**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:** - (1926)

**Heft:** 260

Rubrik: Notes and gleanings

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# he Swiss Observer

Published every Friday at 23, Leonard Street, London, E.C.2.

Telegrams: FREPRINCO, LONDON.

Vol. 6-No. 260

LONDON, JULY 24, 1926.

PRICE 3d.

### PREPAID SUBSCRIPTION RATES

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### HOME NEWS

The "Zones" compromise concluded between France and Switzerland on October 30th, 1924, and relegating a decision in the long-standing dispute to the Hague tribunal, was ratified yesterday

week by the French Chamber.

It is anticipated that the ensuing preparation and exchange of notes will cause considerable further delay so that judgment may not be expected before the beginning of 1928.

The Federal Council is contributing 40% of Frs. 133,300 which represents the estimated cost of erecting 29 new stables and cattle yards in place of those that were recently destroyed by avalanches in Bosco-Vallemaggia (Ticino).

In order to protect Swiss dairies the Federal Council has imposed a duty of Frs. 10 per 100 kilo of imported milk. The duty is directed against the ruinous competition along the French frontier (on account of the exchange) and is only levied on consignments which exceed the normal pre-inflation figures. It is notworthy that the retil price of It is noteworthy that the retail price of milk in Geneva has now dropped four centimes, and is 33 cts. per litre.

In order to combat \*\*\*

In order to combat the competition of the independent farmers, the organised milk producers in Schaffhausen have suddenly reduced the retail price of milk by nearly 20%, i.e., from 39 to 32 centimes per litre (slightly over 1\frac{3}{4}d. per pint).

\*\*\*

According to statistics published in connection with the forthcoming annual meeting of the Swiss newspaper society, to be held at Chur at the end of next month, there are 471 political papers in Switzerland, of which 114 appear daily. Of the total 158 represent the Radical (Liberal) opinion, 83 the Conservatives (Catholics) and 16 the Socialists, while 12 defend agricultural interests and 108 remain impartial. 108 remain impartial.

The fourth international congress of Boy Scouts is taking place from August 22nd to 28th at Kandersteg, the organisations of 35 different countries sending delegates. The founder of the move-ment, Sir Robert Baden Powell, will be present at the deliberations.

The carpenters' strike in Zurich which has lasted since the beginning of March, has now been called off officially, the strikers undertaking to return to work unconditionally.

Self-ignition of hay or lightning is surmised to be the cause of a fire which, in spite of the efforts of the neighbouring fire brigades, reduced to ashes a block of five buildings in Lugnorre (Fribourg); all the official documents in the keeping of the clerk of the commune are said to have become a view to the flames. become a prey to the flames.

Two houses have been destroyed and a third seriously damaged by a fire which broke out on the farmstead of Jakob Heer in Unter-Hallau (Schaffhausen); four families are rendered homeless and the damage is stated to be about firs. 80,000.

\*\*\*

Thundanterens award conciderable damage last

Thunderstorms caused considerable damage last A number of transformers and standards carrying the electric current for the tarmways were struck by lightning whilst the Zurichberg quarter was partially inundated by torrential rains.

For embezzling different amounts totalling frs. 95,000, A. Doser, a former employee of the Basle municipal tramways has been sentenced to two years' imprisonment.

An abnormal number of bathing fatalities are reported, mostly due to carelessness. One of the An abnormal number of bathing fatalities are reported, mostly due to carelessness. One of the most tragic of these occurred in the Cauma lake near Flims (Grisons). Three residents from Chur were crossing a prohibited part of the lake on a raft when two of them lost their balance and fell overboard. They were Frau Christine Eggenberg and Frau Marie Lörtscher; the third one, Mr. Karl Rohr, jumped after them to render assistance, but was evidently unable to rise to the surface as the three bodies were unable to rise to the surface, as the three bodies were later on recovered with the two women tightly clutching the man.

