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# The Swiss Observer

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## HOME NEWS

The accounts of our Postal Administration show a profit of 5.44 million francs, the highest figure ever reached.

The Town Council of Geneva received a delegation from the National Association of Mayors of Japan, who are travelling in Europe and the United States for the purpose of study. The members of the delegation were also the guests of the Lucerne Town Council and attended the Landsgemeinde in Sarnen last Sunday.

The Town Council of Lucerne has decided to name the new quay, in course of construction on the right bank of the lake, "Carl Spitteler Quai."

The electors of the Canton of Zurich have voted in favour of a reduction in the number of members of their "Grosse Rat" from 257 to 220.

The electors of the Canton of Berne decided last Sunday in favour of a loan of 12 million francs for the Power Works "Oberhasli."

On the occasion of the "Auslandschweizertag" in Basle, the announcement was made that the Swiss Chambers of Commerce of Brussels, Genoa, Paris and Vienna had constituted themselves an Association which, it is hoped, will help towards a more satisfactory settlement of problems of common interest. Any other Swiss Chamber of Commerce abroad can join this Association.

The Zurich Männerchor returned home after a highly successful tour in Spain, where they gave concerts for the benefit of the Red Cross.

The centenary of the birth of Federal Councillor Emile Welti was celebrated last Sunday in Aarau in the presence of Federal Councillor Schultheiss and the Argovian authorities.

Dr. Joseph Jäger, President of Baden Town Council, is resigning his membership of the National Council. He is 73 years of age and entered Parliament for the first time in 1896.

The ceremony of presentation of the marble statue "The Prisoner of Chillon" from the Alsatian sculptor Philip Grass, which the "Comité alsacien d'études et d'informations" decided to offer to the Federal Council as a token of appreciation of the hospitality which the French civil prisoners and wounded, and in particular the Alsations, received in Switzerland during the war, took place last Sunday in Chillon. Federal Councillors Häberlin and Chuard, the French Ambassadors, General Pau and the poet Benjamin Valotien were amongst the official guests.

Mr. Simon, honorary member of the Swiss Alpine Club and author of the Jungfrau Relief, died in Berne at the age of 68.

## WER HILFT SÜS, WER HILFT BOSCO?

Zwei Gemeinden in unserer Heimat haben in der letzten Zeit grossen Schaden erlitten. Bosco im Ticino, dann Süs im Engadin, wo in der Nacht vom 19.—20. April 79 Häuser niederbrannten. Bosco ist um 100,000 Franken geschädigt, Süs um einen weit höheren Betrag.

Es gilt nun den Betroffenen zu helfen, damit aus den Ruinen neues Leben erstehen. Als Mit-eidgenossen wollen wir den Verzagten Mut machen zum Aufbau. Die Leute in Süs und Bosco sollen spüren, dass das Wort "Eidgenosse" kein leeres Schall ist, sondern verpflichtet zur freudigen Hilfeleistung. "Wir wollen sein ein einzig Volk von Brüdern." Brüder erweisen sich als solche in Not und Gefahr. Unsere Gaben wollen wir nicht kärglich bemessen. Ein jeder tue, was er kann.

Die Gaben nehmen entgegen Herr J. Manzoni, 42, Kimberley Gardens, Harringay, N.4; Pfarrer C. Th. Halm, "Foyer Suisse," 12, Upper Bedford Place, W.C.1; und der *Swiss Observer*. — Wer Sammellisten wünscht, wende sich an die Genannten. Die Sammlung wird am 25. Mai abgeschlossen.

H.

## Young Swiss Athletes Don't forget the Swiss Sports, Saturday, 23rd May, 1925, at Herne Hill. Last date for sending in Entry Forms May 9th.

(See paragraph "Swiss Sports.")

## NOTES AND GLEANINGS.

By "KYBURG."

### To-day's Thanksgiving.

"Wenn Du noch eine Mutter hast,  
So danke Gott und sei zufrieden."

### Summer-time.

The evenings are nicely drawn out, and there should be plenty of daylight after work is done in the City. The weather, however, is marring outdoor pursuits, and overcoats are still *de rigueur*, at least for the older of us. However, with the advent of summer-time, hope is revived, and we know in our heart of hearts that the cold winter winds are waging a losing battle, and that the warmer zephyrs must triumph by and by. May it be soon!

