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# The Swiss Observer

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## HOME NEWS

At the same time as the general elections a number of cantonal and municipal proposals were submitted for the approval of the electors. In Basle a proposed extension of the public dental clinic attached to the University was rejected by a small majority. More fortunate were two bills in Zurich, where the municipal theatre will now receive an increased state subsidy and the town a modern system of fire brigades.

The military tribunal of the fourth division at Basle dealt with a number of cases where recruits for various reasons failed to join their units for the prescribed repetition course. Amongst the accused was a young man who, having been out of work for a long time, happened to obtain a situation just before being called up and for fear of losing same omitted to put in an appearance. Four weeks' imprisonment and the loss of civil right for one year was the verdict.

On the eve of the general elections a political acrobat hoisted without being noticed a large red flag on one of the two large steeples of the Basle cathedral; a police enquiry has been opened.

Owing to floods an interruption on the Gothard railway took place last Sunday between Castione and Bellinzona; the mail and passenger service on this particular section is being maintained by motor-cars. The inundations have made it necessary to evacuate a number of houses and in order to render possible assistance the troops stationed at the barracks in Bellinzona have been ordered to the spot. The railway bridge over the Calanchini torrent at Molinazzo is under water.

A large collection of water colour paintings have been bequeathed to the Federal Council by the late George Flenwell, an English painter of repute who spent most of his life in Switzerland. The pictures have been entrusted to the National Library at Berne.

For fraudulent misuse of their official position the president and two other members of the local council at Kreuzlingen (Thurgau) have been sentenced to terms of imprisonment varying from 30 to 50 days in addition to fines.

Lieut. Heinrich Kauert from Wohlen (Aargau) contracted serious injuries when, on flying from Basle to Lausanne, he had to make a forced landing at the latter place on account of bad weather conditions; his military aeroplane was totally destroyed.

Councillor Robert Grieshaber, who for 41 years without an interruption represented Schaffhausen in the National Council, died at Hallau at the age of 83.

## EXTRACTS FROM SWISS PAPERS.

**Une Nomination bien accueillie.**—Dans les milieux politiques comme dans les hautes sphères commerciales on se félicite de la nomination de M. Henri Martin au poste de ministre de Suisse en Turquie. Le distingué diplomate qui a derrière lui une si utile carrière déjà et que son stage comme conseiller commercial auprès de notre légation à Londres a mis en contact avec tous les problèmes vitaux de notre commerce extérieur était particulièrement qualifié pour poursuivre à titre définitif la mission qu'il avait si bien inaugurée dans la Turquie nouvelle.

Dans ses nouvelles fonctions, il n'est pas douteux qu'il sera pour l'industrie de notre pays un collaborateur informé, avisé, entreprenant. Un Etat en pleine restauration comme l'actuelle Turquie a d'impérieux besoins, en effet, et il peut offrir à nos entreprises des débouchés considérables. C'est dire que la nomination de M. Henri Martin est tenue pour tout à fait opportune et qu'on s'accorde à penser que le Conseil fédéral ne pouvait trouver une autre personnalité réunissant à ce point de belles qualités diplomatiques et une expérience économique éprouvée.

—La Suisse, Genève.

**Zürcher Aerztin in Mittellafrika.**—Dem guten Beispieler mehrerer schweizerischer Aerzte folgend, wird nun als erste einheimische Aerztin Fräulein Dr.