### EXTRACTS FROM SWISS PAPERS.

La statistique fédérale des ménages.—D'après les communications du Bureau fédéral de statistique, le nombre des ménages, en Suisse, a passé de 557 mille en 1870 à 887 mille en 1920, et de 210 à 229 mille en 1870 à 887 mille en 1920, et de 210 à 229 par mille habitants; vice-versa, chaque ménage ne compte plus en moyenne que 4.4 personnes, contre 4.8 un demisiècle auparavant. Ce fait est en relations avec la diminution de la natalité. Sur 1,000 femmes mariées. Pon a compté, de 1911 à 1920, 166 naissances, contre 260 de 1871 à 1880. Le phénonème, en soi regrettable au point de vue national, est compensé en grande partie par le fléchissement de la mortalité infantile: Sur 1,000 nouveaux-nês, 193 sont décédés au cours de la première année de 1871 à 1880, 124 de 1901 à 1910, et 92 de 1911 à 1920.

Sur 1,000 personnes groupées dans les ménages, 390 sont des chefs de famille, 433 des enfants, 56 des parents, 51 des pensionnaires ou sous-loctaires, 30 des aides professionnels, 26 des domestiques, 14 des enfants adoptifs.

La fécondité et plus faible dans les villes que dans l'ensemble du pays. Sur 100 ménages, on en comptait 20 sans enfants dans les familles catholiques, 21 dans les israélites, 23 dans les procationiques, 21 dans les Israentes, 23 dans les pro-testantes et 28 dans les ménages mixtes. On en trouve 24 sur mille chez les chefs d'entreprise et chez les ouvriers, 31 chez les employés, 53 chez les rentiers et retraités, ce dernier taux n'ayant qu'une signification très relative, car il s'agit en général ici de personnes agées ayant déjà élevé tres famille. une famille.

C'est chez les forgerons  $(15\,\%)$  et les agriculteurs  $(16\,\%)$  que l'on trouve le moins de ménages sans enfants. "Democrate."

Les relations avec l'Italie—M. Motta, con-seiller fédéral, a prononcé à la Journée officielle du tir cantonal tessinois, à Faido, un important discours devant les représentants du gouvernement, du Grand Conseil et de toutes les autorités, ainsi que devant une foule considérable.

Le chef du Département politique, après avoir adressé un salut vibrant au Tessin, en après avoir affirmé que le sort du canton est indissolublement lié à la Contédération a ajouté:

Il y a quelques semaines, je ne l'ignore pas, des journaux, et non des moindres, du royaume voisin, ont provoqué sous le prétexte de la "germanisation" du Tessin une polémique injuste.

du Tessin une polémique injuste.

Si j'en parle, ce n'est pas pour amplifier ni pour diminuer les dangers d'une telle polémique. Le Conseil fédéral s'est abstenu de demander explicitement au gouvernement italien d'intervenir pour faire cesser les polémiques. Il s'en est abstenu pour des raisons diverses. La première, c'est que, comme la Suisse jouit d'un régime de liberté de presse complète, le Conseil fédéral n'estimait pas opportun d'invoquer pour la presse italienne des freins quelconques, qui ne sont pas prévus pour nous dans la Constitution; deuxièmement, les questions tessinoises sont des deuxièmement, les questions tessinoises sont des questions suisses. Or, en demandant au gouvernement italien d'apprendre aux journaux de la péninsule cette grande vérité, on pouvait faire croire que le Conseil fédéral lui reconnaissait un droit de contrôle indirect sur des affaires qui sont nôtres exclusivement. La troisième raison, la plus im-portante, c'est que le gouvernement suisse n'eut jamais et n'a pas de motif de douter, ni de la cor-rection, ni de la loyauté, ni de l'amitié du gouvernement italien.

Le Conseil fédéral n'a donc jamais admis que les craintes et les interventions de quelques journaux italiens étaient partagées par le gouvernement italien.

M. Motta a parlé ensuite de nos relations amicales avec l'Italie, consacrées par le traité d'arbitrage. Il a reconnu que l'opinion publique italienne est très sensible à l'égard de l'ingérence de tiers dans ses affaires; elle ne doit donc pas s'etonner si l'opinion suisse en fait autant, et si elle a condamné unaniment tout entire de quelle a condamné unaniment. ment toute action, de quelque côté qu'elle vienne, qui, sous le prétexte de défendre la race et la langue, tende à une surveillanc, à un contrôle.

M Motta a exalté la solidarité helyétique et a dit que les Tessinois demeurant dans les cantons confédérés vivaient parmi des frères, et il a ajouté que le Tessin pour y apporter son capital et les forces de son travail méthodique, discipliné, rencontre des visages ouverts et nulle défiance.

