627
Entreprises Sulzer	...	1000	582	620
S.A. Brown Boveri (new)	...	500	267	282
Nestlé & Anglo-Swiss Cond. Mk. Co.	...	200	183	191
Choc. Suisses Peter-Cailler-Kohler	...	100	105	105
Comp. de Navig'n sur le Lac Léman	...	500	467	465

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