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# The Swiss Observer

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We again wish our Readers the best of Christmas Cheer and all Happiness and Prosperity in the coming year.

## HOME NEWS

The present session of the Swiss Parliament came to a close last Thursday; the two Houses will meet again on March 23rd.

In the elections last week during the united session of the two Federal Houses, Dr. Giuseppe Motta, the present Vice-President, obtained 155 out of 207 possible votes; the missing 52 votes express, presumably, a protest from those (Socialists) who object to his pronounced sympathies for Fascism. This is Federal Councillor Motta's third term of office, he having been President of the Confederation in 1913 and 1920. Federal Councillor Edmund Schulthess (Brugg) received 173 votes as new Vice-President of the Confederation; the exceptionally large number of votes testify to the confidence and appreciation enjoyed by him in spite of the popular rejection of the Corn Monopoly, of which Bill he was the originator. Rumours were current, after the recent plebiscite, that Federal Councillor Schulthess was contemplating retirement from political life.

During the Budget discussion in the National Council the Socialists proposed that the amount of 80 million francs allotted to the Military Department should be struck out, as experience had shown that for a small country an army was useless against powerful neighbours; the Socialist Schneider (Basle) mentioned as an example the case of Belgium which in the last war had lost the flower of her manhood to no purpose!

In the States Council a motion to advance the age limit from 12 to 15 years for the issue of children's tickets on the Swiss Federal Railways was rejected, although the National Council had previously expressed its approval.

In spite of heated opposition from the Socialists, the National Council has voted a credit of Frs. 350,000 for the purpose of holding special instruction courses for officers in connection with the new light machine gun.

The National Council has passed a resolution requesting the Federal Council to prepare an emergency measure for the provisional maintenance of the present State monopoly in the cereal trade.

The Council of the association "Pro Ticino," which met in Berne last week, passed a resolution urging the Federal Council and the Ticinese authorities to appoint forthwith a commission of enquiry to study the desirability of establishing a university in the canton Ticino.

The assizes court at Aarau has sentenced the hotelkeeper Ernst Tschopp to two years and eight months' hard labour for having last June set fire to the Hotel Krone in Aarburg; the establishment was insured for Frs. 180,000.

The Basle schoolmasters at a recent meeting have made the discovery that the use of capital letters in writing common nouns in the German language is not justified and places German at a disadvantage as compared with the other modern languages. They have passed a resolution to this effect, and it is confidently hoped that the scholastic authorities of the other cantons concerned will follow suit in due course, and that, when once a united demand is presented, Germany will also fall into line.

A new bridge is to be built across the Aar in Berne at a cost of nearly four million francs, and the work is to be taken in hand next winter.

A geological experts' commission established the fact that the Monte Arbino in the Ticino has during 1925, moved forward by 1,04 metres in the direction of the Val d'Arbedo.

## EXTRACTS FROM SWISS PAPERS.

**L'héroïsme des Soleurois.**—Les Soleurois viennent de refuser 6 millions qu'un richissime Américain leur offrait pour un tableau de leur Musée, un Holbein de 1522, et authentique probablement.

Vous avez bien lu, six millions, pour une toile peinte! Et les Soleurois ont refusé le marché, ce dont on les loue vivement. C'est un noble geste évidemment, je me demande si nous aurions le courage d'en faire autant, cas échéant? Je n'en suis pas certain, et dans la pureté de nos budgets, une recette de 6 millions ferait rudement bien notre affaire.

Hélas! nous n'avons pas de Holbein à vendre. Mais on pourrait peut-être prier l'amateur américain de venir faire un tour chez nous. Il y a dans nos musées bien des kilomètres de peintures. Pour 6 millions, ma foi, on en pourrait céder un bon paquet, avec les cadres par-dessus et même une boîte pour les mettre, un de nos musées au choix, par exemple.

Ca serait une toute riche opération, notre dette serait du coup amortie d'un sérieux bout, et nous ne serions plus réduit au régime des économies de bouts de chandelles, et des recettes ramassées à la peignette.

Par ma foi, après tout, pourquoi. Bien des pauvres bougres doivent à l'occasion se défaire d'objets bien plus utiles qu'un tableau. Et je me résignerai sans trop de douleur à bâarder dans ces prix-là les trois quarts des chefs-d'œuvre de nos musées, et la totalité de nos monuments, y compris le monument de la République, le Daniel en chocolat du collège de la Promenade à Neuchâtel, et le pavillon de musique du chef-lieu.

Seulement voilà, l'Américain de Soleure ne viendra pas chez nous, et la tentation nous sera épargnée. Heureusement, car j'ai idée que nous n'aurions pas l'héroïsme des Soleurois, surtout après la bagarre du budget au Grand Conseil, où personne n'a rien voulu lâcher à la caisse de l'Etat.

—*Impartial, Chaux-de-Fonds.*

## NOTES AND GLEANINGS.

### The Spahlinger Treatment.

Long articles in the provincial papers testify to the interest which has been aroused as a result of the latest report from Geneva; whether the lay Press will be able to speed up matters in this country and overcome the prejudice existing in the medical profession, remains to be seen. Practitioners in Lancashire are pressing for the remedy to be placed in their hands. The following historic résumé from the *Manchester Guardian* (Dec. 14th) records the early experiments:

The story of Mr. Spahlinger's latest experiments goes back to 1916. In that year he administered a six months' course of complete vaccines to twenty cows which had previously returned an entirely negative reaction to the tuberculin test. After six months' rest these cows were inoculated with massive doses of virulent bovine tubercle. Rabbits and guinea-pigs, employed as "controls," died of the disease. At the end of one year two of the vaccinated cows were autopsied, but not the slightest trace of tuberculosis was found in them. From that time up to the present one or more of the cows has been killed each year, and every one has been found completely free from the disease.