Meanwhile the British Press gives us beautifully illustrated articles on Springtime in Switzerland. My readers will remember that 'Kyburg's' idea of a perfect holiday in Switzerland has always been one taken at about this time of the year, when the Alpine flora make the country one mass of gaily bedecked gardens.

### An Asiatic Switzerland.

A very interesting speculation is the following which appeared in the *Glasgow Herald* (April 15):

A favourite diversion of schoolboys is to draw a rapid design in ink on a page of an exercise book and turn the page over against the opposite one before the ink is dry. The result is an ornamental figure which makes up in symmetry for what it may lack in artistic inspiration. A similar plan would seem to have been employed by Nature in the lay-out of the two Continents whose essential unity is expressed in the geographical term Eurasia. The right-hand or eastern page has shifted a good deal in the process, and the design has become distorted and curiously enlarged, but the general correspondence of the main features is easily discernible. Kamchatka answers to Scandinavia, the Sea of Okhotsk to the Baltic, Siberia and Mongolia to Russia, China to Central and North-West Europe, Arabia to Asia Minor, Annam, Siam and Malaysia to the Iberian Peninsula, and, very obviously, Japan to the British Isles. India with Ceylon is a tropical enlargement of Italy with Sicily, the Ganges is a greater Po, and the Himalayas are a mighty counterpart of the Alps. Within their folds lies Asia's Switzerland, Nepal. Like Switzerland, it consists of the headwaters and mountain sources of continental races, has a diversity of races (Mongolian and Indo-Caucasian) and religions (Buddhism and Hinduism), was formed out of a number of little States, has asserted its independence against powerful neighbours, and has been a nursery of "mercenary" soldiers, the famous Gurkhas. The points wherein it differs from Switzerland—primitive isolation, the survival of a form of slavery, and government by an autocratic military caste—are incidental to its Asiatic character and its stage of historic development. A fascinating account of Nepal is given in the current number of "The Geographical Journal" by General C. G. Bruce and Major Brook Northey, two of the very few Europeans who have been permitted to enter the country. Besides maintaining a home army of 45,000 men, this little country, with a population of not more than four millions, supplies the British Army with many thousands of soldiers and police. As a fighting man and a comrade the Gurkha has won respect and liking. But the Nepalese are not only warriors, but industrious agriculturists and natural artists—their little cities are a distinct improvement upon their Chinese models. In their valleys the eye passes at one short sweep from rice fields and rich meadows to primeval forests and dazzling snow mountains twice as high as the Alps, and absolutely unexplored. Between Britain and Nepal there is a close and honourable bond, and the racial and geographical conditions of Nepal seem to promise for it a career corresponding in many ways to that of modern Switzerland.

The above seems to prove again that peoples who have to work very hard to wrest their daily bread from Mother Nature, and who live among the valleys formed by mighty mountain ranges, develop the same sort of racial traits.

### The Swiss Stage.

*The Times* (16th April):—

"Bühne und Drama der Deutschen Schweiz."  
Von Paul Lang. (Zurich: Orell Füssli.)

A question which must often occur to the reader of modern German literature is why the German-speaking Swiss, who showed such genius in the short story (Gottschalk, Keller, and Meyer) and won such distinction in the lyric (Keller, Meyer, and Leuthold), as well as in the epic (Carl Spitteler) created no drama in any way approaching the standard attained in other departments of literature. Dr. Lang sets out in this book to give the first thorough reply to the question, and to indicate his reasons for thinking that this reproach against German-Swiss literature may before long be removed, if, indeed, it has not been overtaken already in the most recent plays of the younger school of Swiss dramatists.

No attention should be paid to the theory that the Swiss are essentially an undramatic race. In the time of the Reformation, as Dr. Lang rightly points out, Switzerland led the way in German drama. The "race-theory," suspect enough on most occasions, will emphatically not do here; and Dr. Lang proceeds to dwell on the condition of the Swiss stage in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries as affording the most likely clue to the failure of Swiss writers to devote themselves to the dramatic form. In the eighteenth century there were no regular theatres in Switzerland; puritanical prejudice and, later, the various armed struggles in which the country was involved were responsible for this. Practically the only drama was that provided by touring companies from France or Germany.