## THE GENERAL ELECTION IN SWITZERLAND.

CANTON	Radicals	Liberal Conservatives	Catholic Conservatives	Agrarians	Socialists	Communists	Social Policy Candidates	Non-Party
Zürich	8 (8)	—	2 (1)	5 (6)	11 (10)	0 (1)	—	1 (1)
Berne	6 (6)	—	2 (2)	17 (14)	11 (12)	—	—	—
Lucerne	3 (3)	—	5 (5)	—	1 (1)	—	—	—
Uri	1 (1)	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Schwyz	1 (0)	—	2 (1)	0 (1)	0 (1)	—	—	—
Obwalden	—	—	1 (1)	—	—	—	—	—
Nidwalden	—	—	1 (1)	—	—	—	—	—
Glarus	1 (1)	—	—	—	—	—	1 (1)	—
Zug	1 (1)	—	1 (1)	—	—	—	—	—
Freiburg	2 (2)	—	5 (5)	—	—	—	—	—
Solothurn	3 (3)	—	2 (2)	—	2 (2)	—	—	—
Basel-Stadt	1 (1)	1 (1)	1 (1)	1 (1)	2 (2)	1 (1)	—	—
Basel-Land	1 (2)	—	1 (0)	1 (1)	1 (1)	—	—	—
Schaffhausen	1 (1)	—	—	1 (1)	—	1 (1)	—	—
Appenzell A.Rh.	2 (2)	—	—	—	1 (1)	—	—	—
Appenzell L.-Rh.	—	—	1 (1)	—	—	—	—	—
St. Gall	5 (5)	—	7 (6)	—	3 (3)	—	0 (1)	—
Graubünden	2 (2)	—	2 (3)	—	1 (0)	—	1 (1)	—
Aargau	2 (2)	—	3 (3)	—	4 (4)	—	—	—
Thurgau	1 (1)	—	1 (1)	3 (3)	2 (1)	—	0 (1)	—
Tessin	4 (4)	—	3 (3)	—	1 (1)	—	—	—
Vaud	8 (8)	2 (3)	—	2 (1)	4 (4)	—	—	—
Valais	1 (2)	—	5 (4)	—	—	—	—	—
Neuchâtel	2 (2)	1 (1)	—	—	3 (3)	—	1 (1)	—
Geneva	2 (2)	2 (2)	1 (1)	—	3 (3)	—	—	1 (1)
Total	58 (59)	6 (7)	46 (42)	31 (31)	50 (49)	2 (3)	3 (5)	2 (2)

(The figures in brackets indicate the strength in the old Council.)

From the above table based on the results published but not complete in every case it will be gathered that there is very little variation as regards the adherents of the different parties. Actual changes have taken place in only nine cantons. In Zurich the one mandate held by the Communists has been captured by the Socialists and the Catholics have won a seat from the Agrarians. The latter, however, recouped themselves by ousting a Socialist in Berne. Another seat was lost by the Socialists in Schwyz which they made good by taking one from the Catholics in the Grisons and one from the

Democrats in Thurgau. The Catholics, apart from the above, scored in Valais and Basel-Land at the expense of the Radicals; they also secured an additional seat in St. Gall.

As regards the States Council (Ständerat) thirty eight of the forty-four old members have been returned, the notable exceptions being in Geneva and Basle, where the only two Socialists in this Council, Burklin and Wullschlegler, were unseated. There was also some controversy in Basel-Land where the Radical was opposed by a Socialist and in Vaud where the new Liberal member had to fight against an Agrarian and a Socialist candidate.

med. Ilse Schnabel aus Zürich das verdienstliche grosse Hilfswerk von Professor Albert Schweitzer in Aequatorial-Afrika durch persönliche Dienstleistung unterstützen. Die Zürcher Medizinerin begibt sich in kurzer Zeit mit einer elsässischen Pflegerin auf die Reise nach Lambarene, wo bekanntlich Professor Schweitzer aus Geldern, die ihm seine Konzert- und Vortragsreisen eingetragen haben, ein Spital errichtete, wobei er auch als Zimmermann selbst Hand anlegt. Der Spitaldienst wird jetzt von europäischen Ärzten und Pflegerinnen allein versehen, wobei sich hauptsächlich schweizerische Kräfte zur Verfügung gestellt haben. Fräulein Dr. Schnabel gedenkt etwa zwei Jahre in Lambarene zu bleiben.

—Tagesanzeiger, Zürich.

## NOTES AND GLEANINGS.

### Italo-Swiss Relations.

The *Manchester Guardian* (Oct. 25th) deals with the latest developments as follows:—

"Although the diplomatic conversations between Switzerland and Italy on the Rossi incident have not yet concluded, there has already been a remarkable improvement in Swiss-Italian relations. Both Governments have reached agreement on the question of transit facilities affecting the frontier population, for whom it is desired that passport formalities should be abolished. For Switzerland it will be specially satisfactory that these facilities cannot be abruptly withdrawn, as was done by Italian officers some weeks ago. In future three months' notice will be necessary.

