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HOME NEWS

The new article in the Swiss Constitution, establishing social State insurance, was accepted last Sunday by the Swiss electorate with a majority of nearly two to one. In the cantonal results which we publish below the *italics* denote those cantons which have rejected the proposal; the figures are preliminary and subject to rectification.

	Yes	No
Zürich	77,533	26,948
Bern	68,382	27,678
Lucern	15,025	8,848
Uri	2,058	675
<i>Schwyz</i>	5,203	5,471
<i>Obwalden</i>	1,190	1,284
<i>Nidwalden</i>	920	1,055
Glarus	3,556	2,485
<i>Zug</i>	2,218	2,396
<i>Fribourg</i>	7,710	14,268
Solothurn	13,972	5,476
Basel-Stadt	11,502	3,715
Basel-Land	7,412	3,364
Schaffhausen	5,253	4,796
Appenzel A.-Rh.	5,538	4,056
<i>Appenzel L.-Rh.</i>	357	1,975
St. Gall	35,690	18,400
Graubünden	10,168	5,588
Aargau	32,757	18,217
Thurgau	16,651	10,302
Ticino	14,107	1,104
<i>Vaud</i>	35,256	35,694
Valais	7,500	4,700
Neuchâtel	13,781	2,912
Geneva	13,035	2,876
Total	406,069	213,853

It will be remembered that last May the initiative Rothenberger, which sought to anticipate this measure on a considerably wider scale, was turned down by the electors by a majority of over 100,000 votes. The present bill, all the details of which are not yet worked out, may be considered the outcome or consequence of accumulated efforts on the part of social reformers who for the last 35 years have unceasingly advocated this policy in the Swiss Parliament. With the exception of the Communists, all the political parties have given the bill their official support.

As regards the voting, it will be noticed that the inner cantons, with the exception of Glaris, are on the side of the "noes"; in the same company are the two neighbours Vaud and Fribourg and also Appenzell I.Rh., the electors of which latter canton are reputed to negative any proposal likely to overrule local powers. Outstanding majorities in favour, relatively speaking, are recorded by the frontier cantons Basle, Geneva and Ticino, the latter supplying the record figure of 14 to 1, proving in no uncertain way that it means to provide for aged and needy compatriots.

Prof. Gilbert Murray, of Oxford University, has been nominated a member of the permanent commission created under the conciliation treaty, concluded in June, 1924, between Sweden and Switzerland, the interests of the latter country being in the hands of National Councillor Emil Lohner.

Evidence that the local rates and taxes had been paid are a condition *sine qua non* before a passport is issued in the canton of Zurich; the Federal Tribunal in Lausanne has now enacted that such an imposition is unconstitutional.

In the Grand Conseil of Neuchâtel a motion has been approved by a large majority, abrogating the existing law depriving of the franchise those in arrears with the payment of their rates and taxes.

The Grand Conseil of Vaud has without discussion accepted a proposal, establishing female franchise and the right for women to be elected members of industrial courts.

The revenue for 1923 in the canton of Berne from taxes on property and income amounted to nearly 77 million francs; forty years ago the Bernese treasury secured hardly 8 million francs, so that during this period there has been a tenfold increase.

In reply to an interpellation in the Basle Grosse Rat, drawing attention to the enormous local purchases made across the frontier to the detriment of home industries, it was stated that the Government was helpless in the matter. Lower retail prices in Swiss frontier towns was suggested as the best remedy against exchange profiteering.

For the purpose of enlarging the lunatic asylum in Münsterlingen, the canton of Thurgau is spending an amount of 1½ million francs.

A very heated campaign preceded the elections for the Stadtrat in Berne last Sunday. Every two years half of its members retire, and though the Socialists have increased their total poll, the mandates held by the different parties remain the same.

100-franc pieces to the amount of half-a-million francs will be minted in the near future; they will have the same effigies as the present 20-franc pieces.

The concert hall "Rütihof" in Rüti (Rheintal) was totally destroyed by a fire which broke out early on Friday morning (Dec. 4th), the cause being unknown.

