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HOME NEWS

Widespread devastation was caused by cloudbursts which were experienced at the beginning of last week over several districts in the cantons of Basel-Land and Solothurn. Heavy rainstorms are also responsible for inundations in the inner and eastern part of Switzerland, especially the Pilatus region. Several people have been drowned by falling into swollen streams, whilst others were struck by lightning.

The National Council has voted a credit of 13 million francs for war material and the equipment of recruits.

The much-discussed Art. 22 of the new statute regulating the employment of civil servants, and which deprives the latter of the right to strike, has been passed in the National Council by a large majority. It is said that the Socialist and Communist parties are launching a referendum with the intention of eliminating this restriction.

Compulsory unemployment insurance was added, during last week-end, by large majorities of the electorate to the statute book of the cantons of Basel-Stadt and St. Gall. In the canton of Neuchâtel the electors have refused to sanction a bill which deprives those in arrears with the payment of their taxes of the right to vote.

A strange position has arisen by a ruling of the Regierungsrat of the canton of Berne to the effect that postal autos using the Grimsel Pass have, in future, to submit to the general rules of the road. By a privilege created some years ago by the Federal authorities, ordinary traffic has to travel on the outside of mountain roads, thus reserving the postal autos, even when passing other cars, the safe inside.

At the suggestion of the Grosse Rat of the canton of Aargau, the electors are to be asked to increase the daily emolument of its members from Frs. 3 to Frs. 10.

Instead of a budgeted deficit of about 220,000 francs, the accounts for 1925 of the town of Winterthur disclose a surplus of nearly half-a-million francs.

Monsieur Felix Calonder, a former President of the Confederation, who not long ago spent some time in the London Colony and who is now at the head of one of the International Commissions (Silesia) created under the Versailles Treaty, was entertained to dinner last week at Berlin by the German Chancellor Marx, assisted by President Hindenburg.

The proceedings against no less than 5,563 deserters, i.e., of Swiss who did not respond to the mobilisation order during the Great War, will become void as from the 1st of October this year under the Statute of Limitations.

The index figure of the cost of living compiled by the Swiss Co-operative Societies (Konsumverein) for the month of May shows a further drop of 1.7, thus establishing, with an index of 154.6, the lowest figure recorded since the end of the war.

During the forthcoming army manœuvres, Aarau with its 10,000 inhabitants will have to find accommodation for about 5,000 soldiers of the Fourth Division during the night from Sept. 24th—25th.

The commandant of the voluntary fire brigade of Buchs was acquitted by the local tribunal of the charge of negligence. During a rehearsal in February last year one of the fire escapes came into contact with a high-tension circuit near Gonzenberg, killing four firemen on the spot and injuring a fifth seriously.

An epidemic of typhoid has visited the cantonal lunatic asylum Königsfelden (Aargau); 71 of the inmates and attendants are seriously affected, and five deaths have taken place. The cause of the outbreak is a mystery.

For mortally wounding a companion with knife thrusts in the course of a dispute, Gottlieb Amsler,

of Densbüren, has been sentenced at the Zurich assizes to four months' imprisonment.

National Councillor Jacob Gutknecht has died in Ried (Fribourg) at the age of 60. A farmer and landowner of some importance, he has since 1899 uninterruptedly occupied the position of "syndic" in his native commune Ried.

AN APPEAL

on behalf of the Victims of the Recent Disastrous Cyclone in Switzerland.

In order to succour the numerous victims of the recent cyclone which swept over part of the Jura, especially the region of La Chaux-de-Fonds, the Swiss Minister in London has opened a relief fund and addressed a letter to this effect to the presidents of the different societies in London. We gather that the Swiss Institute has already circularised its members with very gratifying results, whilst the Union Helvetia is organising a ball and one or two other events, the proceeds of which will be devoted to this fund.

NOTES AND GLEANINGS.

By "KYBURG."

"Serving the Lord in Little Tibet."

That there still exists the spirit of religious adventure and of sacrifice is shewn by the following (*The English Churchman*, June 17th):—

Some eighteen months ago there came to England a young believer of Swiss nationality, who had before him a set purpose.

In July, 1917, he came to a knowledge of his Lord and Saviour by the reading of John iii, 16, and writes: "The Lord gave me grace to understand that I was saved to serve the living and true God and to wait for His Son from heaven."

He was enabled to enter a Bible School in Switzerland and studied there. The way was opened for him to attend lectures in two hospitals, and later he was for two years in France. He then came to England and had further medical training at Livingstone College. For all his needs he asked in faith, nothing wavering, and proved not one word fail of all His good promise. Since the Lord had led him thus far he doubted not that He would go with him still further.

