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HOME NEWS

The unhampered continuation of certain war measures as regards the purchase and distribution of cereals supposed to be rendered impossible by the recent popular rejection of the "corn monopoly" is being vigorously attacked in certain political quarters; according to the Zurich paper *Volksrecht* a committee has been formed for the purpose of forcing the resignation of Federal Councillor Schulthess, who is held to be responsible for the present state of affairs.

According to statistics just published, 4,287 trucks of fruit (about 10 tons each), of the value of roughly six million francs, have been exported from Switzerland during last autumn, chiefly to Germany. The imports, mostly from France, amounted to 583 trucks, representing a value of about two million francs.

The former state treasurer of Glaris, Mathias Hösl, has been sentenced to fifteen months' hard labour for having, during the last six years, defrauded the municipal treasury of about Frs. 17,000, all of which has been refunded.

Col. Louis Henry Bornand died last Saturday in Lausanne at the age of 65, barely a week after he had handed over the command of the First Army Corps to his successor. A lawyer by profession, he was an extremely popular officer and at the time of the last mobilisation commanded the First Division in the Jura.

States Councillor Georges Python died last Monday in Fribourg from pneumonia. Born in 1856 at Portalban, he studied law and at the early age of 27 was appointed president of one of the district courts. He took a keen interest in politics and was a passionate and unflinching leader and defender of the Catholic Conservative Party of his canon; his great influence earned him the sobriquet "roi de Fribourg." From 1886 he was uninterruptedly a member of the cantonal government which he also represented first in the National Council and then, from 1893, in the Federal States Council. Python's great life work was the creation and gradual development of the university of Fribourg.

Major Edmund Dähler died in Appenzell at the age of 80. He was Landammann of his canton alternately from 1887 till 1920, when he retired from political life; for a few years he was National Councillor, after which he represented his canton uninterruptedly in the Federal States Council from 1895 to 1920.

Stathalter Kaspar Luchsinger-Trümpt died in Glaris at the age of 63; he had been a member of the cantonal government since 1908 and a prominent manufacturer and business man.

Mr. Eugen Frey-Munzinger, engineer and formerly chief of the Federal Railway atelier in Olten, died in the latter town at the age of 71: he was a descendant of one of the oldest families of the canton, the members of which have played a prominent part in Swiss history.

EXTRACTS FROM SWISS PAPERS.

Un braconnier—Il y a quelque part, dans l'Emmenthal, un braconnier qui bon an mal an abat sa dizaine de chamois à la barbe du garde-chasse, sans qu'on n'ait jamais réussi à le prendre sur le fait. Or, l'autre jour, de nouveau il réussissait un beau coup de fusil. De nuit il ramena chez lui un superbe chamois dans un sac. Mais cette fois, le garde-chasse avait en vente de l'affaire. Il fit rapport au préfet et le lendemain une descente de police avait lieu chez l'homme suspect. Ce dernier, de son côté, avait flairé le danger : il ordonna donc à sa femme de se coucher et de faire la malade, tandis qu'il cacherait à ses côtés le chamois sous la couverture. La perquisition eut lieu et déjà gendarmes et juge s'en allaient furieux d'avoir fait buisson creux, lorsque l'on remarqua que le chien du garde-chasse restait obstinément en arrêt devant le lit de la malade. Soudain il

se dressa, posant les pattes de devant sur le bord du lit. La femme du braconnier, effrayée, se leva d'un bond et l'on vit apparaître des cornes, puis un chamois tout entier. L'homme était pris au piège.

NOTES AND GLEANINGS.

The Spahlinger Treatment.

An article in the *Lancet* by Dr. Thomas Nelson, assistant physician to the St. George's and Brompton hospitals, has aroused a healthy controversy in the Press which, it is to be hoped, will dispel the secrecy and dubiety in which the treatment is enshrouded as far as the layman is concerned. Dr. Nelson states that of the ten cases treated in a London hospital, from November, 1913, to August, 1914, under the immediate supervision of Mr. Spahlinger himself, not one showed any marked improvement and they failed to indicate the presence of a curative agent. The Geneva correspondent of the *Daily Express* promptly interviewed Mr. Spahlinger, who describes the report as most inaccurate and authorises the following statement published in the issue of Jan. 3rd :—

"The quotation from Dr. Nelson's report conveys the impression that the cases received ten months' treatment, when actually the patient who had the longest period of treatment at St. George's, and who is admitted by Dr. Nelson to have been alive in 1926, had five months' treatment only. One of the ten patients had six days' treatment and another three weeks' before being discharged.

