

Zeitschrift: The Swiss observer : the journal of the Federation of Swiss Societies in the UK

Herausgeber: Federation of Swiss Societies in the United Kingdom

Band: - (1930)

Heft: 471

Rubrik: Notes and gleanings

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The Official Organ of the Swiss Colony in Great Britain.

EDITED WITH THE CO-OPERATION OF MEMBERS OF THE LONDON COLONY.

Telephone: CLERKENWELL 9595

Published every Friday at 23, LEONARD STREET, LONDON, E.C.2.

Telegrams: FREPRINCO, LONDON.

VOL. 10—No. 471

LONDON, NOVEMBER 1, 1930.

PRICE 3d.

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HOME NEWS



FEDERAL.

ZURICH CONVERSION LOAN.

The City of Zurich intends to issue a 4 per cent. Loan of 25,000,000 Frs. at 9½ per cent., for the conversion of the 5 per cent. Loan of a similar amount, falling due in May. The City of Winterthur will issue a 4 per cent. Conversion Loan of 5,000,000 Frs. at 9½ per cent.

LEAGUE OF NATIONS.

Next year's contribution towards the "cost" of the League of Nations has been increased by 52,000 Frs. and is now 518,000 Frs.

SWISS FEDERAL RAILWAYS.

Satisfactory traffic returns for the first nine months of the present year are published. Altogether, 54 million passengers were carried—an increase of 840,000 against the same period last year. On the other hand the goods traffic with 14.1 million tons shows a slight falling-off. The total receipts show an increase of about seven million francs which, however, is more than compensated by an increase in the working expenses of 9.4 million francs.

BANQUE GENERALE POUR L'INDUSTRIE ELECTRIQUE.

The net profits of the Banque Generale pour l'Industrie Electrique amounted to 2,280,000 Frs. for the business year ended June 30, 1930, against 1,980,000 Frs. for the previous business year. The dividend remains at 5 per cent.

X-RAYS AND OUR RECRUITS.

Following a proposal by the military department, Röntgen apparatuses are to be installed at the more important recruiting centres; this additional examination is expected to detect unhealthy recruits who are likely to become inmates of military hospitals.

UNEMPLOYMENT.

The unemployment figures for September compare unfavourably with those for August, and still worse with those of September, 1929. Unskilled labour, however, seems to be in demand in most of the trades, especially agriculture; there is also a lack of workers in the tailoring and show manufacturing industries. The hands employed in the building and textile trades (embroidery), show a further decline; the watch industry seems to have righted itself, but unemployment amongst the musicians is on the increase on account of the "talkies."

LOCAL.

LUCERNE.

Three office apprentices, aged 19, 16 and 17 years, a few days ago disappeared without a trace. Two of them managed, in some way or other, to cross the frontier without any papers, whilst the older one had a passport. All three went to Hamburg, from where they sent word to their parents that they intended crossing the ocean to America. In the next few days these young adventurers will, however, be brought back to familiar surroundings again. N.Z.Z.

AARAU.

The Conference of Cantonal Directors of Education from all over Switzerland meeting in Aarau had before them a proposition of the Swiss General Shorthandwriters Society, backed by the Swiss Shorthand Teachers Association and the Committee of Examiners for Shorthand Teachers, that the teaching of shorthand be made compulsory. This proposition is in regard of all schools. The 7th and 8th school years should be the time for starting it. A period of one year at the rate of two hours per week should be devoted to the subject. The Congress, though viewing the proposal favourably, could not see its way clear to accept the suggestion for compulsion, but recommended its acceptance on a voluntary footing. St.G.T.

APPENZELL.

In Walzenhausen about 200 unemployed from Appenzell have met to take measures towards meeting the critical situation in which they are placed. A resolution was passed in which it was stated that the Regierungsrat and the Communal

Authority were too slow in commencing relief work, and that the help they so kindly received from the Appenzeller Vorderland and from private sources was, however, sufficient to relieve only a small part of the great suffering. In view of the steadily increasing unemployment and the approaching winter, the Regierungsrat is requested to call the Grand Council for a joint meeting, so that the cantonal relief works could be started at the latest by the middle of November, and also that the private unemployment insurances which have already done more than they ought to have done, should be supported by the communes. N.Z.Z.

BADEN.

The Badener Arts and Craft School, which is attended by 2,000 students (owing to the large industry in that town), is being reorganised. Up to now 43 teachers have taught as part time work, mostly in the evenings. On the proposition of the Federal Inspectors four principals have been elected so that the school will now be a regular day school. N.Z.Z.

LIVIGNO.