But that was by no means the most remarkable feature of the experiments. Another of the cows of the 1916 vaccination (Nora), infected with potent tuberculosis in 1917 like the rest, was re-infected in 1921 with astonishing results. The administered dose of virus was so strong that Nora's local defences could not at once cope with it, and an abscess formed at the site of the inoculation. Pus from this abscess, when injected into three guinea-pigs, killed them within eight weeks. The abscess healed. The cow gave a negative reaction to tuberculin in November, 1924, and when she was killed in December, 1925, it was impossible to trace tuberculosis in her at all!

The foregoing results, as has been indicated, were obtained with complete vaccines. It remained for Mr. Spahlinger to improve upon them by employing, during a period when the complete vaccines were no longer available, a series of partial remedies, which he named for convenience vaccines 1, 2, 3 and 4. Three cows vaccinated in 1922 with these partials remained totally unresponsive to inoculation of the virulent bacilli. Thereupon Mr. Spahlinger set to work on the difficult problem of the practical simplification of these new vaccines, in order to secure an easier and cheaper method of production. In

the end it was proved that vaccines No. 1 and No. 2 in combination were sufficient to immunise, whereas No. 1 alone was insufficient. At once a series of independent tests were made, some of them under the control of the Geneva Government. These tests have demonstrated beyond all question the power of the new simplified vaccines to protect cattle against a subsequent inoculation of virulent virus. Vaccines 1 and 2 together will give protection under normal conditions; vaccines 1, 2 and 3 will protect against heavy intravenous inoculation of hyper-virulent virus. The next step, says Mr. Spahlinger, is to determine the minimum dosage to protect against infection under normal conditions—such, for example, as arise when uninfected cattle are herded together with tubercular animals.

### Water Power in Switzerland.

Here is another instructive survey from the *Electrical Times* (Dec. 9th):—

An extremely interesting power-station in Switzerland is that of the Jagne, situated in the Gruyère country, not far from the village of Broc, of Swiss chocolate fame. It uses the waters of the Jagne, which have been dammed in an artificial lake called the Lake of Montsalvens, two kilometres upstream, which reservoir contains 12,000,000 cu. m., ten millions of which are put into use. The water is dammed back from the very narrow gorge of la Rousille by a barrage fifty-two metres high.

The dam is of the arc type, and its construction has afforded opportunities for capital experiments as to resistance, influence of temperature on cement, etc., six sets of five thermometers or less, being inserted in the barrage (at present there are twenty-eight in use). The right wing of the dam is supported by a large abutment which, necessitated by the very slight incline on this side, also shortens the upper arches, and admits of the placing of a weir in the lengthening of the barrage. The opposite side is built into solid rock. The depth of the dam towards the valley reaches figure of twenty metres; the thickness diminishes with the height, and is only two metres at the top, for beyond a certain depth the action of the wall becomes predominant and the foot of the barrage, therefore, increases in width. The ridge of the dam, 138 metres long, is surmounted by a series of arches with a footbridge above them. Both sides of the construction are almost entirely faced with cement ashlar closely juxtaposed so as to avoid any infiltration, and the side up-stream has been covered with a special preparation of tar to guarantee its perfect impermeability.

The tunnel, 1,680 metres long, ends in the water tower with its well thirty-four metres by four-and-a-half, terminating in a reinforced concrete chamber twelve metres by eleven-and-a-half metres, to ensure safety during the abrupt suppression, or maximum supply of the water, calculated at 20 cu. m. per second. A lateral gallery forty metres long is joined to the base of the water tower, and, thanks to its volume of water, it acts as an equalising chamber. The twin high pressure pipes, 403 metres long and 1.80 metres in diameter, are connected at their upper end with a sluice-chamber in the solid rock containing two automatic butterfly sluice-gates, set in motion immediately and closing the force-pipes, in case of accident.

The power-house is equipped with four Francis turbines with an average each of 6,000 h.p. running at 500 revolutions per minute under a fall varying between 95 and 118 metres, and under the latter their maximum force is 7,320 h.p.; the normal fall is 105 metres. Each of these turbines is fitted with an automatic safety regulator which comes into play when its speed exceeds a certain fixed limit (20 per cent. perhaps), when the oil-pressure gives out, or when any part of the regulator becomes disorganized. A fifth turbine will be added as occasion demands.

This power-station of the Jagne has been constructed by the Entreprises Électriques Fribourgeoises, and, in consequence, the canton of Fribourg has a vastly improved service of electricity, while both Swiss and Foreign visitors have now one more delightful picnic site, Lake Montsalvens, in its picturesque Alpine setting.

We have already referred to this paper which Professor F. Bacon read in South Wales last month, as chairman of the South Wales branch of the I.M.E. It is interesting to make further extracts from Professor Bacon's address. He remarks that, now that electricity is laid on to over 95 per cent. of all the houses, the steam