Still more important is the satisfactory statement of the Italian Government to the Swiss Minister in Rome on the famous circular which Signor Farini, general secretary of the Fascist party in Rome, addressed to all Italian Fascists living in Switzerland and in which he encouraged them to maintain quietly but firmly their faith in Fascism, "notwithstanding all the singular and illegal measures of the Swiss authorities towards them." In their conversations with the Swiss Minister in Rome the Italian Government plainly expressed disapproval of this Fascist manifesto.

It is noteworthy also that all secretaries of Fascist organisations in Switzerland left Switzerland this week for Rome, where it is considered

probable that Signor Mussolini will recommend them to practise a little more moderation than has been indicated in the Fascist papers appearing in Switzerland in the last few weeks."

### Swiss Architecture.

Several English magazines have recently enlarged on this subject. The October issue of *Building* singles out a few particular edifices with the help of illustrations. The buildings referred to are known to most of our readers, so that the article can be enjoyed even without the illustrations.

"Switzerland is, architecturally, one of the most conservative countries in Europe. This is a reminder that England does not stand alone in its veneration for the antique. Indeed, there are many others besides; and for no such reason as racial affinity, sociological or climatic conditions, or conditions of geographical location, the modern work of Denmark, Italy, Switzerland, and England is remaining conservative, while the work of Germany, Austria, France and Holland—and to some extent Sweden—is becoming more and more experimental and divorced from classical traditions.

There is no psychological clue to this dispersion of modernity or conservatism. Strangely enough, countries that are dissimilar in every other respect, such as France and Germany, are alike in their attitude towards modern architecture; and countries that have so much in common—such as England and Holland (who in the past ran side by side in domestic architecture—are now as different architecturally as a Sedan chair is from an automobile. Moreover, the dividing line between the aggressively progressive and the cautiously conservative does not in any way fall in with those too-easy classifications of Latin or Teuton, mountainous or flat, warm or temperate. This is just as well, for it saves us from falling ourselves into that habit of assuming that the reasoned actions of others is due to some instinctive urge that we know of, and they do not. Even the ancient explanation of the influences of building materials does not help us, for all countries are at least agreed on a total disregard of them. Nor does the suggestion that one country reacts against its neighbour out of sheer cussedness take us any farther, for modernist

Holland is next door to Germany, and conservative Denmark is hard by. Those who delight in explaining things away should turn their attention to this.

As to Switzerland, she is remarkably like England in much of her domestic work, and remarkably like herself in her monumental architecture. Especially this refers to a house at Zurich by Hermann Weideli, the housing colony Friesenberg, the Law Courts, Lausanne, and the Swiss National Bank, Zurich. These two latter buildings have already something of an international reputation, and in Switzerland itself are considered to be the two finest buildings of recent times. Neither of them teach us much of what we do not know already. The Law Courts, Lausanne, justifies its birth into the second quarter of the twentieth century by making such minor alterations in its classic detail as would relate it to the pre-war architecture of Germany. Of course, this building is scholarly, graceful and well proportioned, but the classical orders are so absolutely and finally beautiful that they will not bear the slightest modification. One has to take them or leave them exactly as they are. One cannot try to express one's ego by reducing the proportion of an architrave or by leaving off the base of a column, as was the fashion in Germany fifteen years ago, and is now exemplified—but not so rudely—in this modern building of Switzerland. The best English architects have always been singularly free from this vandalism. Our love of the Orders is a deep and abiding thing; that of some of our foreign colleagues is curious of the Cockney sort; they express their affection by knocking the Orders about.

The dominant impression that would be left on the mind of a British architect visiting Switzerland would be the conservatism of the leaders of architecture in that country. In this relation it may be borne in mind that Switzerland is in a peculiar position. Three languages are officially recognised. In the Canton of Ticino, which contains the beautiful town of Lugano, the official language is Italian; in Lausanne and Geneva, French is the official language; and throughout Eastern Switzerland, from Berne to Basle, Zurich, Lucerne and St. Gallen, German is the official language. And as language opens the door to the artistic literature of each surrounding nation there is a blending of the dominant styles of the French, German and Italian schools. But it is not of a slavish or mechanical character. Switzerland has a notable tradition for independence in political thought and initiative in industrial action, and this finds expression on a plane of architectural evolution. It would seem as if Switzerland sees too many sides of the question to force any modern artistic development in advance of its compeers.

