

Notes and gleanings

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de Winterthur par les Confédérés, en automne de l'année 1460, car à cette époque elle appartenait à l'Autriche. En conquérant la Thurgovie, les Suisses avaient également jeté leur dévolu sur Winterthur qu'ils s'errèrent de près du 20 septembre au 7 décembre.

La chronique relate entre autres que les Bernois avaient mis un gros canon en position au Heiligberg; mais ils n'osaient pas s'en servir à volonté, car la ville de Winterthur leur devait passablement d'argent et en la bombardant ils risquaient de perdre le gage de leurs créances. Les Zurichois, de leur côté, qui disposaient aussi de très bonnes bouches à feu, désiraient cependant pour leur part posséder à eux seuls la ville, qu'ils ménageaient ainsi à leur tour. Les projectiles qu'ils lançaient ne causaient pas grands dégâts. Ils avaient un mortier tirant avec des projectiles de pierre pesant jusqu'à 80 livres; mais ils ne faisaient que briser des tuiles ou des fenêtres. Un de ces "obus" traversa le toit d'une maison et vint choir à la cuisine où il écrasa une écuelle à soupe sans blesser personne. Un autre boulet fut retrouvé dans une étable du Marché-Neuf entre les jambes d'une vache, qui n'avait eu aucun mal. C'était encore la guerre pour rire vis-à-vis de notre époque actuelle.

Feuille d'Avis, Montreux.

L'invasion pacifique.— La presse a maintes fois fait allusion au grand nombre d'agriculteurs de la Suisse allemande cherchant à acquérir des domaines dans le canton de Vaud. Mais ce qui est plus significatif c'est la cohorte de jeunes gens et jeunes filles venant chaque année pour apprendre le français et si possible trouver une place stable. On peut s'en rendre compte par la proportion de Suisses allemands constatés dans les classes de cours complémentaires en hiver surtout en campagne où leurs services sont généralement très appréciés. En villes ces jeunes gens forment en moyenne la cinquième de l'effectif. Dans les villages les Suisses allemands sont parfois plus nombreux que leurs camarades helvétiques.

Cet engouement pour la langue française et la terre romande est encore plus fort chez les jeunes filles. Dernièrement une ménagère des environs de Rolle désirant une volontaire pour aider aux soins intérieurs de la ferme mit une annonce dans un journal bernois. Elle eut plus de 40 offres. On devine son embarras.

La présence de tant de jeunes gens en ville cause une concurrence sérieuse à ceux de la localité tandis que dans les villages ils comblent des vides causés par des départs toujours regrettables.

Feuille d'Avis de Lausanne.

NOTES AND GLEANINGS.

Switzerland and Russia.

The *Manchester Guardian* (June 27th) has an exhaustive report of the proceedings in both the States and National Councils, when the government had to justify and clarify its position in regard to the compromise which enabled Russia to send official delegates to the conferences in Geneva.

The Swiss Parliament discussed the compromise on the Vorowski dispute and Swiss-Russian relations in general. As had been expected, the Swiss Government was severely criticised by Conservative members for having concluded the Berlin Agreement with the Soviet Government and thus helped to make possible the presence of a Soviet Russian delegation at the League Economic Conference and therefore their presence on Swiss territory. It was asserted that the Swiss Government had rendered no service to the League by enabling the Soviet delegates to attend League conferences, and that their presence in Geneva might lead to Bolshevik propaganda in Switzerland. The Opposition, in particular, urged that the Swiss Government should take no further step towards agreement with Russia, and in no case recognise the Soviet Government *de jure*.

The Swiss President, M. Motta, declared that the Swiss Government unanimously accepted full responsibility for the Berlin compromise. It was known that the League of Nations desired that the Swiss-Russian dispute on Vorowski should be settled so that any pretext for Russian absence from the League conferences in Geneva should be taken away. Nevertheless, the League of Nations had with strict correctness abstained from any pressure on the Swiss Government and had maintained Geneva as a meeting place for important League conferences notwithstanding Russian protests. Under those circumstances the Swiss Government unanimously felt obliged to enter into direct negotiations with Russia in Berlin as soon as the Government was informed from a private source that the Soviet Government desired to re-open the Swiss-Russian negotiations of last year.

