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HOME NEWS

Protests are raised in the majority of the Swiss press against the possible election of National Councillor Grimm, as president for 1927 of the National Council; according to old established Swiss parliamentary tradition he should be the next occupant of this high post, but, apart from his extreme socialist views, his candidature is opposed on the ground of his having admittedly been the chief instigator and director of the revolutionary general strike of 1918 in Switzerland.

A new viaduct, connecting Baden and Wettingen, was inaugurated last week in the presence of Federal Councillor Schulthess and cantonal and local authorities.

The accounts of the international inland navigation exhibition, recently held at Basle, close with a deficit of Frs. 775,000, most of which will be borne by the Basle government; the latter, however, has already recouped its loss by the rates and taxes on tickets imposed. In the above deficit is also included a sum of Frs. 400,000 to be paid to the Basle Fair company, for the hire of the exhibition halls.

Several public and private institutions in the cantons of Solothurn and Aargau are benefiting to the extent of half a million francs, under the will of the late National Councillor Bally-Prior of Schönenwerd.

A novel case of international importance will probably come before the civil courts of the canton Zurich in the near future. A recently naturalised Swiss, Paul Spier by name, was carrying on before the war, a successful business in Intra on the Lago Maggiore (Italy); on the outbreak of hostilities he was expelled from Italy, being then a German, and his property was subsequently confiscated and sold. In 1919 he revived his old business relations in Italy and, thanks to his former good reputation, was able to enjoy credit to the tune of over Lire 100,000. On being pressed by his Italian creditors for settlement, the latter were informed that he had made a claim against the Italian Government for wrongful confiscation of his property, and that until such claim had been satisfied, he was not in a position to make any payments to them.

The old idea of re-uniting the two half-cantons Basel, which has been dormant for the last 12 years, is to be revived, and at a meeting in Muttenz last Saturday, an intensive propaganda scheme was decided upon.

The "Orismühle," situate on the borders of the cantons of Solothurn and Basel-Land, was destroyed by fire last week, together with some of the adjoining outhouses, the damage being in the neighbourhood of Frs. 100,000. The property at present belongs to the family Reinhard, but at one time was owned—and to a large extent personally enlarged—by the well-known patriot Hans Joggeli Schäfer, who at the time of the revolution in 1798, was a fiery fighter in the cause of the people.

Imprisonment for life is the sentence on the 19 year old boy robber, Fritz Bühler, from Bannwil (Bern), who in March last attacked and murdered his friend, Eugen Schönmann, in the Rütliwald (Zurich), and abstracted the Frs. 13,000 which the latter had drawn at the local bank for the wages of his firm. Bühler, who is married and the father of a child, is said to have been driven to commit this mad act by an irresistible desire to obtain the necessary funds for the purchase of a motor cycle.

A remarkable series of minor accidents, without any serious consequences, happened last Saturday on the road between Suhr and Aarau. A new Buick car which had just passed a horse-drawn vehicle, after damaging the rear part of the latter, collided with a heavy motor-lorry following on behind. The car was thrown across the road into a meadow, only slightly the worse for the encounter, whilst the lorry with a bent front axle remained fast on the track of Wyentalbahn. In spite of the signals and shouting of the former occupants of the above three conveyances, the approaching train was unable to pull up in time, and crashed into the lorry obstructing its progress, simply whirling it into the adjoining meadow. Nobody was hurt.

EXTRACTS FROM SWISS PAPERS.

Einweihung der neuen Doldenhornhütte der Sektion Emmental des Schweiz. Alpenklubs.—Bei prächtigstem Sonnenschein fand am vergangenen Sonntag (12. Sept.) die Einweihung der neuen Doldenhornhütte ob Kandersteg statt. Ueber 100 Bergfreunde, Männer und Frauen jeden Alters, hatten sich zum Weiheakt eingefunden. Unter den Erschienenen bemerkte man die Vertreter des Zentralkomitees, die Herren Dr. Faes und Bächtold, den Chefredaktor der "Alpen," Dr. Jenni, die Vertreter der Talschaft, sowie die Delegationen der befreundeten Schwestersektionen Alts, Blümlisalp, Bern und Kirchberg.

Herr Pfarrer Trechsel, der Präsident der Sektion Emmental, hielt die Weiherede. Ein Haus, das so hoch gebaut ist, bedarf nebst des Menschen Hut Gottes Schirm und Schutz. Ihm, dem Gebieter der Elemente, übergibt er vertrauensvoll das Hüttlein am steilen Hang und hofft, dass der Allerhöchste es bewahren werde vor Blitz und Donnerschlag, vor Sturmwind und Lawinengefahr.