Yet building activity has been considerable since the War, especially in the direction of domestic work. The Great War brought the Swiss people a large measure of industrial prosperity, consequently there has been a considerable increase in the number of well-to-do families who can afford the larger type of villa. The design of the Swiss villa varies considerably. There is the *chalet* type with which we are all familiar, and which seems to be more popular in English seaside resorts than it does in Swiss mountain resorts. There is the ultra-modern Franco-German type, of cubes and double-cubes, slashed across horizontally by the strong projections of solid balconies, but—in keeping with the Swiss nature—relieved here and there with little touches of homely ornament. There is the firm and noble farmhouse type of Swiss architecture, strong walls of rubble or stone, rough or whitewashed, and roofs that vary from the flat pitch of Italy to the steep pitch of Normandy. There is the Italian tradition, and the late eighteenth century South-German tradition which, save that of England, is the loveliest tradition of all. And, above all, there is the best modern house design, which is singularly English in its general character and singularly French in its delicacy. The house by Hermann Weideli at Zurich is a charming example of this.

Yet amidst this eclecticism and diversity of influences, there is a definite national quality about Swiss architecture. It may be summed up in the word *sanity*. In architecture, as in diplomacy, the larger and ruder nations of the earth come to Switzerland to lose a little of their nationality and to be softened and assimilated. In these respects, as in many others, she is like England. Both can look upon Europe with an air of detachment. It is strange that two nations so far apart and so differently conditioned should be so like each other.

"Two voices are there, one is of the sea, One of the mountains, each a mighty voice."

In Switzerland, as in England and Austria, the question of appropriate homes for workers has assumed very serious proportions. There is not only a great shortage of houses, but the rents are on a far higher scale than those paid by British artisans in, say, a British industrial town. A Swiss workman pays as much as a third of his earnings in rent.

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This shortage of supply has produced a large measure of municipal activity. Basle has produced several colonies, as they call the various working-class estates. Berne and other towns have also been active in this respect; but the most active of all, however, is Zurich, the industrial capital of Switzerland.

In Zurich two separate housing policies are in being at the same time. In one the City Council is responsible for the building and administration of estates; in the other it encourages all kinds of Public Utility Society efforts by lending money on second mortgage to such an extent that only a small amount has to be found by the Association concerned.

A good deal of work in the neighbourhood of Zurich has been carried out by Peter Giumini. Another architect of note in Zurich is Professor Bernoulli.

The architect Laverrière, of Lausanne, acting in collaboration with Prince and Béguin, architects, of Neuchâtel, was responsible for the New Law Courts, Lausanne. This was completed in September last and is worthily considered to be the most important Swiss building of recent years.

The railway station at Enge was designed by the Brothers Pfister (the architects of the better-known National Swiss Bank, Zurich). The external arcade of the station does not seem very satisfactory. There is so little to console or rest the eye, but the circular booking hall has a grandeur and simplicity that is compelling. The railway station at Wiedikon, however, by Stadtbaumeister Herter is a building that has every virtue of simplicity, good proportion, and warm vitality. It sums up all that is best in modern architecture and indicates the direction of sane development for all Europe."

### The Alpine Motor Coaches.

The Commercial Motor (Oct. 23rd) pays tribute to the efficiency of the alpine service of the Swiss Post Office in the following short *resumé*:—

"We have often had occasion for referring to the extensive use which is made of motor coaches by the Swiss postal authorities for passenger and mail transport over Alpine passes, and it is interesting to learn that the services continue to gain ground and are being used by an ever-increasing number of passengers.

The vehicles employed on these Alpine services carried 229,264 passengers during the period from June 25th to September 2nd of this year, as against 189,358 persons in the corresponding period a year earlier. The coaches run on all the Alpine passes—St. Gotthard, Great St. Bernard, Simplon, Furka, Grimsel, Splügen, Maloja, etc. In many instances 16-seater vehicles are employed, but the latest six-wheeled vehicles put into service can comfortably accommodate 30 passengers.