The question whether it was useful to the League that the Russian delegates should attend League conferences had not to be answered by the Swiss Government but by the League itself. As for the danger of Bolshevik propaganda by Soviet delegates to the League conferences, the Swiss Government would never tolerate Bolshevik propaganda in Switzerland by foreigners.

M. Motta reassured the Opposition that the Swiss Government had no intention of granting *de jure* recognition to the Soviet. The Swiss Government realise that Governments had no business to interfere with the internal policy of other Governments, but in the Russian case the Swiss Government is not convinced that the Soviet system conforms to the free wishes of the Russian nation. Moreover, the Soviet Government had not yet renounced the idea of kindling the fire of revolution in other countries. Notwithstanding all promises to nations which officially recognised Soviet Russia, the Soviet Government did not cease revolutionary propaganda, which was inconsistent with the rules of international law.

Finally, M. Motta declared that events in Soviet Russia during the last few weeks completely justified this negative attitude. "Civilised man," M. Motta said, "is horrified by those bloody reprisals which recall the darkest periods of history."

The Basle Trading Co.

According to the following from *Truth* (June 22nd) there are good prospects that this concern will receive some compensation for the unwarranted confiscation of its property during the war. The B.T.C. was, of course, a creation of the well-known Basle Mission, which was so extremely successful in combining the propagation of the Gospel with commercial activities amongst the natives of the Dark Continent. If the claim for reparations succeeds, it constitutes one of those rare cases where the rights of neutral property—supposed to be inviolate in war on the strength of international agreement—have not only been officially admitted but their infringement rectified. Viscount Templeton, who has identified himself with these particular Swiss interests, is not unknown in our Colony; his Lordship has for the last few years regularly attended the annual banquets of the City Swiss Club.

When I last referred to the remarkable story of the confiscation of the property of the Basle Trading Co. in West Africa and in India I mentioned that Lord Templeton, supported by other peers, would probably call attention to the matter in the House of Lords. The discussion has been deferred, and there is now reason to hope that it may, after all, be unnecessary. There is an extraordinarily strong case for the restoration of the Swiss company's property, or alternatively for the payment of compensation.

As the outcome of war-time measures, the property was alienated and handed over to the Commonwealth Trust, an English company, under what was obviously a complete misapprehension of the facts in regard to its neutral ownership, which, in the opinion of high authorities, rendered such a proceeding "entirely without justification according to international law." The French Government recognised this some time ago. The British Colonial Office has virtually admitted that a mistake was made, and I understand that Mr. Amery is now conducting negotiations, which it is to be hoped will terminate in a speedy and satisfactory settlement of a very awkward and unpleasant affair.

Hero Worship.

Personal feats of a passing importance do not arouse the same interest in Switzerland as over here, and this is why the Berne correspondent of the *Manchester Guardian* (June 30th) calls us "unemotional." No doubt the attitude of the Swiss Press is partly responsible for this; the imagination of the masses is not stimulated as is done by the English papers, and the relationship of the latter with the particular trade interests which benefit by this apparently free propaganda is much more intimate. However, I believe we dispose of a truer appreciation of things that matter: the exploit of these two airmen is an affirmation of human endurance and determination exhibited daily by many in less obtrusive walks of life and not acknowledged by a fraction of the spectacular recognition so precisely staged in the capitals of Europe and emulated by our own magistrates.

The famous transatlantic flyers, Messrs. Chamberlin and Levine, were the guests of the Swiss Government at Berne, where they were received with similar official honours as in other European capitals, though the Swiss people once again confirmed their rather unemotional nature and their dislike of hero-worship. Hardly a hundred people were present when at noon Messrs. Chamberlin and Levine arrived in a Swiss Government motor-car before the Federal Palace, where the Swiss President, M. Motta, granted them an audience and welcomed them to Swiss territory.