In the thirties of the following century a new cultural era began for German-speaking Switzerland. Two theatres were founded in Zurich. But now, when the stage began to be provided, the writers were not forthcoming. Richard Wagner studied the question some years later, and diagnosed the trouble as lack of native talent: the German-Swiss theatres were offering the public only poor imitations of current French plays. A further hindrance was the language. Acting, as a profession, was not encouraged in Switzerland, and most of the actors were German. Swiss writers could not, therefore, write in dialect, nor did they find the German actors suitable exponents of Swiss "national" drama, even though written in 'Hochdeutsch.' It was unfortunate that the two Swiss writers who might, by their literary genius and enthusiasm for the stage, have given Swiss drama its most powerful impulse, Gottfried Keller and Conrad Ferdinand Meyer, proved to be more or less devoid of dramatic talent.

The awakening really began, Dr. Lang holds, with Arnold Ott, who, inspired on the literary side by Shakespeare's "Julius Caesar" and on the technical by the stage-craft of the Meiningen theatre, wrote a number of dramas in the eighties and nineties which have not so far been surpassed by Swiss writers. The next important writer, Carl Spitteler, although he attempted to give the stage a native drama, found his chief medium of expression in the epic form, observing that the Swiss people had an essentially amateurish attitude to the stage, and that only when sufficient Swiss 'Berufsspieler,' professional actors, were available, would Switzerland have a school of native drama.

The remainder of Dr. Lang's book is an account of the way in which progress has been made along these lines in the last ten years: how the popular theatre, despite the counter-attraction of the cinema, has spread a taste for drama among the common people, how private stage-societies have given opportunity for Swiss dramatists to gain experience, how the regular

stage has gradually emancipated itself from the domination of German plays, and how the idea of a German-Swiss national theatre originated and prospered. Dr. Lang considers that the anxieties through which Switzerland passed in the Great War, and the increased feeling of national self-consciousness and independence which has followed, have created a fertile soil in which the considerable dramatic talent among her younger generation—for example, Carl Friedrich Wiegand, Max Pulver, Albert Steffen, Konrad Falke—will grow and flourish.

In conclusion, Dr. Lang gives a bibliography, and it is interesting to note that most of his work was done in the British Museum Reading Room, to whose ample stock of "Helvetica" he pays an especial tribute.

#### Trade Inquisition.

Daily Express (17th April):—

The Swiss Government has requested the American Government to recall the American agents sent officially by the U.S. Treasury to Switzerland in order to verify on the spot the cost of production of Swiss articles exported to America.

The agents have called on Swiss firms to produce their books, with veiled threats of prohibiting commerce if the request is not granted.

The Swiss firms have refused, and have appealed to the Government, who have notified Washington that such procedure is contrary to international law and would create a dangerous precedent for free commerce between the countries.

I learn that the same American procedure is employed in England, though not so openly as in Switzerland.

The object of this procedure which is authorised by the Fordney Tariff Act, is to satisfy the American authorities that there is no dumping. Foreign traders who object may have their goods barred from America.

A number of other papers make reference to the above as well. Our protectionist friends ought to be aware that this sort of Nosey-Parker procedure is almost unavoidable, under some form or other, when it comes to finding out what prices of production are in any given country. The remedy, of course, is *Free Trade all round*, and towards that goal efforts should be directed. If Europe were the Amalgamated States of Europe, an economically and politically united State, it could force Free Trade on the whole world, I should think. Even the U.S.A. would have to give in, and industry and commerce would at last be allowed to find their levels, and the terrific waste which is now going on in production could be eliminated to a great extent.

A Brotherhood of Nations, working together for one common goal, the advancement of Humanity, what wonders could it achieve in the way of production, elimination of waste, and accumulation of wealth in the shape of increased well-being and happiness all round! But, of course, I am thinking of what the cynical exploiters call Utopian conditions. Nevertheless, if there is anything at all in all the professed religious beliefs, those Utopian dreams must come true one day, because otherwise, if human beings will work against their clearly indicated destiny, our much admired civilisation must go the way of all the ancient civilisations, and make room for a new and better one.