Il a invité les Confédérés établis au Tessin à envoyer leurs enfants dans les écoles cantonales, à con-struire des maisons selon l'architecture traditionnelle

L'orateur a relevé qu'il n'attend pas beaucoup des mesures législatives qui peuvent être prises,

mais bien de la volonté et de la concorde entre Tessinois et Confédérés.

M. Motta a terminé son discours par un salut enthousiaste à la patrie, et par un toast aux tireurs, déclarant notamment que si la Suisse fut sauvée, c'est à son armée qu'elle le doit. Quiconque ne voit pas ça est un àveugle. Une neutralité ne reposant pas sur l'armée serait considérée avec inquiétude par nos voisins, et enlèverait à notre peuple le sentiment de la confiance en soi-même.

### NOTES AND GLEANINGS.

By "KYBURG."

It is nearly always a sign of incipient senile decay when one starts lamenting the good old times! In many ways I am considered "youngish," often even "boy-ish" as far as manners are concerned and contents of my pockets, as I am told by Her Who Knows, but all the same I sometimes come across a thing which I consider was done better in our earlier days and I they were content to heave the scaled thing which I consider was done better in our earlier days, and I then am tempted to lament the good old times we had. I refer to the programme for the "Fête Nationale 1926," which has reached me by this morning's post. Remembering the time when under the auspices of the late Minister Monsieur Carlin, we celebrated our Fête Nationale at the Portland Rooms in Baker Street, singing, listening to songs and music, patriotic speeches, and when we could not only smoke if we wanted to, but when we could also obtain claret-curs and other delicious could also obtain claret-cups and other delicious refreshments of the stronger variety during the interval, I feel that things are not the same to-day, when it states even on the programme that "on est prié de ne pas fumer pendant la soirée."

Smoke may, of course, affect the singers and make the air somewhat heavy and unpleasant perhaps for some particularly delicate persons, and I console myself with the reflection that, having had my good old time in years gone by, it is now the turn of the non-smokers and the non-drinkers and, who am I, that I should grudge them their chance?

I suppose they staved away on former occasions or were not in existence then, and I am afraid the restriction referred to is quite enough to clash with my ideas of celebrating the Fête Nationale now.

(Oh, yes, I know that licentiousness is not freedom, but ——!?

Now, passons à l'ordre du jour.

### Bears Exonerate their Keeper.

Morning Post, July 1st :-

The "Bear Pit of Berne" is historic, not only in Switzerland but all over the world, since tourists of every country have gazed down into the basin of the capital of the Swiss Confederation at the playful bruins which have been kept there for continuous. centuries.

But the Bears of Berne have won additional recognition, and incidentally rehabilitated themselves in the good graces of the populace after the recent tragedy which resulted in the death of a child and injury to a youth.

For the first time in the annals of law courts two bears from the Berne pit were recognised as capable witnesses before the Cantonal Courts. One of the assistant keepers had brought charges One of the assistant keepers had brought charges of cruelty against the head keeper. The case was duly called, and, as part of his defence, the head keeper, to the apprehension of the judge and attendants, appeared for trial followed by two of the bears. The charges were made and the complaining witness described how the animals, even the two brought into the court-room had been mistraeted. mistreated.

The usual emphatic denials were entered by the defence, and after a discourse upon the habits, intelligence and honesty of bears in general, the counsel for the head keeper asked if the court would permit him to introduce, as the only witnesses for his client, the bears themselves.

The Court, unable to find reason as to the incompetence of the bears as witnesses, inasmuch as they were the aggrieved parties, and impressed by the arguments of the counsel, consented, whereupon the two animals were led before the Bench. The complaining witness and several other attendants of the Bear-pit were asked to come down from their places and confront the bears.

Much to the consternation of everyone except the head keeper and his lawyer, one of the bears, showing his dislike for the attendant before him, moved menacingly towards his supposed defender in an effort to administer a savage cuff. The other attendants he paid no attention to whatsoever. The argument proved sufficient and the Judge

dismissed the complaint against the head keeper who followed by the two shuffling bruins, walked out of the court-room.

and no doubt, the head keeper regaled his brown friends with a choice carrot or two. They had

### Preservation of Swiss Beauty Spot.

The Times, July 14th:

A successful attempt has been made by a group of Swiss alpinists and nature lovers to preserve the natural beauty of the Fafler-Alp (5,846ft.), the last glen in the Loetschental, in Canton Valais, and to prevent its attractions from being spoiled by the

prevent its attractions from being spotled by the ever-growing hotel industry.

