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The Swiss Observer

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HOME NEWS

ZURICH.

The International Silk Association held the 3rd annual congress in Zurich on September 12/14th. An imposing agenda, dealing with matters concerning silk from the raw material to the finished article, was before the meeting. Not the least interesting part of their plans are endeavours to regularize selling terms for woven silks on an international basis and to stabilize customs duties. Two well-known figures in the Swiss Silk Industry, Mr. E. Appenzeller-Frihli and Dr. Niggli, were highly commended for their ceaseless labour on behalf of the Association. N.Z.Z.

* * *

On Sunday, 8th September, the Zurich "Zoo" was opened. More than 1,000 animals are housed in it. Thus a long-cherished ambition of Zurich has been fulfilled. N.Z.Z.

* * *

The Mayor of Winterthur, Dr. H. Sträuli, is retiring; he has fulfilled his arduous duties, as well as those of National Councillor, during 18 years. N.Z.Z.

* * *

Great excitement was caused in the usually peaceful village of Wildberg (Tössatal) by the action of a madman. He posted himself at a window in his flat and started pepperering passers-by with his browning, fortunately without inflicting any injury. The police, after surrounding the house, found the would-be sniper hidden inside a case in the loft. He offered no resistance and was removed to an asylum. N.Z.Z.

* * *

The heat of the sun-rays set fire to a stack of wood-shavings at the joinery works of Heinrich Benz at Kloten. When the fire was discovered it had already sufficient hold to render the salving of the works impossible. The total damage is estimated at half-a-million francs, and the amount covered by insurance is only frs. 20,000. N.Z.Z.

BERN.

A bill has been introduced to create a special judicial machinery for dealing with juvenile offenders in the canton Bern. N.Z.Z.

* * *

A fire in the celluloid works Worbla A.G. at Worblaufen near Berne caused a great deal of damage. N.Z.Z.

GLARUS.

Glarus reports a satisfactory state of employment generally in commerce and industry, with the exception of the Cotton industry, where the continued scarcity of export orders creates uneasiness. The Hotel proprietors can look back on a fairly satisfactory season. A novel experiment is being tried at Engi with the establishment of a silver fox farm which, according to expert opinion, promises to be successful. N.

BASEL.

A well-known and highly respected personality of the town of Basel, Dr. Hans Merz, is retiring and leaving that town after 30 years of unselfish service to humanity. He not only helped his patients with his excellent professional skill, but he also had the gift of infusing them with new courage and the will to recover. His many friends see him leave with very genuine regrets. N.

* * *

Berthold Goldschmidt, gardener, and well-known in Jewish circles at Basel is among the sufferers of the recent riots in Palestine. He left Basel a few years ago for Haifa, where his home was destroyed and looted by Arabs. N.

* * *

The well-known Ettinger specialist, Dr. Schaub, has been the victim of a brutal assault. When near Balsthal, he was stopped by some young men who asked for a lift in the Doctor's car, a request to which he acceded. Suddenly one of the men wrenched the steering wheel out of Schaub's hands, drove the car into a sideway and attacked him with a knife. Schaub was then thrown into the roadway, and when found, had no less than 22 wounds, mostly on the face and chest.

Fortunately there is no serious injury. The Solothurn police have arrested the criminal, whose motive was robbery. Great astonishment has been caused by the fact that the attacker's companions were released by the police after a short examination. N.

AARAU.

Health authorities at Zofingen are disturbed over the recurrence of cases of infantile paralysis. N.Z.Z.

SCHWYZ.

The plans of a motoring road from Küssnacht to Rigiirst is much discussed at present and, apparently, stands a good chance of realisation. The proposed road would start at Küssnacht and lead to Rigiirst via Seeboden and Rigiänzeli. A car park with room for several hundred cars is foreseen at the first. As the cost of maintenance will, naturally, be very considerable, it is proposed to levy a toll on every car using the road. N.Z.Z.

SOLOTHURN.

On September 9th an empty military train collided with a passenger train between Leuzingen and Lüsslingen-Nenningkofen. Fourteen passengers were injured. It appears that, for some still unknown reason, the special military train did not stop at Leuzingen as foreseen to let the other train pass. St.G.T.

ST. GALLEN.