Es sprachen ferner die Herren Oberst Bühlermann, der trotz seines hohen Alters die Feier durch seine Anwesenheit geehrt hatte, Architekt Mühlemann, Grossrat Keller und Zentralpräsident Dr. Faes. Letzterer bezeichnete das neue Berghaus als ein Sinnbild emmentaler Stolz und Dauerhaftigkeit. Nach dem Imbiss, der den Ehrengästen inner- und ausserhalb der Hütte serviert wurde, ergriffen noch die Vertreter der eingeladenen Sektionen sowie die Vertrauensmänner der Talschaft, worunter Nationalrat Bühler, in äusserst launiger Rede aus dem reichen Schatz seiner Erinnerungen schöpfte, das Wort. Alle Redner gaben ihrer grossen Freude Ausdruck über das wohlgelungene Werk und dankten der Sektion Emmental für das dem Alpenklub im allgemeinen und der Talschaft im besondern gemachte Geschenk. Um 3 Uhr war die in allen Teilen wohlgelungene Feier zu Ende und die Teilnehmer nahmen in grösseren und kleineren Trupps Abschied von der heimeligen Stätte, deren Bild wohl noch lange in ihrer Erinnerung haften bleiben wird. Unvergesslich wird uns das schlichte Wort bleiben, das der Vertreter Kanderstegs der Hütte gewidmet hat:

Gott bewahre dieses Haus
Und alle, die drinn gehen in und us
Vor Firs'fahr und vor böser Zyt
Vor Murer- und vor Zimmerli'sch.

(Emmenthalet Nachrichten.)

Une petite S. d. N.—C'est évidemment à un sentiment très généreux et très louable qu'obéit ce vieux couple anglais qui vient, comme nous le signalions hier, de décider d'adopter six enfants âgés de 6 ans et appartenant à six nationalités différentes, pour leur donner une éducation technique et leur laisser plus tard leur nom: il y aura un petit Français, une petite Anglaise et quatre enfant italien, espagnol, polonais et suédois.

Ce sera là en modèle réduit, une véritable Société des nations, dont il sera curieux de suivre, dans l'avenir, l'évolution, comme pour l'autre. Quand ces six enfants auront quelque litige à propos de quelque tartine de confiture, il sera curieux de voir si l'arbitrage pacifique suffira à faire attribuer la tartine à l'ayant-droit ou si, au contraire, le droit du plus fort ne jouera pas, exactement comme pour les hommes. Car, conclut *Le Petit Bleu*, si les hommes sont frères, ils ne sont pas tous semblables, et l'histoire nous en fournit mille preuves depuis Cain et Abel.

NOTES AND GLEANINGS.

The Landslides in the Valais.

The upper Rhone Valley continues to remain in a state of geological evolution and lucid descriptions appear in the English Press of the efforts made in order to prevent further damage to railway tracks and bridges threatened by the consequent overflowing of the St. Barthelemy torrent. A typical narrative is given in the *Daily Mail* (October 11th) and refers to events of Saturday, October 9th:—

At half-past two in the afternoon the gendarmier at Lavey-les-Bains, in the Rhone Valley, were startled by a telephone message from the watchers at the Alpine village of La Rasse warning them of another landslide from the Plan-de-Névé, in the Dent du Midi range, where exactly a fortnight ago a great avalanche of mud and stones swept down to the Rhone and diverted the river from its course for half a mile.

Scores of railwaymen who were occupied in clearing the scene of the last avalanche immediately set to work to try to make a channel for the torrent to pass beneath the new bridge on the Simplon line, over the St. Barthelemy torrent, which was only completed a week ago. But, like sand-castles on the seashore, washed away by the incoming tide, their work was wiped out in a few seconds. Inexorably the dark sluggish mass of mud and rocks moved down, covering the neighbouring forest for hundreds of yards.

At three o'clock this morning the watchers again heard a dull, rumbling sound from the mountains. This time the flood overflowed the banks of the St. Barthelemy torrent and swept across the countryside, covering the only road up the Canton of Valais for half a mile.

The landslide was even more extensive than its predecessor a fortnight ago. A quarter of a mile above the Simplon road the torrent left its bed and spread out like a great fan over the neighbouring forests. A huge amount of debris has been carried down into the old bed of the Rhone, but the Simplon railway bridge was spared.

