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HOME NEWS

The Federal Council has expressed its agreement with the latest French proposals in the Free Zones controversy; each party appoints a lawyer, and the two are expected to work out the procedure and references, on the strength of which the dispute will be adjudicated by an international tribunal.

The State Council of the Canton Ticino has addressed to the Federal Council a memorandum, containing 30 pages, and drawing attention to the precarious financial and economic conditions prevailing in this canton. A number of proposals, suggesting concessions and other privileges, are advanced in order to amend an unsatisfactory state of affairs, which, it is pointed out, is giving rise to much dissatisfaction amongst the local population.

On the proposal of the Federal Council, a credit of Frs. 300,000 has been voted to encourage Swiss exhibits at the "Exposition internationale des arts décoratifs et industriels," to be held next year in Paris.

The Federal Council has recently appointed a foreigner, Prof. Machatschek, to the chair of Geography at the Zurich Polytechnic; this appointment, which ignores Swiss talent, has given rise to varied criticism, and the question is to be raised in the National Council by Councillor Joss.

In the canton of Lucerne the electors rejected last Sunday a Bill (called the Kramis initiative), which made the appointment of cantonal judges and prefects subject to a direct popular vote; the town of Lucerne voted in favour of this innovation.

In the elections for the Grosse Rat of the canton of St. Gall, which took place last Sunday, the different groups practically maintained their former strength, with the exception of the Socialists, who gained three seats at the expense of the Democrats.

The cantonal Technicum in Winterthur celebrated last Saturday (March 29th) the 50th anniversary of its foundation; a torch-light procession in the evening terminating the festivities.

Endeavours are being made again, this time by the Swiss Buyers' League, to suppress the tipping system in hotels and restaurants; conferences to this effect are being held between hotel proprietors and the different unions representing the employees.

In the course of an address, delivered in Zurich at a meeting of the League for the Independence of Switzerland, Col. Weber stated that the country was at present less secure from invasion than before the war, and that, as the League of Nations offered no protection in case our neutrality was violated, the maintenance of a strong and capable army was the only means of obtaining a certain measure of security.

The French ban on the export of vegetables, under which the border towns of Geneva and Basle suffered materially, is likely to be removed in the near future. It is reported that in certain agricultural districts in France the price of greens has fallen to such an extent that farmers refuse to place their produce on the market; the price of cauliflower, for instance, is said to have dropped from 32 francs to 6 francs (French) per dozen.

National Councillor Stoll, the general secretary of the Schweiz. Kaufmänn. Verein (Soc. Suisse des Commerçants) is laid up with a serious illness.

Prof. Dr. Eduard Herzog, bishop and founder of the Old Catholic Church in Switzerland, died on Wednesday, March 26th, in Berne after a long illness at the age of 83. Born in Schongau (Lucerne), he was educated in Lucerne, and completed his theological studies at Freiburg, Tübingen and Munich. After his secession from the

Roman Church he was appointed clergyman in Olten and subsequently in Berne, where he also lectured as professor of the newly created Catholic theological faculty of the university. He was beloved by friend and foe and exercised a worldwide influence in modern religious dogmatic movements. The following is reproduced from the obituary notes published by *The Times*:

"Bishop Herzog was the Bishop in Switzerland of the Old Catholic Church, comprising Roman Catholics who refused to accept the dogma of papal infallibility, promulgated by the Vatican Council in 1870. The great figure in the movement was the learned Dr. Döllinger, who, however, shrank from initiating a schism and refused to be bishop of the new body.

"Herzog, who had been ordained priest in 1867, seceded from the Roman Church with Döllinger, and became an active member of the Old Catholics. These entered into relations with the little Jansenist Church of Utrecht, and in August, 1873, after the celebrated Falk laws had been enacted in Prussia, Prof. J. H. Reinkens, of Breslau, was consecrated at Rotterdam by Bishop Heykamp, of Deventer. Controversies in different countries, in Switzerland especially, on the question of episcopacy hindered the development of the movement, but these were so far composed as to allow of the consecration of Herzog as first Old Catholic Bishop for Switzerland by Bishop Reinkens in September, 1876. Old Catholicism spread to various countries, including the United States, but it can hardly be said that its progress has fulfilled the hopes which were originally entertained by its sympathisers, especially in this country."

THE EIGHTH ANNUAL SWISS SAMPLES FAIR WILL BE HELD AT BASLE

17th to 27th May, 1924.

For information apply to:

The Commercial Division of the Swiss Legation,
32, Queen Anne Street, W.1,

or to:

The Swiss Bank Corporation,
43, Lothbury, E.C. 2 and at Basle.

A special conducted party will be arranged by the *Swiss Observer* to leave London on Saturday, May 17th.