Many anxious hours were spent at Dubendorf, near Zurich, where Chamberlin and Levine were expected to land about five o'clock, coming from Warsaw. Representatives from the Swiss Government, the Zurich canton and the municipality, and the American Legation from Berne attended in vain until ten o'clock at night, but news about the flyers arrived neither from the German intermediary stations nor from Prague

or Vienna, where the flyers possibly might have stopped. It was reported from all sides that stormy weather prevailed everywhere over Central Europe. The officials then returned to Zurich, where they enjoyed, with fifty invited guests, an excellent banquet, but the carefully prepared English speeches of welcome to Chamberlin and Levine could not be delivered.

Later information showed that the airmen had been obliged to land at Munich owing to a terrible thunderstorm, but they would continue their flight to Dubendorf early this morning, where they arrived at nine o'clock. The Swiss airman, M. Mittelholzer, well known for his flights to Persia and Africa, welcomed the Americans at Dubendorf and conducted them to Thun, near Interlaken, whence Government cars transported them and their wives to Berne, where to-night they will be the guests of the Swiss Government at an official banquet.

Air Taxes in the Alps.

From the *Morning Post* (June 24th):—

Plans for a unique air service have been completed by Captain Leslie Hamilton, the owner of the only private amphibian air taxi in the country. It is designed to cater solely for Swiss winter sports enthusiasts and will operate between Lake St. Moritz and the Marie Maltiz glacier.

A fleet of three Napier-D.H. machines will be used at the outset and an hourly service will be maintained. Each machine will carry eight people and their equipment. Passengers will embark on the frozen lake, and for "taking off" from and landing on the ice the "planes" will be fitted with special large runners or skis.

The intention is for winter sports enthusiasts to fly to the glacier, from which they will ski down, and they will be able to make the return by air. This will obviate the necessity of climbing. The service will be opened as soon as the winter sports season begins. It was his own experience in Switzerland last winter which made Captain Hamilton decide to inaugurate this novel airway.

A Queer Case.

Some choice morsels are sometimes picked up in strange places, and the following I found in *West Africa* (June 29th):—

The cantonal tribunal of St. Gall, Switzerland, tried a queer case last week, when a tradesman asked for a divorce from his wife, an enormous woman, on the sole ground of her "abnormal obesity." The petitioner declared that his wife ate as much as four adults, and his savings had been squandered in buying food for her. She had taken a dozen different medicines in attempts to reduce her appetite and weight, but all of them had failed. The amused jury dismissed the case, considering obesity no cause for divorce.

QUOTATIONS from the SWISS STOCK EXCHANGES.

	BONDS.	June 28		July 5	
		Fr.	Sfr.	Fr.	Sfr.
Confederation 3% 1903 ...		79.25		80.00	
" 5% 1917, VIII Mob. Ln.		101.50		101.75	
Federal Railways 3½% A—K ...		84.10		84.10	
" 1924 IV Elect. Ln.		101.75		102.00	
SHARES.					
	Nom.	June 28	July 5		
	Fr.	Fr.	Fr.		
Swiss Bank Corporation ...	500	771	777		
Crédit Suisse ...	500	823	820		
Union de Banques Suisses ...	500	690	700		
Société pour l'Industrie Chimique	1000	2335	2375		
Fabrique Chimique ci-dev. Sandoz	1000	3763	3855		
Soc. Ind. pour la Schappe ...	1000	2860	2855		
S.A. Brown Boveri ...	350	565	557		
C. F. Bally ...	1000	1293	1333		
Nestlé & Anglo-Swiss Cond. Mk. Co.	200	672	674		
Entreprises Sulzer S.A. ...	1000	1010	1043		
Comp. de Navig'n sur le Lac Léman	500	560	555		
Linoleum A.G. Grubbe ...	100	110	100		
Maschinenfabrik Oerlikon ...	500	733	735		

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