The Federal Council has granted a loan of 710,000 francs to the Rorschach-Heiden railway for its electrification. The loan is repayable at the rate of 1% per annum, and the interest charged is 4%. N.

* * *

The F.C. St. Gallen, the oldest footer club in Switzerland, has celebrated the 50th anniversary of its foundation. St.G.

AARAU.

The Socialist party is leading a movement to obtain a revision of the licensing law whereby the sale of spirits is to be prohibited before 8 a.m. N.Z.Z.

TWO RESIGNATIONS ON THE C.F.F.

For reasons of age and health two heads of divisions of the General Management of the C.F.F. have tendered their resignations. M. de Werdt engineer-in-chief and M. Zuttel chief controller of finance and general accounts have asked to be relieved of their functions at the end of this year. M. de Werdt has been in the employ of C.F.F. since 1893 and Mr. Zuttel since 1884.

THE CREDIT SUISSE PREMISES AT GENEVA.

The question of new buildings to be erected at Geneva for the Crédit Suisse, which was mentioned in our last issue, has now been definitely cleared by the explanation given at the State Council by M. Boissonnas. He explained that the bank obtained at the time due authority to proceed with the construction according to the plans submitted. Therefore the only possible course now is that of expropriation. As the necessary procedure of expropriation would take 2 years at least, the new premises will by then have been erected and it would then be necessary for the town of Geneva to pay, not only for the ground but for the building as well, which settles this argument once and for all.

ALPINISM.

Two more accidents occurred last week. One at Kammilücke where an experienced climber Anton Arnold of Zurich, 49 years of age, has disappeared. In spite of a long search his body has not yet been recovered and further endeavours have been abandoned.

* * *

At the Besso near Zinal, three young men from Lausanne sustained a fall between the Zinal and the Morning glaciers. Two of them, Edouard Badel and Fritz Ledermann were killed, and the third, Paul Spetzler, is injured but will probably recover.

PETROL SUBSTITUTES IN SWITZERLAND.

A meeting was recently held in Berne of representatives of municipal and cantonal authorities owning forests, of chemical and gas works, and of motor-vehicle manufacturers to consider the question of finding in the country a substitute for petrol in order to render the country less dependent on imported motor fuel. It was considered that a suitable fuel ought to be obtainable from the timber and tar-oil supplies of the country, and, with the object of going more deeply into the subject, it was decided to form a Swiss association for the study of alternative motor fuels.

SUMMER SCHOOL AT ENGELBERG.

At the suggestion of Sir Henry Lunn, who kindly went to considerable trouble in making the arrangements, the first Anglo-Catholic Summer School of its kind was held this year at Engelberg, Switzerland, from September 1 to 8. The intention was that of combining a little serious reflection with the ordinary activities of a holiday.

DISEASE IN TREES.

A catastrophe threatens Engadine, the famous resort for tourists in the Swiss Alps.

According to the "Engadiner Post," the most handsome of the mountain pines, the Arolla, which withstands the roughest storms, is attacked by a serious disease. A parasite which hitherto has only been found on the larch is now attacking the Arolla, and destroying especially the young shoots.

Another parasite is also at work which prefers the older needles, which it sucks dry. Experts say they have never known such an epidemic before. As the Arolla only grows from eight inches to a foot each year, Engadine may suffer considerably.

WIRELESS FOR LEAGUE.

The long disputed question of the establishment of a League wireless station was finally settled on Sept. 17. It was decided to accept the Swiss offer to run the station for the League in ordinary times. In time of crisis control is to be given to the Secretariat of the League, the Swiss Government having the right to appoint an observer.

The present station will be strengthened by an additional two short-wave transmitters for inter-Continental communications.

This arrangement will cost the League about £8,000 annually, while the income derived by the Swiss radio company from the short-wave messages sent by parties outside the League will be credited to the League Secretariat. A wireless expert, appointed by the Secretariat, will, moreover, be in attendance at the station at all times.

BIG EAGLE SHOT.

A hunter, of Canton Grisons, on Sunday killed near Malans a royal eagle measuring 7ft. from wing to wing, the biggest shot in that region for the past 20 years.

CENTENARIAN.

On Thursday last the church bells of Interlaken rang joyously to announce the 100th birthday of the oldest inhabitant of the town, Mrs. Mary Nisbet, an Englishwoman who settled in Interlaken a few years ago. In the afternoon there was a reception at the Kursaal, where Mrs. Nisbet, who is very alert and in possession of all her faculties, was greeted by the local authorities and members of the British colony.