An idea of the mechanical efficiency of the modern motor vehicle and an indication of the attention given to the maintenance and upkeep of the vehicles employed on these services can be gained from the fact that no accident has been recorded in the Swiss postal motor-coach services during the past four years."

### Swiss Electric Meters.

A correspondent sends us the following extract from the *Rochdale Observer* (Oct. 13th). The letter is written by a member of the firm that secured the order for Switzerland.

"I have read the report in your issue of October 6th of the remarks made during the discussion by the Rochdale Town Council on the minute of the Electricity Committee recommending acceptance of my firm's tender for the supply of electricity meters and provided the speaker was correctly reported, I am surprised that a member of the Electricity Committee should make statements which reflect upon the department without verifying the information on which such statements were based.

I should be greatly obliged, therefore, if you would allow me to correct some of the impressions which these remarks may have created, by publishing the following facts:—

(1) The Swiss meter referred to is "officially approved for use in this country" by the electricity commissioners.

(2) The statement that only 15 per cent. of the meters used in this country are foreign made

is absurd as applied to meters for alternating current, which is the type that was under discussion.

(3) Your report states: "The longest experience they (i.e., Rochdale Electricity Department) had had of this Swiss make of meter was three years, while the experience of the other makes goes back to 1902." This is both incorrect and misleading. My principals have supplied the department with a.c. meters since 1921. The experience referred to as going back to 1902 was the d.c. meters—a totally different instrument.

(4) In reply to the reported statement, "the cheap foreign article recommended would not work within 10 per cent. on a 34 watt lamp," I can only say that after considerable enquiry I have failed to find anyone connected with the electrical industry who has seen a 34 watt lamp, but every meter supplied by my firm is guaranteed to work within the limits prescribed by the electricity commissioners and has been proved by independent tests, made without our previous knowledge, on meters taken at random from stocks—not specially selected for test purposes—to compare favourably with any of the British made meters, including the one referred to in this discussion. To allay any misapprehension which the statement may have caused amongst consumers I may add that every meter is checked by the electricity department before being put on circuit and any one showing an error greater than two per cent. would be rejected. This fact should be well known by every member of the committee and, in view of this, it is difficult to understand the reference to "robbing the poor and small consumer."

(5) In regard to the statement: "The Swiss meter is a noisy one," this can well be left to your readers, several thousands of whom must have meters of this make fixed in their homes.

I do not purpose entering upon the general question of whether the policy of excluding all foreign made goods would tend to improve the industrial conditions of this country or not further than to suggest that if other countries adopted that policy, British and particularly Lancashire industry would be in a much more parlous state than it is at present.

Thanking you in anticipation of your giving this correction an equal amount of publicity to that accorded to the statements made last week, yours, etc."

### QUOTATIONS from the SWISS STOCK EXCHANGES

BONDS.		Oct. 23		Oct. 27	
		Fr.	Sfr.	Fr.	Sfr.
Confederation 3% 1903	...	81.25	...	81.25	...
5% 1917, VIII Mob. Ln	...	101.25	...	101.30	...
Federal Railways 3½% A-K	...	86.10	...	86.17	...
" " 1924 IV Elect. Ln.	...	101.30	...	101.65	...
SHARES.		Oct. 23		Oct. 27	
	Nom.	Fr.	Sfr.	Fr.	Sfr.
Swiss Bank Corporation	500	835	...	837	...
Crédit Suisse	500	939	...	947	...
Union de Banques Suisses	500	957	...	953	...
Société pour l'Industrie Chimique	1000	3310	...	3298	...
Fabrique Chimique ci-dev. Sandoz	1000	5425	...	5335	...
Soc. Ind. pour la Schappe	1000	4188	...	4219	...
S.A. Brown Boveri	500	590	...	585	...
C. F. Bally	1000	1500	...	1500	...
Nestlé & Anglo-Swiss Cond. Mk. Co.	200	940	...	943	...
Entreprises Suizer S.A.	1000	1235	...	1225	...
Comp. de Navig. sur le Lac Léman	500	500	...	505	...
Linoleum A.G. Giubiasco	100	321	...	317	...
Maschinenfabrik Oerlikon	500	883	...	875	...

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