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# Che Swiss Observer

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LONDON, MAY 26, 1928.

# Where are you going this day week? To Herne Hill, for the Swiss Sports, of course!

# PREPAID SUBSCRIPTION RATES

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#### HOME NEWS

The new article of the Federal Constitution facilitating the naturalisation of foreigners residing in Switzerland has been accepted by the voters with a majority of nearly three to one. It is expected that about 2,000 foreigners, mainly children born of a Swiss mother, will acquire Swiss citizenship every year. Generally speaking the new law created no political controversy; scarcely 50 per cent. of the electors went to the polls. In the following table the three rejecting cantons are printed in

		Yes		No
Zurich		 106742		16468
Berne		 33458		9523
Lucerne		 7290		1481
Uri		 1938		1149
Schwyz		 1812		4896
Obwalden		 1200		906
Nidwalden		 922		416
Glarus		 3763		1200
Zug		 1203		414
Fribourg		 3935		5124
Solothurn	- 122	 9439		1600
Basel-Stadt		 13611		1363
Basel-Land		 6474		1319
Schaffhausen		 8027		1188
Appenzell A.	Rh.	 6322		1827
Appenzell I.	Rh.	 281		1779
St. Gall		 24049		23087
Grisons		 7689		4023
Aargau		 33192		14120
Thurgau		 17956		5316
Tessin		 5009		3705
Waadt		 39743		28103
Wallis		 4807		2133
Neuchâtel		 4067		970
Geneva		 4952		416
Total		 $\frac{-}{347915}$	e to relia	132525

Total ... ... 34(916) 152029
It will be noticed that the largest majorities in favour were recorded by the cantons most affected by this problem: Geneva 14 to 1, Basle 10 to 1, Schaffhausen 7 to 1, Zurich 6 to 1, etc. Appenzell I.Rh. can always be depended upon for saying no to any proposal emanating from Berne. In Schwyz the Catholic-Conservative party resisted the revision whilst Fribourg, another Catholic centre, was little interested in the change.

Replying to a memorandum to the Federal Council submitted by leaders of the female suffrage movement in Geneva, the Council states that the granting of the votes to women would require a revision of the Federal Constitution.

A number of cantonal and municipal proposals were also placed before the electorate during the week-end. In Berne the procedure under the penal code undergoes a revision, the Insel hospital and the gas works are to be extended and a plot of land (Belpmoos) is to be acquired for the purposes of an incidence acked.

In a by-election at Zurich the previously unsuccessful Dr. Häberlin (Radical) returns to the Stadtrat with 18,802 votes, his opponent, Dr. Brupbacher (Communist) obtaining 12,183 votes. A Bill regulating civil aviation and another extending unsupplement in the present found for the present control of the present control employment insurance found favour.

In Basel-Stadt the members of the Regierungs-rat (Executive) were granted the long overdue in-crease of Frs. 2,000 in their emoluments.

The electors of Obwalden refused to sanction the proposed addition of 11 to their Kantonsrat, the number of its members remaining at 28.

The civil servants of the town of Solothurn are to receive an increase in their salaries necessitating an extra annual expenditure of Frs. 46,000.

In connection with the recent frontier incident when two Italian deserters were without much ado handed back to the Italian frontier guards, the Ticinese States Council has now, as a disciplinary measure, suspended for one month the chief of the cantonal police, Capt. Ferrario.

The Ticinese poet Francesco Chiesa was made an honorary doctor of the University of Rome last Saturday, when all the professors and students and a distinguished gathering of scientists and poli-ticians attended the impressive ceremony.

M. Robert Hofmann, one of the founders and a former president of the Secretariat des Suisses à l'Etrange: in Fribourg, died in La Tour-de-Peilz at the age of 50 after a prolonged illness.

## NOTES AND GLEANINGS.

Henri Dunant.

Of the many references which appeared in the English Press to remind as of the centenary of Henri Danant's birth the following from the Catholic Tablet (May 12th) contains some singular allusions. We do not wish to quarrel with our contemporary. Belated religious polemics cannot impair the merit of Henri Danant, and it has certainly not been enhanced by the freet that he was impair the merit of Henri Dunant, and it has certainly not been enhanced by the fact that he was a Protestant; his work is above factitious conceptions. We firmly believe, however, that if the lofty ideals of our great compatriot had been identified with any particular religious doctrine they would not have obtained that unqualified universal response which culminated in the creation of the International Red Cross and which, thanks to the very absence of that association, is developing on a much wider basis than the original founder ever dreamed of. We do not dispute that the "Camillians" distributed milk of human kindness at the battle of Solferino, though we have never heard battle of Solferino, though we have never heard of it before, but we do know that similar acts of charity are on record from many other battlefields before that memorable date, though the noble dis-pensers have not been canonised. We are also in-formed that the Camillian samaritans wore red crosses at Solferino, but the Tablet omits to point out to its readers that this is in no way responsible for the ultimate adoption of this particular escutcheon.