A new theory as to the cause of these disturbances is advanced in the issue of October 7th of the same paper; here it is:—

Geologists have established that the landslide was not due to the bursting of a water pocket on Plan-Névé glacier, as was believed, but by the disintegration of rocks near the summit of the Cime de l'Est which accumulated in a gigantic funnel-shaped ravine. The heavy rainfall sufficed to set the mass in motion.

It is now seriously suggested that the disintegration of these rocks is not due to natural causes, but is the result of heavy artillery fire from the Swiss fortress of Dailley, across the valley, which for years has used the rocks below the summit as a target.

The Cost of Surgery.

I have referred at some length to the interesting correspondence which the *New Statesman*, under this and similar headings recently published. I have received communications from several subscribers who are singularly unanimous in disagreeing with the opinion expressed by "L" in the last issue of the S.O.: one fair subscriber, who successfully emerged from the grip of surgeons and nursing homes in both countries, states that "she is glad to know that 'L' has had happier experiences than herself, but he ought to think himself very lucky indeed." I must apologise to my correspondents for not publishing their instructive experiences, but in justice to the *New Statesman* I reprint two letters which appeared in its issues of October 2nd and October 9th respectively:—

Sir,—In your issue of September 18th, you publish an article by your contributor of "Lens," the theme of which is the praise of—among other things—Swiss nurses and nursing homes. Without maintaining that English nursing homes are all they should be, I should like to point out the possibility of there being two sides to this question.

I have spent six months in one of the more expensive clinics of Dr. Rollier. In this clinic the nursing, diet, and, I may add, the medical attention, were disgraceful. The nurse is evidently considered efficient, as she has held the position for nearly two years.

During my stay in Switzerland I have met many people who have had a fairly wide experience of Swiss nursing homes. I have yet to hear of a Swiss nurse who is anything but a *femme de chambre*.—Yours, etc., PATIENT.

I can hardly believe that the charges levelled against one of Dr. Rollier's clinics can be substantiated; however, as the writer veils his identity under a nom-de-plume, our great compatriot will probably decline to enter into a controversy, but the second letter from the pen of a medical practitioner deals with the charges very effectively and leaves little to be added:—

The letter published under this heading in your issue of October 2nd is so misleading in its inference, and so contrary to my own experience, that I trust you will permit me space to reply.

Last August my wife was brought down from a Swiss mountain resort owing to an attack of appendicitis, and was operated upon at a clinic. I desire to state that our experience was almost identical with that described by "Lens" in your previous issue.

I cannot personally speak too highly of Swiss nurses, who besides being generally well-trained, maintain to my observation the spirit of nursing at an unusually high level. I can record an equally happy experience of two different Swiss

maternity nurses in England, and some years ago my wife was also confined at a Swiss maternity clinic, where the organisation, nursing and efficiency were in every way admirable.

Your correspondent's reference to one of Dr. Rollier's clinics has too personal a flavour to carry conviction. The excellence of the treatment and results obtained at Leysin are too well-known to require any defence against such statements. Though never a patient there I have visited several of the clinics. One of the outstanding features about the tubercular patients one sees at Leysin is the extraordinarily healthy and well-fed appearance so many of them have, and though it is many years ago now I still recall the spotless refectory and excellently appetising meal which I shared with several recovering patients and their friends, and this after a visit of inspection to the kitchen. I may add that I called unannounced at these clinics, just presenting my card as a medical visitor.

The Swiss *femme de chambre* is still often an amazingly efficient person who makes an art of service which appears neither to bore her nor to be beneath her. This quality she shares with the Swiss nurses it has been my privilege to come across. Is not the absence of this quality one of the vulnerable spots in many modern English nurses? I doubt if the deficiency, where it exists, is due so much to the training as to the same cause which has made it a commonplace amongst so many of those English women who still pretend to earn their living in domestic service.

The Spahlinger Treatment.

General interest in this country is kept alive by an interview which a *Sunday Chronicle* representative had with Mrs. Roscoe Brunner on her return, about a fortnight ago, from a visit to the laboratories at Geneva:—

Although M. Spahlinger has not had sufficient money to make the complete remedies which could be safely placed in the hands of any good physician who understands the administration of injection, or tuberculosis, he and a group of doctors in Switzerland are working wonders with the partial remedies. They have only got about two vaccine treatments and nine of the serums there, but their chemical knowledge is increasing daily, and they are obtaining wonderful results.