VISP-ZERMATT ELECTRIFIED.

The railway line from Visp to Zermatt, in Canton Valais, has been electrified, the power being supplied by the Swiss Federal Railways. The reduction in general expenditure as a result will make it possible to assure a regular service during the winter months, thus contributing towards the development of Zermatt as a winter sports resort. Next year a new line is to be built between Visp and Brig, connecting the Visp-Zermatt railway with the Brig-Furka-Oberalp line, and next summer there will be through coaches from Zermatt to Andermatt, Chur and St. Moritz.

SWISS EXHIBITION OF MSS. AND PRINTED PAPERS.

An exhibition has been arranged at Berne by the director of the Gutenberg Museum, Herr Karl Lüthi, which has been specially viewed by Swiss newspapermen. It goes back to the oldest times and contains manuscripts and, later, printed papers and books, as the art of printing developed. Works on the deciphering of Egyptian, Chinese and Phoenician inscriptions are shown, illuminated manuscripts and psalters from the Middle Ages and hand-printed productions, and examples of Chinese manuscripts and books, including an illustrated "Life of Confucius" printed on silk.

MORE RECRUITS FOR THE SWISS GUARDS.

Although a body of young Swiss men arrived from their mountain homes last May to augment the ranks of the Swiss Guards of the City of the Vatican, it has been found necessary, because of the extension of the Papal territory, that another group should be enrolled in the famous corps. The new recruits should be enrolled in uniform, drilled, taught the geography of the vast household, and

shown the exact part of the Vatican where each prelate and dignitary has his apartment. They are also learning the nature and the competency of every office in the Vatican City, for a Swiss Guard is supposed to be as well informed as to the Vatican as the best trained policeman on his beat in any of the big cities of the world.

However, not until May, 1930, will the new recruits be sworn in. This ceremony is made a solemn affair on one of the squares inside the walls, and invitations are eagerly sought for by distinguished visitors.

With great care recruits for the Swiss Guards are picked periodically from among the most earnest Catholic families in Switzerland. This is but natural in light of the fact that all approaches to the Vatican are under the sole charge of this military corps. And not only the recruits' families, but the Swiss Government, feel honoured by the trust and confidence placed in their young men by the Pope. During the Great War a Protestant Deputy opposed a motion to recall Swiss Guards from the Vatican, saying the nation should feel the high honour the Pope shows by selecting them.

Modern Travel Criticised.

Mr. R. H. Bruce Lockhart has recently written some trenchant critical remarks in the "Evening Standard" on the unprofitable restlessness of modern travel and pleasure seeking, extracts of which we reproduce below.

"To conclude that travelling is useless because we travel badly is bad logic." These words were written by Jean Jacques Rousseau a hundred and seventy years ago, and in his day there was ample excuse for travelling badly.

Both before and during the French Revolution a thousand dangers confronted the traveller. It was a natural precaution for a merchant setting out from Paris to Rouen to make his will before his departure, and the guide-books of the period advised their readers to "arm themselves with a pair of double barrelled pistols, to look under the bed before going to sleep, and to barricade the door with the chest of drawers."

It was Napoleon who first freed the European highroads from the hordes of bandits who infested them, but even until comparatively recent times a voyage was a great adventure only to be undertaken in a spirit of solemn seriousness.

In England the Continental grand tour was regarded as an essential part of a young man's education, and a thousand volumes from Disraeli's brilliant travel sketches to the more modest manuscripts which are still to be found in country house libraries of old English families prove how seriously Victorian youth followed Plato's advice "to travel frequently in order to bring back new ideas which might be of service to the State."

To-day, when a whole host of rival Cooks (the first venture of the original Thomas was a tour to the Borders in order to show the Scott country to Englishmen) has reduced the discomforts of travelling to a minimum, do we travel more profitably than our ancestors?

Long residence in Continental countries forces me to the conclusion that since the war English people have evolved a new conception of foreign travel. Among the wealthier classes the educative value of travel has almost disappeared. The old voyage of discovery has ceased to exist, and in his restless search for distraction the modern Englishman goes abroad not to find but to lose himself.