Having read much of the need of the peoples of Little Tibet, he felt called to preach the Gospel of Christ in that needy field. At this juncture he was confronted with many difficulties, and much prayer was made on his behalf that the Lord would open the way before him and lead him in a straight path. In a very short time he again proved all things possible to them that believe. All his need had been supplied, the booking of his passage to Bombay was further evidence of God's overruling hand, and he went forth upheld by a band of faithful, praying friends. Having by the mercy of God a safe journey, he joined an experienced missionary. It was not long before he was in active service. His letters are most encouraging. He tells of the physical needs of the people. Disease so often caused by neglect, and how grateful they are to be relieved of their sufferings. They are informed long before his arrival that he carries medicine, and it is wonderful to read of how he performs operations quite successfully, being thrown entirely upon God for all needed wisdom and strength. Truly our young friend has great opportunities. He is becoming acquainted with the language, and is already able to read a little from the Gospels to his patients. His heart yearns to tell them of the love of God.

And yet, I cannot help feeling that there are countless numbers of patients very much nearer than "Little Tibet," and I wonder whether Christ, had He known our present-day slum districts, would have directed the activities of his followers to foreign countries.

The glorious weather we are enjoying now directs our thoughts more and more towards the Highlands of our native country. "Off the beaten track" is the motto of many, and the following from *The Nation and the Athenæum* (12th June) gives a charming description of a not less charming spot:—

La Gruyère.

Hidden away in the depths of the Fribourg Mountains in Switzerland is the shy little barony of La Gruyère, so modest that fame—the fame of its tasteful cheese—seems to have come to it against its will.

A simple pastoral province sheltering a community of old-fashioned people, La Gruyère presents a scene that still embodies the romantic air of the Middle Ages—historic castle walls looking down on misty valleys, quiet villages among the fields, where life has not changed for centuries.

Here the visitor will discover the jodeler, startling the woods and the lonely heights with his carolling. It is the home of mountaineers and cowherds. It is the home, too, of the bizarre but stirring national song, the "Ranz des Vaches," or "Chaunt of the Cows," which goes thus quaintly:—

"Lè z'armaillis dei Colombetté,

De bon matin se sanlèvá, ha! ha! ha! ha!"

This ancient song, written in the patois of the Fribourgeois, will stir a chord in the hearts of Swiss the world over. Its first line signifies that "the belled cow of Colombetté arose early in the morning," and its whole inspiration, like that of its more famous French cousin, "Sur le pont d'Avignon," which it recalls, is essentially of the people, expressing their pastoral tradition. Such a homely aspect of these hardy people is scarcely known to the mere globe-trotter, who envisages the Swiss either as an Alpine guide or as a hotel waiter!

In the Middle Ages, La Gruyère was more or less an independent barony ruled over by feudal lords, whose friendly interest in the people became proverbial. The last Comte de Gruyère, whose castle still stands intact, died four centuries ago. His stronghold stands on the top of a great rock, beneath whose brow curious old houses in the Gothic style huddle for shelter. Away on every side the fields sweep up to the mountains and are lost in the upland forests.

La Gruyère has no modern hotels to satisfy the tastes of 100-per cent. globe-trotters, but a pleasant scattering of comfortable old-fashioned inns where you can eat, drink, and be merry in the least complicated of ways. At every meal there are jugs of the wonderful Gruyère cream and plenty of rich, cool butter; and nothing in the world is more delicious than the trout they give you, fresh from the mountain streams.

For climbers there is the great Moléson, the Rigi of French Switzerland, and if really stiff ascents are wanted, there are innumerable peaks yet more rugged, such as the uncouth Gastlosen.

But I think of La Gruyère essentially as a country to saunter through quietly. To climb up to the Alps and sleep on straw in the Alpine chalets; to talk with old men over a brimming tankard and hear the charming legends of the country; to stroll unhurriedly from village to village and see the quiet activity of the people—these are the pleasures I would seek in a visit to La belle Gruyère.

Death of an eminent Basle Surgeon.