A war veteran, G. von Freudenreich-de Sévery, who as an Austrian private took part in the battles of Solferino and Magenta in 1859, died in Monnaz, near Morges; he owned the castle and considerable property at Monnaz, of which place he was made an honorary citizen in 1913.

NOTES AND GLEANINGS.

By "KYBURG,"

Motoring in Switzerland.

For some time past articles have appeared in British motor papers complaining about the unfair treatment meted out to some motorists by the authorities in some of our cantons, especially the Grisons. It could hardly be expected that the British motorist should realise the fact, so obvious to us who know how difficult it is to get our people to swallow new ways and methods, that these exasperating fines, etc., often imposed by bodies who would not be recognised, perhaps, as possessing the requisite authority anywhere else, were very frequently the result of inexperience on the part of some minor official called upon to interpret a new law, and very often, too, the result of a feeling of justifiable revenge for road-hogging perpetrated by some other motorist who had been too quick to be caught. I have heard of racing along the mountain roads, involving great danger to all other users, motorists and pedestrians, and especially also to cattle. Friends of mine, motorists themselves in Switzerland and lovers, ardent lovers of the sport, but still more ardent lovers of our beautiful Alps and the simple, home earth-worshipping population of our mountain districts, have told me that the law breakers ought to be punished much more severely than is now the case, in order to enable the Grisons authorities to keep their beautiful roads open for those who think not only of themselves alone. All the same, I am very pleased that the *Autocar* of Nov. 27th published the following letter from Mr. C. Demmer, the president of the Grisons section of the Swiss Automobile Club:—

For many years past I have subscribed to *The Autocar*, and have followed with much interest the correspondence about motoring in Switzerland.

As President of the Grisons Section of the Swiss Automobile Club I should like to express my deepest regret to all motorists who may have received arbitrary unkind treatment from our police, especially in unjust fines. May I point out to you that the people of this canton are of a typical mountain race, who only very unwillingly accept any introduction of new methods. The motor-car in particular has been most unpopular with them, and the work we had to do for the last seven years to open the canton to automobile traffic is inconceivable to anyone living outside the district. On the Grisons peasant in his mountain solitude the motor-car had at first the effect of a red rag on a bull. But this cannot and must not last. Already next season there will be a change.

The complaints made in your paper have received our careful attention. We have every promise from our Cantonal Government that next year strict orders will be given to the police all over the canton with regard to motor-car traffic, so that I sincerely hope motorists will

not "punish" us by keeping away from our country, but, on the contrary, will come as numerous as possible, and thus show our people how advantageous and important motoring traffic is nowadays, and how foolish and, indeed, suicidal it is to kill this golden goose.

I shall be glad to deal with any complaints that are brought to my notice, and would like to assure all British motorists that they will receive every possible courtesy and assistance from their Swiss motoring colleagues in this canton.—C. Demmer.

By the way, it may be just as well to motor over the Swiss Alpine roads, as long as the mountains still last, for, according to *The Times* of Nov. 30th at least one of our lesser mountains has started to move:—

It has been discovered by the Swiss Federal Topographical Survey that Monte Arbino (6,000 feet), a summit three miles north-east of Bellinzona (Canton Ticino), is moving in the direction of the Arbedo valley at the rate of eight inches a year over a face 1,100 yards wide; 30 years ago the rate of movement was only $\frac{3}{4}$ in. a year. As the strata are vertical, the whole mountain is advancing, but measures have already been taken against accidents.

Railway Electrification in Switzerland

is making great progress. *The Times* (Nov. 28th) says:—

The electrification of the Swiss Federal Railways is making good progress. A sum of £2,037,321 was spent on this work during the present year, and a further £1,461,555 will be spent in 1926. Out of a total of 2,882 kilometres (nearly 1,800 miles) 840 (525 miles) will be completed by the end of the present year, when the Berne-Olten section (40 miles) will be put into service. It is probable that electrically-driven trains will run before the end of 1925 on the Geneva-Lausanne section (39 miles), which was planned to be ready only in January next. At the end of 1926 the Swiss railways will have a network of 1,012 kilometres (632 miles) of electrical lines. The accounts show that the results of electrification are much more satisfactory than was expected, and that the equipment will, on the whole, cost £3,200,000 less than the estimates.