#### Drought Danger in Switzerland.

Glasgow Evening Citizen (16th April):—

Unless really heavy rain should occur during this month, there is likelihood of a repetition in Switzerland of the severe drought of 1921. The last six months' drought in Switzerland is already preventing the big steamers laid up along the quay in Geneva from beginning their spring services. Electricity has been rationed in certain districts and in many towns, and the drought prevails all over the country.

In 1921 the Lake of Geneva got so low that a rock in the lake became visible on which is carved the inscription in French, "Whoever sees this rock again will weep," with the date 1839. Another small rock also became visible in which is carved lines in French to this effect, "Whoever shall read me shall know what privation means," with the date 1805. Apparently those rocks were visible in 1921, and now they are beginning to appear, and unless there are rains very soon, the inscriptions also will probably reappear. In 1921, during the Easter holidays, no steamers ran on the lake, and at present it looks as if the same thing will happen this Easter. The regulation of certain rivers for the water supply of Lake Geneva is at present being negotiated with France, and in the Swiss Parliament the other day the Government was urged to do something to save the situation.

Not only has the drought dried up certain streams and caused the loss of valuable trout, but farmers and fruit-growers are affected. The largest and most famous cataract in Central Europe, the Falls of Schaffhausen, has almost disappeared. In summer, and even in spring, the falls are generally 500 feet wide, with a drop of about 100 feet and a discharge of water

estimated at 88,000 cubic feet per second, but now only an insignificant fall of water remains, and the bed of the falls, except in the very middle, is nothing but a pool.

It is not so bad now as it was in 1921, but what is true of Lake Geneva is also true of the falls of the Rhine, and if no rain comes soon and the cold weather continues, it may be as bad as it was four years ago, when the bed of the Falls of the Rhine was so dry that geologists enjoyed the unexampled chance of examining the bed of the Rhine and below the falls, where they found what is known as glacier mills below them, with huge, rounded polished boulders lying about.

The winter, too, has been singularly lacking in snow. Even the little that fell at the end of March is not sufficient to make any impression upon the lakes and rivers in Switzerland, and as for the glaciers, they only give out water in exceptionally hot summers, and, as a rule, the heat in the higher Alps does not come until July and August.

For some unknown reason the authorities have never thought of putting a powerful dredger at the entrance of the Lake of Geneva, so as to be prepared for dry seasons. Outside the actual outlet of the lake at Geneva itself there appears to be enough water for the steamers to continue to run. It is only for a short distance that there is not enough water, and a dredger would easily provide a passage for the Swiss tourist fleet.

Of course, I know it was hardly necessary to add "in Switzerland": nobody would have thought it could be in England!

#### President Coolidge—

to be Chairman of the Conciliation and Arbitration Tribunal in any future dispute between Poland and Switzerland! According to the *Morning Post* (17th April) President Coolidge has been asked to undertake this work, in conformity with the Arbitration Treaty concluded between Poland and Switzerland last month.

#### The Spahlinger Treatment.

An interesting debate took place at the annual conference of the Association of Approved Societies in London on the 17th April. According to the *Manchester Guardian* (18th April)—

There was a lively discussion on the question of the Spahlinger treatment for tuberculosis, several delegates criticising the Ministry of Health for their failure to finance the treatment in this country.

Mr. Robert Smith (Manchester) said that it had been proved beyond doubt that 82 per cent. of the cases treated by Spahlinger were absolute cures, and if the money was forthcoming, the remedy could be bought for this country. Millions were being spent on sanatoria in this country, and no good was being done. Insurance committees throughout the country were ready to subscribe, and if the slightest encouragement was given to them by the Ministry of Health, everything would be all right.

Mr. F. Hughes pointed out that the Ministry had not been able to get any guarantee that, if the money were subscribed, the treatment would be available in this country. Surely, it was not too much to expect some kind of board of control or that guaranteed conditions should be agreed to.

Mr. Smith said that this condition was laid down in the Association's report on the subject, and Mr. Spahlinger was prepared to accept that condition.