"Let all due honour be paid to the memory of Henri Dunant, founder of the International Red Cross organisation as now established at Geneva. Last Tuesday was the centenary of Dunant's birth. But, in asking that he may have the whole of his "due" honour, it is not ungracious to express the hope that he and the Geneva Red Cross will no longer be given credit which belongs to others. Not very many years ago, an English Catholic lady published through Messrs. Burns, Oates & Washbourne a well-informed and soundly argued book called "The First Red Cross," in which it was shown beyond all possibility of contradiction that Catholics were the pioneers of succour for the wounded and dying upon the battlefield and that the trained were the pioneers of succour for the wounded and dying upon the battlefield and that the trained men who risked their lives in this noble work wore a Red Cross as their emblem. We are alluding to the splendid sons of Saint Camillus de Lellis, who was himself a soldier. The Camillians had been risking their lives as trained helpers of the wounded on many a battlefield for hundreds of years before the Geneva Red Cross was heard of. In the remarkable book already mentioned, it is shown that Henri Dunant must have seen the Camillians wearing their Red Crosses and giving first aid at the battle of Solferino. Everybody who knows anything about the Geneva movement is aware that Dunant's Red Cross work was the outcome of his Solferino experiences. He wrote a book describing the experiences. He wrote a book describing the sufferings of the wounded on the Solferino field, and therein pleaded for an international organisation which should be respected by the belligerents on both sides, in the sacred name of our

common Christianity.

It is now more than sixty years since the splendid effort of Henri Dunant was crowned with success. Delegates from sixteen countries re-paired to Geneva in 1864, and there drafted the famous Convention by which it was agreed that ambulances and field-hospitals should be protected from gun-fire by the flying of a flag with a Red Cross on a white ground. This humane movement quickly made progress until "firing on the Red Cross" came to be regarded as a backwist which lead the progression of the red cross of the regarded as a on the Red Cross" came to be regarded as a barbarity which placed the perpetrator of such an outrage beneath the contempt of civilised peoples. Long may the Geneva Red Cross flourish; and long may the memory of Henri Dunant be venerated! None the less we must express our deep regret that certain persons connected with this great work seem determined that its Catholic origin shall be buried out of sight. The biographies of Henri Dunant which have been appearing this week have laid stress on his coming from "an old patrician and Protestant family" and on his early enthusiasm for the Y.M.C.A. movement, Whether these strongly non-Catholic associations disposed him unfavourably to the Catholic Church we are not in a position to say; but the fact remains that Protesably to the Catholic Church we are not in a position to say; but the fact remains that Protestants are surprised and even a little indignant when they are told that Dunant cannot have helped seeing the Red Cross Camillians in the thick of the fight at Solferino. A few years ago we were shown a correspondence with the Editor of the official magazine of the Geneva Red Cross. Urhappily this gentleman, who had published a misleading review of the English book, "The First Red Cross," which we have already mentioned, refused to let a rejoinder on points of fact be placed before his readers.

Somebody may ask how it has come about

points of fact be placed before his readers.

Somebody may ask how it has come about that the Camillians have not spoken up more loudly as the rightful heirs to Red Cross honours. They are still a vigorous Order; indeed, it is often said in Rome that no parish in the Eternal City is more splendidly worked than that which is staffed by the sons of Saint Camillus de Lellis. Although they are not likely to thank us for saying so, it is within our knowledge that these devoted men are conscious of the injustice that has been done to them. Not for the whole world, however, would they cry out against the Geneva Society, seeing that it is doing the very work which was so dear to the soldier Saint who was their founder. Moreover, the Geneva Conwas their founder. Moreover, the Geneva Con-vention was signed at a time when there was still an enormous amount of prejudice against the Religious Orders, so far as the Protestant Powers were concerned; and the Camillians knew that it would do much more harm than good to the cause of wounded soldiers if the work of the Catholic pioneers were harped upon."

### The Uri Landsgemeinde.

The disappearance of this old historic land-mark has not passed unnoticed in the English Press. The Outlook (May 12th) has the following short

"The news that the canton of Uri is to abolish its annual assembly of its male citizens would have fluttered Victorian dovecots. I sup-pose that hardly anyone reads Freeman nowapose that hardly anyone reads freeman nowa-days, but it was once orthodox to teach English-men to look to Uri and, I think, Appenzell, for surviving examples of the tribal moot, from which democracy sprang. Indeed, the doctrine may have helped to found the popularity of Switzer-land as a holiday resort, but winter sports and votes for women have proved too much for the Teutonic tradition." Teutonic tradition.

and the Times (May 11th) publishes a lament from

and the Times (May 11th) publishes a lament from a correspondent:—

"It is with much regret that I learn from the telegram from your Geneva Correspondent in to-day's issue that in the Canton of Uri the Landsgemeinde, or open-air Legislative Assembly of male citizens, is no longer to be held; a regret which will doubtless be shared by those who have read the account of these historic assemblies in Freeman's "Growth of the English Constitution," or Capper's "Shores and Cities