When, in 1914, a scheme was set up for building three big hotels in that remote glen, the group of Swiss alpinists, wishing to keep the Fafler-Alp as a sort of natural reserve, resolved to buy the place. By agreement with the Cantonal Government and By agreement with the Cantonal Government and Commune, they purchased the existing hotel and the adjacent ground, as well as all rights over water and springs, thus putting an end to any attempt to build huge hotels in the valley. They themselves either contributed or raised the necessary capital for purchasing the place and running the small mountain hotel, which was renewed but will not be enlarged. The first years were difficult, but now things are going on smoothly, and the profits are sufficient to pay the interest on the capital invested. If any surplus profits are made, they will be used for the improvement of the place, as those who undertook the purchase do not intend to make any profit for themselves. If nothing interferes with this interesting experiment the Fafler-Alp will remain a lonely mountain glen, and will not be invaded by lonely mountain glen, and will not be invaded by ugly modern buildings and shops.

It is just as well to preserve some of our Swiss beauty spots, because one never knows how long they are going to last, seeing that even mountain tops move, glaciers dwindle, and, in short, the whole country will become as flat as an ironing board by and by. (But not in your life-time, my friend, so don't hasten your holiday!) Read what The Times said on July 13th said on July 13th.

### Glacier Movements in the Alps.

The retreating movement of the Swiss Alpine glaciers, which began in 1922, continued throughout the year 1925. This is made clear by the observations made by Professor P. L. Mercanton, of Lausanne, an expert in glaciology. Snowfalls were abundant during the preceding winter, but they were completely "eaten" by the sun during the subsequent summer.

the subsequent summer.

One example may help to show the size of this movement. The mass of new snow reached a depth of 7ft. on the Orny glacier at the beginning of the summer season; the quantity of snow that melted during the summer months reached a depth of 18ft., so that the surface of the glacier sank by

Out of 100 Swiss glaciers observed in 1925, 19 were advancing (23 in 1924), 11 were at a stand-still (11 in 1924), and 69 were retreating (66 in 1924.) still (11 in 1924), and 69 were retreating (66 in 1924.)
The Saleinaz glacier advanced by 63ft. and the lower Grindelwald glacier by 29ft.; on the other hand, the Aletsch glacier retreated by 30ft., the Allalin glacier by 30ft., the Eiger glacier by 61ft., and the upper Grindelwald glacier by 50ft.

The consequence of this retreating movement is that the glaciers are now in a broken condition, cut

by deep crevaces which make them difficult and sometimes dangerous to cross. There is every reason to believe that this is the beginning of a period of general retreat; if this be the case, it period of general retreat; if this be the case, it will be evidence in favour of the theory that the periodicity of the glacier movements is 35 years. During nearly 35 years ending 1922 there was a general advance of Alpine glaciers. It remains to be seen whether in another 35 years we shall be entering on another period of advance.

In The Observer of July 11th, I came across the following "tall" story:

The papers of the week have not had any piece The papers of the week have not had any piece of news quite so exciting as one which I find in The Observer of a hundred years ago. It is given as from "a Paris paper," and on the authority of "Dr. James Hotham, of Morpeth, in Northumberland." Dr. Hotham had just come from Switzerland, where he had visited Mt. St. Gothard, and made a startling discovery:—

A league from Alzoli, in the valley of Levantina, at the bottom of a kind of cavern, the body of a man, about thirty years of age, was perceived, under a heap of ice, proceeding from an avalanche. The body seemed to be fresh as if it had been stifled only half an hour

fresh, as if it had been stifled only half an hour

before.

The body, covered with a crust of ice, was taken out and placed in warm water, from which it was transferred to bed and treated in the manner customary with cases of suffocation, "by which means animation was restored":—

What was the astonishment of everybody when the individual, having recovered the use of his faculties, declared that he was Roger Dodsworth, son of the antiquary of the same name, born in 1629, who, returning from Italy in 1660, a year after the death of his father, was buried under an avalanche?