To the business magnate, the overworked professional man, and the harassed politician travel has become a narcotic which assists him to forget for a few days his material cares. To enable him to compete with the nerve-racking speed of modern life constant change has become a necessary tonic, and to him the getting somewhere is more important than the somewhere itself. To-day there are few Englishmen who would subscribe to Ruskin's dictum that "all travelling becomes dull in exact proportion to its rapidity."

For this type of traveller as well as for those fortunate people who can afford to travel for the sake of their health there is some excuse. But what are we to think of the vast army of young men and women to whom foreign travel is merely a sector in the round of their social engagements and whose sole incentive is the pursuit of pleasure.

Of the thousands of English people who go to Switzerland every year how many of them see anything of the country except the slopes on which they ski and the hotels in which they dance?

Two years ago I was in Venice. There were wives of famous Englishmen, women whose names

are household words, who spent four weeks on the Lido and whose only sight of the most beautiful city in the world was a fleeting glimpse of the grand canal from the steamer which bore them from the station to their summer playground!

Here it may be said is much pother about nothing, but the pursuit of pleasure at the expense of the cult of the mind is the first sign of national decay.

Because of our wealth there is a vast international network of hotel proprietors and travel agencies to pander to our pleasures. Because we are still the wealthiest nation in Europe and because of our slavish subservience to the most blatant influences of American Philistinism we are assisting American tourists in that levelling process which is slowly undermining European culture.

We have destroyed the culinary excellence of the Paris restaurants. Already the Anglo-American demand for jazz has driven the Hungarian tsigane orchestras out of employment, and syncope has ousted the old Viennese *lieder* from Grinzing.

In this process of Americanisation we have lost our own individuality. Over a hundred years ago Goethe said that the Englishman carried his tea-caddy with him wherever he went. To-day the tea-caddy has been replaced by the gramophone and the ukulele!

I do not wish to imply that all English people travel in this foolish fashion. Our heritage of travel research is still the greatest in the world. The best books of travel have been written by Englishmen of leisure. Some of the greatest archaeological discoveries of all time have been made by Englishmen who have devoted their time and their fortune to the pursuit of knowledge.

At the present moment I know at least two millionaires whose keenness for profitable sightseeing would put even a German professor to shame. But I do not see their like among our rich young men of to-day.

Perhaps the neglect of the educative aspect of travel is to be explained by the effortless ease with which we travel nowadays. The gifts which the rich despise most are those, like universal suffrage and the rules of health, which cost no effort and which are within the reach of everybody.

To-day, even to the man of moderate means, travel has become a commonplace. And this leads me to the class of Englishmen who still travel intelligently. This class embraces the thousands of English men and women to whom foreign travel is still a luxury to be provided for by weary months of saving and to be used with the greatest possible benefit for the lowest possible expenditure.

This is the class which, guide-book in hand, is to be found in every gallery and museum in Europe, and assuredly it reaps the reward of its virtue. As long as its supply of recruits never fails, there need be no fear for English culture.

Doubtless in all times there have been foolish travellers. Nevertheless there is something that bodes ill for our national welfare in the reflection that the class to which Fortune has given the best chance in life and which in the past supplied us with the majority of our leaders should contain to-day the largest percentage of men and women who travel improfitably.

Hans Renold Jubilee.

I have received a copy of the jubilee brochure issued by Hans Renold, Ltd., which tells in simple language the romantic story of the company's development, in the lifetime of its founder from a cellar in Salford to the vast organisation which now covers an area of 11½ acres at Burnage, on the south side of Manchester.

Mr. Hans Renold, who is in his 77th year, was born at Aarau, in Switzerland, and was one of the first to enter Paris in 1871, when the ashes of the Tuilleries Palais were still burning after the German evacuation. He was engaged there in engineering reconstruction work, and came to England two years later.

The Renold bush roller chain which he patented in 1880, has been an important factor in the development of the British cycle industry, and during the war the original experiments in the choice of tank chains were carried out at the Burnage works.

Mr. Renold adopted the 48 hours working week at his factory so far back as 1896, and he is a pioneer in welfare work.

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MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 30, 1929.

The Film depicting Life and Scenes of the Patriotic Rally at Hendon, in celebration of the Swiss National Day will be screened at 7 p.m., and will be followed by: Locarno, Engelberg and Wintersport and "D'Barner Mutze als Filmschauspieler"

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