An interesting occurrence is reported on the Swiss-Italian frontier. For several days past a large eagle could be observed flying from his nest, which he has on the Swiss side of the frontier, over on to Italian territory, there to fetch his prey in the form of sheep. In the space of a few days he fetched five sheep from the Livina valley and brought them over the border, there to devour them in peace. The farmers who were so victimized have not yet been able to shoot the eagle, as he invariably returns to the sanctuary of the Swiss territory immediately after having secured his prey. V.

RIEDEN.

A 62-year-old farmer in Rieden wanted to greet a newly married couple on returning from their honeymoon, by firing some shots. He took a cartridge and lit it, thinking it would take a long time to burn, held it in his hand. Suddenly the cartridge exploded and tore his right hand clean away. N.Z.Z.

Last Tuesday, Walter Fuchs, a 20-year-old railway worker, who, in the course of his work had to cross the lines in the station of Aarau, was caught by a train coming from Wettingen and was knocked down. Both his legs were cut off and he also suffered such severe head wounds that death, a short time after, came as a relief. N.Z.Z.

AMSTEG.

On Sunday night between 10 o'clock and midnight passers by found, almost in the middle of the village of Silenen on the St. Gotthard road, the body of the stonemason Corti. On Monday a cyclist went to the police in Altdorf declaring that at that time he was riding at a slow pace and with a light on through Silenen and knocked against a man, he himself being hurt by the fall. He got up but could not see anyone and so rode on. He was now coming forward as, perhaps, the dead man might be the one he ran into. The doctor is now examining the matter. Corti leaves a family of nine young children. N.Z.Z.

FROM THE TICINO.

REDUCTION OF MEMBERS OF THE NATIONAL COUNCIL.

The amendment to the Federal Constitution, approved provisionally by the Federal Assembly, whereby the number of members of the National Council is reduced from 198 to 190, is adversely criticised by several of the newspapers. They point out that Latin Switzerland will have to sacrifice 4 members, viz: one each for the cantons of Geneva, Vaud, Neuchâtel and Ticino, whereas among the German speaking cantons, which have already such an overwhelming majority in the National Council, only three, viz: Berne, Zurich and St. Gall will suffer a reduction. THE BASSANESI AFFAIR.

This question continues to be the major item of discussion, both in the press and among the people. Severe criticism is levelled against the Federal Council for the way in which the whole matter has been handled and for the clear desire they have shown to trample Swiss traditions and principles underfoot, for the sake of pleasing the existing Italian régime. The trial, fixed to begin on the 17th of November, promises to be the star turn of the year and the stage is set, through the excessive zeal with which the Federal Council endeavoured to favour Fascism, not for the trial of Bassanesi and his accomplices but for the impeachment of the existing Italian régime. (Continued on back page)

NOTES AND GLEANINGS.

By KYBURG.

When our witty collaborator "ck" mentioned the other week that he should like to have more of Kyburg and less of his Gleanings, he made me blush! Not with vanity, but with a sense of well-merited reproach!

Those of my readers who take the trouble to read all the Gleanings from the British Press I set before them, must often think why some of them fail to stimulate my locquacity and why I so often seem to be content to string these articles loosely together and hardly write a word myself.

I wonder myself over my self-control! It is not sheer laziness, I assure you, it is perhaps just a slight weariness sometimes. When you find, as I so often do, that you write the most outrageously provocative things in your article, only to find that your readers either do not read the stuff, or then think it not worth while to protest vehemently, well, then the fun goes out of the business and you cannot keep on hitting an imaginary foe, as it were, all the time! If my readers would only strike back, hit hard and not take everything I write lying down and with hardly even a murmur, things would be much more lively, because then I could hit back, hard and strong—and what, after all, is more amusing than a real good fight with ink and paper as weapons and with pointed arrows of so-called wit (but no malice), being banded about freely. Well then, as I have written and admonished so often, come on, fight back, let me have it and don't all of you take it lying down, as if you had not an atom of intellect left in your bemused brain! But mind you, no malice! Vituperation, if you will, abuse if you must, leg-pull, yes, but . . . all in good fun and no malice! Now then, come on!

Naturally enough I did not get my present fighting vim by going to the office day after day and working hard. No, my hearties, yours truly has had another wonderful week of sight-seeing in beautiful Cornwall and Devon, not to speak of the journey to and fro, along the King's excellent high roads. At this time of the year, when the autumn tints clothe the landscape in gold, orange, brown and dark green, when the views from the hill-tops are clearer than during the summer, when the air is scented with that tangy scent of decaying leaves and when at even-tide you welcome the grey smoke-curls that rise up from the cottage chimneys, and when the scent of the wood-fires is strong in the air as you pass through a village, everything in that part of England makes you feel lovely, makes you see fresh wonders of beautiful Nature everywhere, in short, a holiday at the beginning of autumn in Cornwall is a wonderful tonic and gives you plenty of stamina to face the coming winter fogs of dear, dirty old London.