In the *Lancet* of June 19th appears the following sympathetic necrologue on Gerhard Hotz, M.D., Basle and Würzburg:—

The death of Prof. Hotz is a severe loss to surgical teaching, and removes a figure loved and honoured far beyond his native city. Gerhard Hotz was born in Basle on June 8th, 1880, the son of Dr. Rudolf Hotz-Linder, teacher in the High School. He took the Fedare qualification in 1905, became surgical assistant in the Bürgerspital under Prof. Enderlen, and followed his master to Würzburg in 1907, where he gained a thorough introduction to modern surgical methods and began to acquire organising ability. After taking his degree in Würzburg in 1909 he received the title of professor in 1911, and shortly afterwards refused an invitation to Chicago in order to become surgeon in charge of the Deaconess House in Freiburg. It was while he was there that war broke out and Hotz received permission from the Swiss Army Medical Department to remain in Freiburg, where he took over a large part of the systematic teaching and became responsible for a war hospital which, with its adnexa, gave him at times 600 beds under his personal care. At this period he made intensive studies of gunshot nervous injuries with Dr. Hoche, director of the Nerve Clinic, and with an extensive surgical practice lived an extraordinarily full life, complicated by shortage of food and harassed by the activities of enemy aeroplanes, which destroyed the Anatomical Institute close to his hospital.

In 1918 Hotz returned to Basle to occupy the surgical chair left vacant by the departure of de Quervain for Berne. The position of a professor of surgery in a continental clinic is something different from what we know in this country. He is the absolute head of a surgical

establishment, which includes laboratories, X-ray and electro-therapeutic equipment, and through his hands pass all the important and exceptional surgery cases of the district. It thus becomes easy for him to organise through his assistants clinical demonstrations on a grand scale and to place the teaching of surgery on a systematic basis. Less fortunate surgeons visiting his clinic found Hotz teaching elementary students by means of lecture-demonstrations, in the course of which patients, museum specimens, skiagrams, and diagrams illustrating anatomy, physiology, and pathology were shown. The pressure of one button brought up a fresh blackboard or a new drawing, another excluded daylight in a few seconds, every possible dissection was ready to hand, and his voice was never drowned by the roar of traffic. His writings include useful work on abdominal emergencies and on blood transfusion, but his teaching for the most part has no record except in the careers of his assistants and pupils.

In physique Hotz was a slight, alert man of medium height, with quiet, incisive manner and unflinching sympathy both for patients and students. A visit paid to Basle three years ago by the heads of surgical units in this country gave him an opportunity for intimacy which was availed of then and since by both parties. One of the visiting surgeons writes of him as a man who exerted a good influence which could be seen and felt in all his surroundings. "Hotz was," he adds, "more than a surgeon, he was a philosopher." He played a prominent part in the life of his native city and would have served on municipal and federal councils had his strength permitted, but his work was carried on under the constant shadow of illness. Just after being appointed to the chair of surgery he had a gastric perforation which required immediate operation, and once again during his term of office he came under the surgeon's knife. On this account he forswore all enjoyments and engagements outside the work of the clinic and practised a rigid abstinence. His premature death at the age of 46 was due to the perforation for the third time of a gastric ulcer.

Prof. Hotz was happily married to Fräulein Orsolina Fanconi, of Samaden, and surgeons in many lands join in sympathy with his widow and six children.

And Switzerland mourns another of her sons who has done much to help struggling and suffering humanity a step farther towards a better and healthier age.

New Microscope Discovery.

It is the perfection of scientific apparatus that enables the scientist observers to penetrate farther and farther into the mysteries of Nature. Vide the following:—

Daily Express:—

A new age in the fight against disease will be opened if the claims of Mr. Charles Spierer, a chemical engineer of Geneva University, are substantiated.

He explained his new invention of an ultra microscope with bilateral illumination to a large audience of famous Swiss scientists and professors here last night, and obviously impressed them.

The microbes and bacteria which cause many diseases have yet to be discovered. The most powerful microscope known is quite unable to reveal them to the scientist.

Mr. Spierer says that he has confident hopes that the difficulty is now overcome. He is able with his microscope to resolve one cubic millimetre of dry collodion—smaller than a pin's head—into sixty billion infinitely small grains.

The principle of the ultra-microscope is the revelation of tiny specks in a beam of light, similar to the manner in which a sunbeam reveals dust in the air. When such a system is applied to the ordinary microscope germs and bacteria—previously invisible under the most powerful microscope—can be counted.

Mr. J. E. Barnard, who is in charge of the National Institute for Medical Research, recently demonstrated that he could obtain a magnification of 3,500 diameters, which is equivalent to multiplying an object 12½ million times. The discoveries of Mr. Spierer apparently will make possible an even greater magnification.

QUOTATIONS from the SWISS STOCK EXCHANGES.