The Secretary (Mr. F. A. Goodwin) said the real difficulty was that the remedy would take four years to produce. Mr. Spahlinger was in the position of the inventor with twopenny in his pocket and a sceptical public to deal with. The tragedy of it all was that sufferers had to go to an early grave, and the approved societies had to spend unlimited amounts in benefits. In his early visits to this country Mr. Spahlinger certainly made efforts which the Ministry, with the sceptical methods usually adopted by their medical advisers, turned down. "There is no doubt in my mind," added Mr. Goodwin, "that the remedy might have been here now had not the prejudice of medical men been in the way."

#### FINANCIAL AND COMMERCIAL NEWS FROM SWITZERLAND.

The latest Bulletin published by the Swiss Bank Corporation contains a most comprehensive survey of the economic situation in Switzerland, and is also of particular interest as including a consolidated balance sheet of a large number of the principal industrial concerns in the country. From the figures two points of special interest may be quoted. In comparing the total joint results of these companies in 1924 with those achieved in 1913 it appears that the percentage of net profits to paid-up capital in the latter year was 12.05, whereas for 1923 or the year ending September, 1924, it had fallen to 5.09. On the other hand, the amount set aside for depreciation against fixed assets in 1913 was 4.88 per cent., whereas last year this proportion had advanced

to 6.81. This increased provision, while to some extent indicating a conservative and careful policy, must also be attributed to the process of writing down war and post-war values. The Bulletin also contains a similar joint survey of the results of the large banks.

The Eisen- und Stahlwerke vorm. G. Fischer in Schaffhausen closed the year 1924 with a net profit of Frs. 2,083,939, somewhat more than that achieved a year before. The directors propose to pay a dividend of 8 per cent., against 7 per cent. a year before.

The Bank Guyerzeller A.G. in Zurich shows a net profit of Frs. 636,774, after writing off an amount of Frs. 152,255 from the building fund. The dividend is again at the rate of 8 per cent.

The "Kohlengenoossenschaft," which was formed in March, 1919, to assure the post-war provision of coal for Swiss consumers, has presented its final balance sheet, showing the eventual results of the liquidation. The losses sustained owing to the slump in prices which set in soon after the inception of this institution, have caused an eventual deficit of Frs. 18,200,000. This will be covered by a State subsidy, and consequently the concern will be able to repay the entire capital, together with interest accrued at 6 per cent. since 1921.

The City of St. Gall has just issued a 5% loan of Frs. 12,000,000 to provide funds for redemption of maturing issues. Conversion for holders of the 5 per cent. bonds of 1915 and the 5½ per cent. Treasury Bonds of 1920 will be at 97 per cent. and the balance will be available for public subscription at the same rate.

The report and accounts of the Nestlé Company were duly approved by the shareholders in the General Meeting, after a certain amount of criticism had been levelled at the company's American policy and other details arising out of the report and the Chairman's speech had been discussed.

#### STOCK EXCHANGE PRICES.

BONDS.	Apr. 21	Apr. 28
Swiss Confederation 3% 1903 ...	75.25%	76.50%
Swiss Confederation 5% 1923 ...	99.00%	99.20%
Federal Railways A—K 3½% ...	79.00%	79.00%
Canton Basle-Stadt 5½% 1921 ...	101.15%	100.95%
Canton Fribourg 3% 1892... ..	71.75%	71.87%

SHARES.	Nom.	Apr. 21	Apr. 28
	Frs.	Frs.	Frs.
Swiss Bank Corporation ... ..	500	646	647
Crédit Suisse ... ..	500	693	697
Union de Banques Suisses ... ..	500	552	552
Fabrique Chimique ci-dev. Sand ...	1000	3305	3440
Société pour l'Industrie Chimique ...	1000	1977	1985
C. F. Bally S.A. ... ..	1000	1212	1216
Fabrique de Machines Oerlikon ... ..	500	662	672
Entreprises Sulzer ... ..	1000	750	746
S.A. Brown Boveri (new) ... ..	350	338	337
Nestlé & Anglo-Swiss Cond. Mk. Co.	200	220	218
Choc. Suisses Peter-Callier-Köhler ...	100	178	187
Comp. de Navig'n sur le Lac Léman ...	500	540	540

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