The catering is excellent. At least, we were very fortunate in finding a tiny little fishing cove, miles away from anywhere, where we found cosy shelter, excellent cooking and dear people, and where the expenses did not run away with us. I rather flatter myself on knowing Southern England pretty well by now, having explored most of it fairly thoroughly, but I have never yet found a spot where one's inner man was looked after in such a wonderfully Lucullan fashion as down there, some thirteen miles south-east of Truro, among a small community of fishermen and their families and in wonderful scenic surroundings. And, if any reader wishes to know details, I shall be glad to furnish them to him. I draw no commission!

Besides walking all day, from rocky cove to sandy beach, over hills and down steep lanes, paddling for hours on end on beautiful sand and in glorious sunshine, we also spent a couple of days motoring and sight-seeing further afield, and one glorious morning we stood on that last stone at Lands End and the guide who had undertaken to pilot us among the rocky fastnesses of that lonely spot and to show us the cave, underneath the rock, where the waters of the St. George's and the English Channel run up against each other, said his little piece:

"You are now the first and the last gentleman (or lady, as the case may be) in England, but not the least and you, of all people in England, are the one nearest to New York."

Those of my readers who have been there too, may remember that little set remark, quoted above and which has been said to countless thousands of visitors.

From there to St. Ives for lunch, followed

by a halt on the deserted, but still wonderful sands of Carbis Bay, then tea with Cornish Cream and Splits at Truro and the lovely run home to our Cornish fishing village, deep down among the rocks.

The day before we had visited Newlyn and Mousehole and at the latter place been conducted to a smuggler's cave by a Cornish gentleman of obviously Spanish descent. It is quite wonderful how easy it is to detect that the people of Mousehole are from entirely different stock to other Cornish people. They are much quicker in their movements, they are more beautiful to look upon, especially their women and children and even in young boys you see that quickness of movement, that flashing of the eyes which you associate with southern blood. Naturally we also saw that one and only house, now an inn, which the Spaniards did not burn when taking Mousehole. Our guide, as truly a born gentleman as ever there was in his deportment, speaking the King's English delightfully well, choosing his words as if he was a born poet, was a simple poor fisherman, but, as I have said, a gentleman with all.

There is much more I could tell of our explorations in Cornwall. Poesy rings through the whole country, as far as its coast is concerned; stark misery and poverty ranges through the inland, where the miners delve deep down in the earth and where just now much misery and unemployment is rife, owing to rationalisation of coal mines.

Of Dartmoor and its autumnal beauty, its golden hills, its wonderful views, I will only remark that if there is another district in England which can beat it for sheer grandeur, I shall be glad to know of it. Not loveliness, but grandeur!

Such, however, is the softening influence of golden sunshine that even Princetown Prison, that dread place, looked almost like a desirable residence when we passed it!

Enough! But you will understand now why Kyburg is fresh and keen for battle and work, why he challenges his readers to roll up and let him have it for a change and to engage in wordy and, I hope, witty, word-warfare in our pages! Do! Let's enliven the dull winter-days a bit!

Passons a l'ordre du jour:

Buenzli Fait du Cinema.

To-day's Cinema, 13th October:

A Swiss company, headed by the comedian Freddie Scheim, have been working in Vienna on "Bünzli fait du Cinéma."

Interiors have been shot in the Schoenbrunn studios under the direction of Robert Vollmuth. The company are now in Zurich.

M. Gyr, who is in charge, explains that the film is financed with Swiss money, and that if this 1,500 metre effort is successful, more important work will be commenced, as the necessary Swiss capital is available.

The language of the film, of which two versions are being made, is German and Swiss-German.

The recording set is Sélénophon.

Although the Alpine Season, except for Winter-Sports, is at an end, the following record in the *News Chronicle*, 21st October, may interest many.

Englishman's great Alpine Feat.

A young Englishman, Mr. C. F. Hudson, living at Arveyres, near Villars, has made the first ascent of the Lion d'Argentière peak, in the Vaudois Alps, by a new and almost impassable route.

The guide, Adrien Veillon, who accompanied Mr. Hudson, stated that the ascent was also probably his last as he will refuse to attempt a repetition of the climb.

The Lion d'Argentière, 7,485 feet high, gets its name from the silvery slabs forming a vertical wall.

It was from this side that the ascent was made, the time occupied being 90 minutes. Sixty feet from the top the attempt was almost abandoned as the "chimney" the climbers were using was blocked.

They had to descend to find another "chimney." Handholds were few, but the rock was in good condition.