BONDS.		June 22	June 29	
Confederation 3% 1903	...	80.50	80.50	
" 5% 1917, VIII Mob. Ln.	...	102.60	102.50	
Federal Railways 3½% A-K	...	83.63	83.95	
" " 1924 IV Elect. Ln.	...	102.50	102.55	
SHARES.		Nom.	June 22	June 29
Swiss Bank Corporation	...	500	722	724
Credit Suisse	...	500	787	787
Union de Banques Suisses	...	500	625	639
Société pour l'Industrie Chimique	...	1000	1992	2122
Fabrique Chimique ci-dev. Sandoz	...	1000	3462	3475
Soc. Ind. pour la Schappe	...	1000	2940	2997
S.A. Brown Boveri	...	350	500	522
C. F. Bally	...	1000	1300	1300
Nestlé & Anglo-Swiss Cond. Mk. Co.	...	200	526	510
Entreprises Sulzer S.A.	...	1000	976	1022
Comp. de Navig. n. sur le Lac Léman	...	500	570	570
Linoleum A.G. Giubiasco	...	100	85	92
Maschinenfabrik Oerlikon	...	500	765	775

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"RIMEMBRANZE."

Il paese, o cittadina, n'importava poco: era abbastanza monotono, uniforme, tutto bigio, come tanti altri paesi della costa nordica; invece mi piaceva molto la sua spiaggia, specialmente dalle undici a mezzogiorno, quando c'era la bella folla dei bimbi colle loro mamma; i balli, arrivavano soltanto al venerdì sera per il "week-end" e ripartivano al lunedì mattina.

I bimbi mi davano una grande allegria: abbellivano ed improvvisavano uno strano paese sulla spiaggia; la sabbia era fina, morbida, vellutata; le ultime ondine, levigavano ininterrottamente, e, come tanti piccoli operai, armati d'ogni sorta d'arnesi, vi scovavano pozzi alzavano ponti, perforavano "tunnels" costruivano perfino dei castelli... Voci, trilli, grida, echeggiavano dappertutto; dal mare mi pervenivano anche le risate e gli urli dei nuotatori e delle signorine che si bagnavano al sole e si rincorrevano poi, calzati dai sandalini, sulla sponda fangosa...

Pensavo che questo mare colla sua spiaggia ridente, dalla sabbia finissima, calpestata da centinaia di bambini seminudi, che cantano e ridono, innanzi a tanta vastità di cielo e acqua, che è oggi placido e come dormiente nella sua tinta grigiastra, può essere domani, andace e forte e venire sconvolto dagli acquiloni...

Vi ritornavo anche al dopopranzo; mi accomodavo al riparo del vento, in una "deck chair" e godevo la pace di quell'ora pigra "del dolce far niente"... i miei occhi erravano su quel vuoto infinito, affascinante...

Un suonatore ambulante accompagnava, con l'ardore musicale di cui è piena l'anima del popolo italiano, un tenore di strada che cantava "O sole mio"; e cantava con un languore voluttuoso, con un impeto passionale, d'arrestare l'attenzione di quella folla estiva; tutta gente gaia e frivola, che in quell'ora del pomeriggio, esce per la passeggiata, per giocare al tennis o a leggere, abbandonata sulle sedie a sdraio; vi era un andirivieni di uomini, di donne, elegantemente vestiti, che s'incontrano, non si salutano, non si sorridono... tutti forestieri, sconosciuti l'uno all'altro, venuti in quella spiaggia marittima in cerca di salute, riposo, distrazione, di romanzo forse!...

E il tenore della via, invoca il suo sole—il "mie" sole—con un impeto commovente, in cui l'antica romanza popolare par quasi che esprima la nostalgia amorosa del bel sole italico, che tutto indora, cielo, terra ed il suo mare meraviglioso!...

I miei sguardi vagavano placidamente sull'imponente, austero mare... ma non lo vedevano più il mare... non cercavano più di scoprire i suoi misteri, racchiusi nella sua profondità... vagavano oltre, al di là della sua vastità grigia, sterminata... Sognavano forse un paese seducente di beltà, di grazia, di poesia, fra il florido verde delle sue colline vicine, la maestà de'suoi monti poco lontani, la maestosità delle sue montagne cupe che confinano quasi con l'orizzonte purissimo... invocavano un viale tutto verde, sotto alberi folti che ombreggiano così fragrantemente la passeggiata bella....

...e in lontananza, come un eco, fievolmente riudivo le note del "O sole mio" che andavano morendo sui riflessi del mare....
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GOLD MEDAL, Swiss Agricultural Exhibition, Berne, 1925

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