To produce the full treatment it will require a great deal of money. At least 22 horses are needed to produce the serums, which must not be confused with the vaccines.

The vaccines are not so complicated, nor fortunately do they require such a long time to make. It is by their injection that people can be immunised against tuberculosis, as they are to-day immunised by injection against small-pox.

Wireless in Switzerland.

Though late in the field the Swiss Radio stations have quickly made up for lost time, judging from the following report sent by an English commissioner who is touring Continental broadcasting stations, and published by the *Evening Standard* (October 6th):—

I had not originally intended to go to Berne, but I was told that I should make a great mistake if I missed seeing that station. So I set out with a letter of introduction to Mr. Anselmi, the station engineer.

I was surprised on the way to find the interest the peasants in the mountains take in wireless. One lad I spoke to had a very well-made three-valve set, and he was able to get the best out of it.

Mr. Anselmi proved a charming host, and we sat far into the night, discussing his receiving and transmitting stations, and the difficulties he had gone through at the outset of broadcasting in Berne.

The transmitting station at Munchenbuchsee which I saw the next day, is a very fine station. It is particularly interesting in that in the same building there are two high-power commercial transmitters working independently, but on the same aerial and also in the same building, unscreened from the others, is the broadcasting transmitter. One end of the broadcasting aerial is attached to one of the main masts, and the other to a small mast which has been specially erected.

In all the rooms of this station there is laid on a supply of compressed air, which is used for cleaning the apparatus by blowing out the dust with powerful fans. While we were examining the air compressor pump and stand, by the apparatus in the engine-room, a crash was heard near the transmitter, which was working at the time. We returned to ascertain the cause, and found that a large moth, flying about the building, had passed between the plates of one of the condensers operating at a pressure of 9,000 volts. Its wings had touched on either side—hence the crash!

Leaving Berne I set out for Zurich, making my way along the Lake of Lucerne and via Zug. Listening on my set in the evening, I was again surprised to hear such poor quality from Radiola. Situated as it is in the heart of Paris, one expects so much and gets so little that is good. Davenport again was jammed with Morse. The interference from trams was very severe, as I was right in the

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centre of the town and on the main tram route.

By the way, much is being done in Switzerland, especially in Berne, to mitigate this trouble. The aluminium trolley wheels are being replaced by carbon rods, which, it has been discovered, considerably reduces the trouble.

I was far from expecting the surprise I received when I entered the Zurich studio. Zurich is only a low-powered station, but it is apparently well supplied both with money and brains. Their engineer, Mr. Spoerri, took me round.

When you enter the station studio you are at once struck with the fact that there is only 25 per cent. of the damping used in English studios; and that, in consequence, you can speak with ease and can recognise your own voice—which in our studios is often difficult. Again, the windows were open and the studio was beautifully cool.

This change is due to their acoustic engineer, Mr. Oswald, of Winterthur, who has arranged to do most of the necessary damping to the microphone by lowering over the instrument what looks like a large lamp-shade of wicker and canvas stuffed with cotton wool.

Another device is a "curtain-damping" behind the piano to bring out that instrument more or less, as the case may be.

Everyone who has listened to a broadcast from some public hall in England will have noticed the unpleasant echo present. At Zurich they have found means to reduce this along the same lines, and they enclose the microphones in a specially-constructed basket, which is also padded with cotton wool.

A Free Port in the Channel.

From the *Siren and Shipping* (October 6th):—

We understand that a group of Swiss financiers have approached the Belgian Government with a request for sanction to acquire about 800 acres of land on the left bank of the Scheldt at Antwerp for the purpose of creating a free port. This section of Antwerp's water-front is at present occupied partly by warehouses and partly by a queer "longshore" community whose presence has long been a source of anxiety to the municipal authorities. The latter, in fact, are known to have been contemplating the clearing of this area for some time past, but their plans envisaged the construction of additional docks as an extension to the port of Antwerp. The Swiss, however, are very desirous of having direct access to the sea, and they have offered to do the clearing and all necessary constructional work if the Government will approve of their free port scheme, the advantages of which to Swiss importers and exporters would be numerous and important. In addition, the financial interests concerned are reported to have offered to take over the responsibility of carrying out the much-discussed project of connecting the two banks of the Scheldt at Antwerp by a tunnel, thus doing away with the present system of ferry-boats. The Belgian Government, it is stated, are now considering these proposals, but no official pronouncement on the subject has yet been made.

A New Wallpaper.