And now, to cheer you all up, a warm message, namely that the

World is Getting Warmer.

The Star, 8th October:

The earth is growing slowly warmer and drier, according to reports by Professor P. L. Mercanton, head of the scientific committee which has recorded the advance and retreat of glaciers since 1881.

He bases his statement on the fact that the glaciers of the Swiss Alps have been retreating for several years, says the "New York Herald," which is quoted by the Central News.

The conditions of 102 glaciers were observed in 1929, and of these, says the professor, 79 were found steadily retreating or shrinking. Alpine weather stations have reported that snows have been far less than normal.

But don't, for yet awhile, omit to lay in a good stock of coal!

A Swiss Cup for Southwick:

Sussex Daily News, October 6th:

It is a remarkable circumstance that the first cup which the Wickers Swimming Club will have to compete for comes from Switzerland. It is the Prix de Berne, and it has been presented by two Swiss brothers, who came to Southwick for a holiday and who were among the founders of the Wicker's Swimming Club. As a memento of happy days spent here needless to say such a practical gesture of goodwill and camaraderie is very greatly appreciated, and the trophy will be retained as a permanent one and will hold an honoured place in the club. There is no reason for surprise in the fact that the membership is already a very large one and the outlook is very rosy as there is a lot of enthusiasm behind the venture.

I think those Bernese Brothers ought to be made "honorary members" of the League of Nations Union!

NOTE.—Kyburg has also sent us a long "Gleaning" on the activities of the League of Nations, which we shall be pleased to print, together with his comments thereon, next week.—Ed.

ECONOMIC NOTES.

From the Economist.

FOREIGN TRADE.

Economic conditions in Switzerland have grown worse during the summer, as shown by the unsatisfactory results of foreign trade, the decrease in the receipts of transport undertakings and the growth of unemployment. There was a rise in imports during July and August when the figures were respectively £9,537,153 and £9,611,245, compared with £8,032,728 in June, and with £9,776,499 and £9,446,418 respectively during the corresponding months of 1929. The increase in imports of foodstuffs, minerals, wool, chemicals and precious metals was particularly great. On the other hand, exports have been continuously dwindling, and in June they fell to £5,469,248. They rose slightly in July, when they reached £5,522,276, but they dropped to £5,215,681 in August, the lowest figure recorded for many years. Compared with 1929, the decrease was £1,471,156 in July, and £1,324,417 in August. All the exporting industries are more or less touched by the depression, but the cotton, silk and watch-making industries, which are among the chief exporting industries of Switzerland, are suffering particularly.

During the summer months there was a rise in imports from Great Britain, mainly due to important gold purchases in England, and a continued fall in imports from the United States. British imports into Switzerland, which reached a monthly average of £526,561 during the first half-year, rose to £1,424,400 in July, and to £1,758,300 in August. There is no doubt that Great Britain has to some extent benefited from the reduction of Swiss purchases from the United States. Swiss exports to Britain totalled respectively £832,447 and £825,593 in July and August, compared with a monthly average of £864,319 during the first half-year. Imports from the United States, which totalled £650,935 in June, rose to £678,817 in July, but they dropped to £565,776 in August. During the first half-year, Switzerland imported motor-cars to a value of £1,664,000, as against £1,584,000 in 1929, but while the importation of European cars increased by 304 cars, that of United States cars fell by 594.

INDUSTRIAL DEPRESSION.

The number of unemployed, which was 9,002 at the end of June, rose to 10,161 at the end of July, and a further increase of a few hundreds was recorded in August. It may be noticed that over 50 per cent. of the unemployed belong to the watchmaking and jewellery industry, and about 20 per cent. to the textile industries. There is no improvement in sight, and prospects for the coming winter are, therefore, very gloomy indeed.

CAPITAL MARKET.

On the other hand, the banking situation is very good, and money is so abundant that the banks have, since July 1, reduced the interest on short-term and long-term deposits. Since the war, Switzerland has acquired a great importance in the capital market. Apart from Great Britain, all the European States affected by the war, especially Germany, borrow from Switzerland, and the overseas countries—such as Brazil and Chile—do so equally. From the end of 1921 to the end of July, 1930, foreign loans subscribed in Switzerland amounted to more than £52,000,000. During the first seven months of 1930, twelve loans have been raised on the Swiss market to a value of £9,340,000, four loans to Germany representing £1,170,000, and four loans to Belgium totalling £1,000,000, while there were substantial loans to Chile, Austria and Italy, and a number of smaller loans to foreign industries, banks and Governments. That money is abundant in Switzerland is shown by the fact that a conversion loan of £600,000, issued by the Federal Government, was subscribed five times within a few days.

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