"It is childish to assume that advanced cases of tuberculosis can be cured in a few days or weeks. Only two patients received fair courses of treatment, including injections at and after leaving St. George's. They are alive and well.

"One is a luggage porter in a large London hotel. He stated in his last letter to me that he was working twelve hours a day, and added : 'I was very pleased to see so many of your other old patients looking so well the other day. From what they told me they must be working about as hard as I am.'

"A second case is working at Bedford. A third patient, who received a few further injections after his discharge from St. George's Hospital, was passed A1 for the Army in 1917, and stated in a letter dated December 25th, 1920 : 'I can do my round of golf after business hours or have a night's dancing without feeling any worse.'

Mr. Spahlinger made no enquiry regarding the other patients because, having had insufficient treatment, their condition was of no scientific value. None of the patients had the serum, which is the normal method of treating advanced cases, Dr. Arthur Latham, who selected them, wishing to use antigens on all the patients.

References on the charts are declared by M. Spahlinger to be incorrect on that point. He photographed all the hospital records in London in October, 1914. No other series of cases were treated by M. Spahlinger and Dr. Latham outside the ten at St. George's, quoted by Dr. Nelson.

This contribution to the controversy is not very convincing and to the unbiased reader it must appear strange that Mr. Spahlinger should personally superintend—what Dr. Nelson maintains to be—the application of his serum, and now assert that the cases referred to did not receive his treatment at all. However, there is worse to follow. Sir Warden Chilcott, M.P. for a Liverpool division, recently interrogated the Health Ministry with a view to eliciting what official steps were being contemplated for a general adoption of the Spahlinger treatment in this country. The following reply was forwarded to the baronet :—

Dear Sir Warden Chilcott.—The situation in regard to Mr. Spahlinger is generally that all Ministers of Health during the last four years have kept closely and continuously in touch with his work. His laboratories at Geneva have been thoroughly inspected several times by officers of the Ministry, and an actual offer of any assistance within our power was made in the summer of 1925.

Mr. Spahlinger has been repeatedly seen, personally by the present Minister, and by officers of the Ministry during his visits to this country. All this continued attention bore fruit

ANNIVERSARIES OF SWISS EVENTS.

January 16th, 1831.—Constitutional conflicts in Basel. In the canton of Basel, the existing Authorities undertook a revision of the Constitution which did not satisfy the country-folk because, under the proposed new arrangement, the town still possessed a preponderant influence in the Grand Council. A rising of the country-folk, led by those from Liestal, made a strong attack on the town. On the 13th, 15th and 16th the town troops, under the leadership of Colonel Wieland, attacked the country-folk and drove them back to the gates of Liestal. The country-folk had to submit for the time being to the town. (May the 100th anniversary of this division of the Town and Baselland bring about the unity of both.)

January 17th, 1401.—Alliance between St. Gall and Appenzell. The peasants of Appenzell, assisted by the citizens of St. Gall, destroyed the castle of Clanx, near Appenzell, which had become to them a kind of tyrant's citadel. The owner, the Abt of St. Gall, had taxed the country-folk too heavily.

January 20th, 1853.—Expulsion of the Ticinesse from Lombardy.

January 20th, 1834.—Drawing up of the "Badener Articles." At a conference, held at Baden, the Governments of Bern, Lucerne, Solothurn, Baselland, Aargau, Thurgau and St. Gall, on the advice of Edward Pfyffer, Schultheiss of Lucerne, drew up a Concordat for the maintenance of the rights of the State as regards the Church. The following are the main points :—

1. Establishment of an Archbishopric, to which all other bishoprics should be subject.
2. Establishment of a Synod to control the temporal power of the Church.
3. Government "approval" for clerical dispensations.
4. Permission for mixed marriages.
5. Reducing the number of Seminaries, and Government control of same, as well as of all Clerical Orders.
6. Taxing of Monasteries.

These points were passed by the "Grosse Rat" of the cantons of Lucerne, Baselland, St. Gall, Aargau and Thurgau, but were, however, later on rejected, at the instigation of the Clergy, and declared "false and schismatic."

January 22nd, 1788.—J. G. Zollikofer died at St. Gall.

in a perfectly definite proffer to him to arrange for a thorough test of his remedy in this country, in conditions and on terms which could be settled after consultation with him.