By the way, the Swiss Railways are a Government undertaking!

The *Sunday Chronicle* on Nov. 29th announced that—

A White Scourge Crusade

will be launched within the next few weeks, in order to make the Spahlinger serum available in quantities sufficient for the world's needs:—

It has been reported by work specialists on tuberculosis that the Spahlinger treatment not only accomplishes cures in advanced cases of consumption, but confers immunity from future infection.

The difficulty, in present circumstances, of obtaining State aid or substantial aid in any form to allow Spahlinger to continue his researches has convinced the organisers that the humane task of combating the "white scourge" must be assumed voluntarily by the British people, at first by private help and, if possible, subsequently by national appeal.

The chief worker in this great effort to provide funds for Spahlinger, who, in pursuit of his work for humanity, has exhausted his private fortune, is Mrs. Roscoe Brunner, of Belmont Hall, Northwich. She is the wife of Mr. Roscoe Brunner, chairman of the firm of Brunner, Mond and Co., and is well known for her national work on behalf of charities.

Hodler at the 29th Exhibition

of the International Society of Sculptors, Painters and Gravers. The *Observer* (29th Nov.):—

The Swiss section is overshadowed by the genius of Hodler, whose noble sense of design and concentrated expressiveness of gesture are seen at their best in the heroic figure, "Le Guerrier Blessé" (No. 405). Here as well as in the poise of the "Portrait de Mme. Gunzberger" (No. 408) and in the manner of painting adopted by him in some of his small landscapes, one cannot but notice a certain kinship between the Swiss master and Mr. Augustus John, though Mr. John seems to have a higher artistic culture which saves him from such occasional lapses into crudeness as Hodler's "Lac et Mont Blanc" (No. 410).

It took me a very long time ere I could appreciate Hodler. His "Retreat from Marigagno" in

the Landesmuseum at Zurich left me quite unimpressed for a long while. Then I saw his "Der Lebensmüde," the figure of an old man sitting on a soap box, looking so infinitely weary that the whole force of Hodler's art was suddenly revealed to even my comprehension. He can put in a stroke or two, in a dash of seemingly roughly applied colour, a whole world of meaning, just as a novelist who knows his métier can, as it were, with one or two phrases make a character live. When next I saw the "Retreat from Marignano" the various figures of the Landsknechte assumed a quite different meaning, and even the famous pictures on the Swiss banknotes conveyed their message to me, apart from their intrinsic value as tokens of exchange! But—such is my poor judgment—I have never been able to call Hodler's picture beautiful, and to this day I do not believe that they are beautiful or even meant to be so. And I still prefer beautiful pictures! A basket of roses, for instance, such as I can see now from where I write, is to me more than the most famous Hodler picture, because the message it conveys to me is one of hope, of the coming of summer, and in these dark days this is a precious message indeed.

Which reminds me that Winter (with a capital "W") has been with us. And gone for the time being. Those of us who could indulge in skating, etc., no doubt liked it. There were others, unfortunately, who may be forgiven for feeling glad that the thermometer has risen considerably. Personally I had enough of the cold, the snow, ice and fog. Travelling last Friday from 1 o'clock to 11.45 p.m. to get from Liverpool Street to West-cliff-on-Sea was no pleasure. Even in the dining-car the ice could be taken off the inside of the windows!

But, personal experiences of that kind do not alter the fact, happily, that winter provides a lot of people—and I still hope to be one of them, by and by—with exquisite joys. Winter Sports are in full swing now in Switzerland, and the various matches and competitions are about to be decided or at least prepared. Says the *Morning Post* of 1st Dec.—

The Swiss University Ski Club is organising an international University Ski meeting to be held at St. Moritz on January 18 and 19. Two hundred invitations have been sent out to the Universities of Europe, the United States, and Canada.

And for those of you who think of learning ski-ing the following article from the *Westminster Gazette* (28th Nov.), written by Olga Major, British lady champion in ski-ing championships held at Murren in 1921 and 1923, may be of use:—

As ski-ing becomes more popular, the standard rises higher and higher. The result is that the novice must devote all her time to learning to ski, if she is to be able to join in expeditions and races.