Aluminium, which was invented, I believe, and first put to practical use in Switzerland, and which reigns supreme in most of the kitchens, will soon be seen climbing the walls of the dining and drawing rooms, according to the *Mechanical World* (October 8th):—

According to a report from the American Consul at Zurich, Swiss wallpaper manufacturers have successfully developed a process for using aluminium in the manufacture of wallpaper. As manufactured at present, the paper is made of commercially pure aluminium, rolled and backed upon stiff paper. The design is then stamped upon the aluminium surface, the impression of the stamping going through the backing paper. The colouring and embossing processes are said to give satisfactory results, but so far the manufacturers have been unable to overcome a gaudy, metallic effect in the finished paper.

FINANCIAL AND COMMERCIAL NEWS FROM SWITZERLAND.

The municipal authorities of Agram (Zagreb) are in negotiation with a group of Swiss banks for a loan of Dinar 200,000,000 to be expended on public works and for similar purposes. Should a loan of this kind eventually be arranged, it should

without doubt be of considerable benefit to Swiss manufacturing industries, since it is almost certain that some stipulation as to the acceptance of tenders from Swiss contracting firms will be included in the agreement.

The firm of Brown Boveri, in Baden, announce that they are closing down their foundry business, as the space occupied by this department of their works is required for extension of their machinery and engineering shops. It is expected that the firm of Gebr. Sulzer will take over a great part of the foundry business and that they will in consequence re-open their foundry in Buelach, which has been closed down for some time past.

The A.G. der Maschinenfabriken Escher Wyss & Cie, Zurich, closed the year 1925/26 with a net loss of Frs. 223,470. This could, however, be covered out of the surplus carried forward from the preceding year. In the report it is pointed out that contrary to expectations, conditions became even worse during the year under review. Unemployment and the general trade depression were still acute and the firm had the greatest difficulty in finding markets for its goods. Prices had often to be accepted which barely covered costs, though it is noted that even at a higher price the Swiss goods were often preferred on account of their high quality.

Another important Swiss engineering firm, the Schweizerische Lokomotiv- und Maschinenfabrik, in Winterthur, shows better results for the year ending June 30th, 1926. There is a net profit of Frs. 1,306,000, approximately the same as that of the year before, and a dividend of 7 per cent. is again to be paid on the share capital of 12 million francs. The firm are working on a large contract for supplying electric locomotives to the Swiss Federal Railways and have also fulfilled orders from the Rhätische Bahn, the Japanese State Railways, the Dutch State Railways for Sumatra, the Chilean-Transandine, and other lines.

For the year to the end of June, 1926, the sugar works at Aarberg—the Zuckerfabrik und Raffinerie Aarberg A.G.—showed a net profit of Frs. 82,307 against Frs. 89,008 a year before, and 6 per cent. dividend was again paid.

The Linoleum A.G. in Giubiasco (Tessin), whose shares have for some time past been quoted regularly in these columns, closed the year 1925/26 with a net profit of Frs. 168,327 as compared with Frs. 172,296 a year earlier. 5 per cent. dividend is being paid on the share capital of Frs. 3,000,000.

The Banque pour Entreprises Electriques in Zurich proposes to pay a dividend of 9 per cent. for the year 1925/26 as compared with 8 per cent. a year previously.

QUOTATIONS from the SWISS STOCK EXCHANGES.

BONDS.		Oct. 12	Oct. 19	
Confederation 3% 1903 ...	...	79.50	79.75	
" 5% 1917, VIII Mob. Ln	...	101.67	101.60	
Federal Railways 3½% A—K	...	83.95	83.97	
" 1924 IV Elect. Ln.	...	101.50	101.50	
SHARES.		Nom.	Oct. 12	Oct. 19
Swiss Bank Corporation ...	...	500	792	785
Crédit Suisse ...	...	500	818	823
Union de Banques Suisses ...	...	500	660	665
Société pour l'Industrie Chimique	...	1000	2385	2385
Fabrique Chimique ci-dev. Sandoz	...	1000	3950	3875
Soc. Ind. pour la Schappe ...	...	1000	2830	2650
S.A. Brown Boveri ...	...	350	513	497
C. F. Bally ...	...	1000	1179	1230
Nestlé & Anglo-Swiss Cond. Mk. Co.	...	200	551	446
Entreprises Sulzer S.A.	...	1000	1017	972
Comp. de Navig'n sur le Lac Léman	...	500	545	545
Linoleum A.G. Giubiasco	100	94	94
Maschinenfabrik Oerlikon	500	800	780

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