The above will be sufficient to show that there has been no failure to give this very important matter the serious attention which it undoubtedly should receive from the Minister of Health. So far we have understood that Mr. Spahlinger has been unable to furnish material for investigation.

As regards the recent Press articles, I can say no more than that we know of no foundation for the statement that Mr. Spahlinger has made any fresh offer, and have had no information of such an offer. Mr. Spahlinger is well aware that we are prepared to arrange for an immediate investigation and test of his remedy at any time, and we had assumed that if he desires further action, we should, as before, hear from him on the visit to this country early next year, which he is said to have in mind.

W. A. ROBINSON,
Permanent Secretary to the
Ministry of Health.

To which the *Daily Express* (Jan. 1st) appends an interview with Sir Warden Chilcott, of which the following is the gist :—

It is understood that the offer to M. Spahlinger mentioned in the letter took the form of an arrangement for the provision of a testing clinic in England and the payment of a sum of money sufficient to relieve him of a great deal of financial embarrassment.

"More than £3,000,000 is spent on the upkeep of sanatoria in this country every year," said Sir Warden Chilcott. "A great part of this money goes in experimental work in an effort to find some cure for tuberculosis in human beings. One half of this sum is borne by the rates, and the other half is paid out of the taxes."

"If so much money is being spent on tubercular work, obviously no one is going to grumble if M. Spahlinger is paid a large sum for his secret, so the offer by the Ministry cannot have been on the low side."

"I am ready to start a subscription list for M. Spahlinger with £1,000 of my own money, if money is the only thing that is delaying his work. There are many others who would follow my example if it was necessary, and the Ministry of Health would undertake to control the conditions of the experimental tests."

"Apart from the question of money, which I think I have satisfactorily answered, I can see only three other possible reasons for the delay in divulging the secret of the cure. One is the question of time. M. Spahlinger claims that it takes four years to manufacture his complete range of sera. He made his discovery thirteen years ago, so I do not think that the question of time arises."

"Then, too, there is the difficulty of manufacture, but that could easily have been overcome, considering the offers of help made."

"Lastly, there is the deplorable possibility that M. Spahlinger has been mistaken in claiming too much for his discovery."

Mr. Spahlinger's rejoinder is curt but far from satisfactory, always assuming that he is correctly reported in the *Daily Express* (Jan. 3rd):—

The Ministry of Health offered in 1922 to treat fifty test cases in London. M. Spahlinger replied that he would accept the offer when the complete sera were available, but the remedies are not yet recompleted. The Ministry has made no concrete offer of financial assistance.

M. Spahlinger expresses his thanks to Sir Warden Chilcott, M.P., for his generous offer to open a subscription list with £1,000, but declines the offer, not desiring further charity. He hopes to get money to recomplete the sera and vaccines for human beings by disposing of his successful bovine vaccine.

He states that the British Medical Association has never yet communicated with him, verbally or by letter. Even if they had he could not have sent the treatment to England before the complete sera were available.

The British Red Cross Society offered £30,000, but this sum was entirely insufficient to pay his debts, clear the mortgages on his laboratory, and also make the large quantity of sera and vaccines asked for by the Society.

M. Spahlinger is greatly distressed by polemics, which prevent him from working. He says that no one has authority to make statements in his name.

The last sentence refers to a somewhat vague statement given to the English Press by Dr. G. C. Anderson on behalf of the profession. I again quote the *Daily Express* (Jan. 1st):—

"The British Medical Association have offered to investigate the treatment, and it should be investigated, in order that the claims may be proved or disproved. It is, of course, impossible to accept the statement of any individual scientist."

"So far as we understand, Mr. Spahlinger is in need of money to prepare the vaccine and anti-serum necessary for the test. It is for M. Spahlinger to say how much money would be needed."

"It has been suggested that M. Spahlinger needs £40,000 or £50,000 to carry on his laboratory."

"Nothing like such a sum would be needed to discover if his claims were sound," said Dr. Anderson. "It would be a comparatively inconsiderable sum, and the raising of it would have the support of the profession."

On January 5th the same paper published a letter dated Jan. 1st (1) from M. Spahlinger which is also not a very convincing document, though the legal advice now to be invoked may lead to some startling developments. Here is the letter:—

Sir,—My attention has been drawn to an article appearing in your issue of December 31st under the heading "Startling report on the Spahlinger 'cure,'" which quotes passages from an article by Dr. Thomas Nelson on the treatment of some of my patients in 1914. I shall be glad if you will allow me to say at once that Dr. Nelson's statements are most inaccurate, and that I am taking legal advice in the matter forthwith.