Other travelling facilities may be obtained from the *Swiss Federal Railways*, 11b, Regent Street, S.W.1.

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Le Festspiel du Tir fédéral de 1924. — Le comité chargé des réjouissances artistiques pendant le tir fédéral avait ouvert, l'an dernier, un concours pour la composition d'un festspiel sur les simples données: "Volkskraft-Wehrkraft," c'est-à-dire énergie populaire, vertu militaire du peuple, les deux piliers qui soutiennent l'édifice national. L'examen des manuscrits a mis en vedette un jeune poète soleurois. M. César von Arx, réisseur au Théâtre de Leipzig, dont le travail l'a emporté haut la main sur ceux de ses concurrents en raison de la fantaisie dont il fait preuve, de la forme concise, claire et énergique qu'il a su donner à sa pensée, de son style, d'une puissance entraînante. La pièce est une suite savamment agencée de tableaux de l'histoire suisse, de scènes de meurs de paraboles en quelque sorte et de faits militaires, dont l'inspiration est une, grâce surtout à l'emploi, comme dans la tragédie grecque, de deux chœurs, le "Chœur des mères nourricières," qui poursuivent un idéal de labour paisible, et celui des "Mères guerrières," qui font tendre tous leurs efforts à la valeur militaire, à la force défensive du pays. Ces deux chœurs, aux sentences d'une concision frappante, encadrent l'action, pleine de couleur et de mouvement, qui se déroule sur un vaste théâtre formé de trois scènes successives et disposées en gradins, pourvues chacune de son rideau. Ces tableaux ont été inspirés à l'auteur par les chefs-d'œuvre de Hodler (*le Retour de Marignan, Tell*, etc.).

Voici quelques traits généraux de cette pièce considérable, qui n'exigea pas moins de 100 acteurs et figurants:

Au fond de la scène la "Maison suisse," d'abord en construction, puis en proie aux flammes (Révolution), enfin reconstruite et terminée (1848). Les premiers figurants sont naturellement nos ancêtres des cantons primitifs: Melchthal et son père, Tell et sa famille, Baumgarten, qui tua un bailli de sa hache. Une joyeuse scène de moisson et la montée à l'alpage se déroulent, tandis que l'on entend le bruit lointain de la bataille de Sempach. Puis nous assistons à une foire du XVe siècle, au départ des troupes suisses pour Morat, aux fanfaronnades des troupes du Téméraire, enfin à la bataille elle-même.

C'est ensuite le temps des services mercenaires, de l'esprit d'aventure, et bientôt les Confédérés pleurent le désastre de Marignan.

De tableau en tableau, nous arrivons aux temps modernes: scènes de la Guerre des paysans; Révolution française; Napoléon paraît; Pestalozzi; 1848. La lente construction de la "Maison" s'achève. Une époque de bonheur et de paix commence, l'avenir est plein de promesses, lorsque tout à coup éclate la Guerre mondiale, tempête terrible qui entoure la "Maison suisse" de ses rafales et l'illumine de ses éclairs. C'est alors que les Mères nourricières, restées jusqu'ici étrangères à l'esprit martial, ont recours aux Mères guerrières. Et les Confédérés comprennent que le salut dépend d'une étroite collaboration des Mères nourricières et des Mères guerrières.

L'art de César von Arx fait un abondant emploi de l'antithèse; ainsi, tandis que les Confédérés prononcent, avant la bataille de Morat, leurs prières dans le plus grand recueillement les Bourguignons braillent des chansons grivoises et railleuses; le poète sait aussi condenser en un raccourci saisissant le caractère d'une époque: la Mort, déguisée en soldat suisse, a pris place sur le trône de Charles le Téméraire, où de grands dignitaires laïques et ecclésiastiques lui font une cour empêtrée pour obtenir l'aide militaire des Suisses.

Le texte est mis en musique par Werner Wehrli, le compositeur argovien avantagéusement connu. On peut donc avoir la certitude que ce festspiel sera une manifestation artistique de premier ordre. C'est un résumé d'histoire nationale sous forme d'œuvre d'art, œuvre pénétrée d'un patriotisme non conventionnel, mais ardent et sincère.

(*Journal de Genève*.)

NOTES AND GLEANINGS.

There is very little of general Swiss interest in the English papers of the last week or so, probably due to their having become aware of the absence of "Kyburg," their vigilant chronicler.

The Jewish press is lamenting with their kindred in Switzerland over the French prohibition which stops the supply of "kosher" meat; it seems that a quantity of oxen and other cattle, killed according to Jewish law, were exported to Switzerland for the exclusive benefit of non-gentiles; some enterprising butchers exploited this concession too freely, with the result that the French Government has put its foot down.

Giovanni Ticinesi.

It is natural that in a country where the right