The novice has to attain some slight proficiency before expeditions can be really enjoyed. As in other sports, it is the first step that counts, and beginners who are able to start off with good lessons are well on the way to become ski-ers.

The ski-er should always carry two sticks, but should use them only along the level and uphill. In going along the level the ski should not be lifted as in walking, but glided forward and a push given with the opposite stick at each step.

It is impossible to climb very steeply on ski without slipping back, so the hill should be climbed in gentle zigzags, making each traverse as long as possible. To turn the corners a "kick turn" is necessary. To do this stand with the ski pointing across the slope; then lift the lower foot, and, swinging the heel of the ski clear of the snow, turn the ski right round and bring it down parallel to the other one, but pointing in the opposite direction. Then swing the second ski round and put it beside the first.

Beginners should choose slopes for the descent which have a good run out, for, until the different turns (Christiania Telemark, and Stemming turns) have been learnt, falling is the only means of stopping.

Going downhill the sticks should be held one in each hand, with the points well behind and clear of the snow. The leather loops should not be over the hands, as this sometimes leads to sprained or broken wrists. The ski must be kept close together, with one about a foot in front of the other. The knees should be well bent and touching, and the body leaning forward. The steeper the slope the more necessary it is to lean well forward. At the bottom when reaching level ground the weight should be allowed to come slightly more back. When traversing across a slope the upper foot should be in front, with most of the weight on the lower one, and the body should lean outward as well as forward.

By stemming it is possible to go slowly down a steep slope, and it is a necessary accomplishment if there are any icy paths to be negotiated. The method is as follows: The ski are put in the form of a wide V, with the toes together and the heels apart. The ski are edged on their

inside edges and the knees bent inwards. The slower the speed desired the more the ski should be edged. It is very easy to steer when in the stemming position. To turn to the right, all that is required is to put all the weight on the left foot, and vice versa. Stemming is very difficult in soft snow, and is only practicable at slow speeds. So it cannot be used as a means of stopping when travelling fast.

It is very important to have the ski properly fitted. When the binding is fastened there should be no side play and it should be possible to kneel down on the ski, or a forward fall may cause serious injury.

Ski should be waxed frequently, or they will ice up underneath and refuse to run. The most lasting sort is the hard brown wax, which should be ironed in with a hot iron and polished afterward with a cork or old handkerchief. Paraffin wax is specially good in heavy snow and has the advantage that it can be rubbed in with the hand, which makes it very useful to take on an exhibition.

Sealskins are a very great help for climbing, and will be required for exhibitions. Spare woolies, dry gloves, a spare binding, some sort of repair outfit for ski, spare toe-straps and wax should always be taken in a rucksack.

To the above I would add one further advice, gained from personal experience: Remember, when first starting out on skis, that you will have many falls which look alarming to the onlooker, but are quite harmless to you, provided you do not try to prevent yourself from falling once the balance is lost.

QUOTATIONS from the SWISS STOCK EXCHANGES

BONDS.	Dec. 1	Dec. 8	
Confederation 3% 1903 ...	79.50	79.50	
5% 1917, VIII Mob. Ln ...	100.72	100.65	
Federal Railways 3½% A—K ...	81.67	81.20	
" " 1924 IV Elect. Ln. ...	100.67	100.32	
SHARES.	Nom.	Dec. 1	Dec. 8
Swiss Bank Corporation ...	Fr. 500	Fr. 703	Fr. 702
Crédit Suisse ...	500	758	762
Union de Banques Suisses... ..	500	604	605
Société pour l'Industrie Chimique	1000	1830	1836
Fabrique Chimique ci-dev. Sandoz	1000	3275	3299
Soc. Ind. pour la Schappe ...	1000	3310	3319
S.A. Brown Boveri ...	350	381	379
C. F. Bally ...	1000	1132	1135
Nestlé & Anglo-Swiss Cond. Mk. Co.	200	281	295
Entreprises Sulzer S.A. ...	1000	938	937
Comp. de Navig'n sur le Lac Léman	500	545	550
Linoleum A.G. Giubiasco ...	100	78	81
Maschinenfabrik Oerlikon ...	500	675	676

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