The account goes on to say that "Mr. Dodsworth feels a great stiffness in all his joints," but that "by degrees they will become as flexible as before the accident."

Unfortunately the story (which has a striking similarity to the motive of Mr. Well's "When the Sleeper Wakes") is left without an ending. "If," concludes the Paris narrative, "Mr. Dodsworth fully recovers, and should pass through Lyons to return to his country after 166 years' absence, it may be predicted that he will attract in the highest degree the public curiosity." But whether he did recover, and whether he returned as a Rin van Winkle to England, we do not learn: either then or (so far as I can ascertain) subsequently. We can only presume that if England had a Rip van Winkle in 1826 she would not have buried the secret in so much obscurity.

And, inserting it in these columns, I just wonder how many of my readers will have to read it twice ere seeing that it was originally printed over a century

#### Italy and Ticino.

Daily Mail, July 12th :-

In reply to the protests in the Swiss Press against the alleged Fascist campaign for the return to Italy of the Swiss canton of Ticino and against the Italian complaints of the Germanisation of the canton, a semi-official statement has been issued at Rome. This communiqué says that in view of the repeated expressions of friendship on the part of the Italian Government the attitude of distrust of certain members of the Swiss Government is entirely unjustified.

Italy, however, maintains her right to keep a vigilant eye on all that passes at her frontiers.
"It is only natural," says the communiqué, "that we should want to know since when have numerous Germans who have bought property on the hills dominating Lake Maggiore acquired Swiss

The argument in the last sentence of the above is very curious and a somewhat specious one, but the main thing is that our *Ticinesi* are *Swiss at heart* and main thing is that our Tietness are Swiss at heart and none than they are more loyal to mother Helvetia, as all those who know and love our beautiful Canton south of the Gotthard know full well. I fancy the Italians would have a tough job, if they tried to assimilate the Ticino. Relationship of culture and language is one thing, political relationship is another. another.

### "RIMEMBRANZE."

SERATE DI LUGLIO.

Lunghe serate placide d'estate, non sarete mai più che ricordi cari, sogni deliziosi; memorie di

oscura, parco fitto di frondami da sembrar fantasmi, fontana famigliare dal zampillo d'acqua fresca e purissima, panchina di sasso ove ci attardavamo di sera, sedute, colla testa riposante contro il muro di casa, in dolce rapimento, contemplando esta tiche, un firmamento di un color turchino meraviglioso, costellato di una miriade di "vivid facelle," stelle filanti, via lattea che attraversav vaporosa ed inserutabile quell'immensità di una superba bellezza...oh no, non ritornerete giammai!

e contemplavo "allora" in voi . . tutto un avvenire io studiavo, scrutinavo in voi, in quelle serate sublimi, senza luna, calme, placide e belle, seduta sulla panchina di sasso, colla testo reclinata, poggiato al muro di "casa" . . . . Si beveva a pieni polmori vita, tutta un'esistenza mi si apriva . ntemplavo "allora" in voi . . . tutto

poggiato al muro di "casa".

Si beveva a pieni polmoni quell'aria imbalsamata dall'odor delle rose mescolato a quello del gelsomino, del caprifoglio e delle magnolie.

L'occhio vagava e rincorreva le luccinole che ingemmavano il giardino, chiamate dal caldo e dalla fragranza dei fiori; apparenti, sparenti; incerte e come stupite d'esistere; luccichio verde oro, un pò stella, un pò fuoco fatuo da sembrar lumicini delle streghe.

Ero giovane allora: ero sicura d'esserlo sempre

Ero giovane allora; ero sicura d'esserlo sempre e bevevo a gran sorsi quella soavità di solitudine piena di un'intima melodià; quelle vibrazioni molte-pliche di natura notturna che rendono sonoro cias-cun atomo del silenzio.

Tanti mai anni son passati dopo quel tempo, cerco, in una dolce serata estiva di soverchiar

l'altre lontane . . . Ricordandole, ho nel cervello immagini di luce, infinito moltiplicarsi di stelle nel cielo di luglio, e ciascuna ha un suo modo di guardare, di palpitare, di splendere....

E. Lunghi-Rezzonico.

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