Perhaps I may add that I have in my possession all the photographs of the original written hospital records of all patients treated with my remedies at the St. George's Hospital, together with letters written to me—since 1920

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by some of these very patients, who were completely cured."

That there is not the slightest doubt of the treatment meeting with success is proved by the eulogistic acknowledgement sent by Mr. J. Havlock Wilson to the *Daily Express* (Jan. 1st):—

Sir,—My youngest son had a breakdown in health about June, 1925. On many occasions during the previous two years he had shown signs of lung trouble. When the breakdown occurred I immediately had him medically examined by at least three doctors, and they expressed the opinion that there was danger of tuberculosis developing.

Having heard of the Spahlinger treatment I caused careful enquiries to be made in Geneva and elsewhere, and the reports were such that I made up my mind that my son should have the Spahlinger treatment. With this object in view, I sent him to Geneva in October, 1925. He was examined by Dr. Stefani and Mr. Spahlinger, the former pronouncing the case to be one of tuberculosis well advanced. Spahlinger said the case would require not less than eighteen months' treatment.

At the end of three months' treatment there were visible signs of improvement. My son rapidly gained weight, and at the end of nine months' treatment he was examined by several medical men, one of whom said he was fit to pass A1 class.

I wanted to assure myself that the Spahlinger treatment was quite genuine, so three months ago my son was again examined by two medical men. The medical men in question could not be described as Spahlinger men, so they exercised the greatest possible care. In their report they declared that while he was well on the road to recovery there were still signs of slight lung trouble.

A further examination took place six weeks later, the report being that my son showed signs of further recovery since the previous test, and the opinion was expressed that there was no reason why he should not fully recover from the lung trouble.

I think it is important that this case should be made public. There can be no doubt as to the facts I have stated above."

To wind up this article I reprint the report of an explosion which occurred in the laboratory on December 29th as communicated to the English Press by Reuters:—

On Wednesday night, about ten o'clock, while Dr. Spahlinger was working in his private laboratory at the Spahlinger Institute here, a large glass flask containing huge quantities of virulent cultures of tuberculosis exploded.

The explosion was so violent that the deadly germs were scattered over the whole room. Allowing none of his assistants to enter the room for fear that they might contract the disease, Dr. Spahlinger remained in the room for several hours, hanging his clothes and disinfecting himself and thoroughly cleansing the laboratory.

A similar accident occurred last year, and affected the scientist's health for several months. In order to avoid explosions, special containers have been made; but, in spite of all precautions, one of these exploded with a loud report, deluging the room with a mass of deadly germs sufficient to wipe out entire countries.

Dr. Spahlinger resumed his work next morning as if nothing had happened. He is grieved at the loss of such large quantities of tubercle bacilli, which had taken considerable time and trouble to grow.

It is to be hoped that his strong immunity against tuberculosis will protect him once more against the fatal germs, which he inhaled after the accident, while taking the necessary steps to kill the bacilli and prevent them from harming others.

The work at the Institute is proceeding as usual.

The Value of Snow in £ s. d.

It is left to the *Sunderland Echo* (Dec. 30th) to "capitalise" the annual snowfall in Switzerland, but the magnitude of the task has evidently frightened our contemporary from finishing his calculation, for we only learn that the winter's snowfall in Switzerland is worth "a million

pounds per inch" and he has omitted to measure out the number of inches and follow this process by the very interesting multiplication:—

The real founders of all the famous winter resorts in Switzerland were Englishmen errant, who could not be sure of a regular supply of snow and ice in their own country and so took their winter holidays in a land where tobogganing could be made the most thrilling of pastimes—with that element of personal peril which is the spice of sport.

Thanks to these pioneers, the winter's snowfall is worth, say, a million pounds an inch to Switzerland and the Scandinavian countries. This economic truth should be borne in mind by the intelligent foreigner when he is moved to declare that the principal achievement of the English is to have taught the world innumerable ways of wasting time. It is something to have shown how much wealth and health is contained in a pinch of snow!

But it is a pity that we cannot establish some of these winter sports in our own island. There are districts in the Highlands where rain falls only in the form of snow for three or four months, and the facilities for tobogganning and ski-running are excellent. Why not make a start in 1927?

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