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The Swiss Observer

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PUBLISHERS' NOTE.

On the occasion of the 10th Anniversary of the "Swiss Observer" we have received innumerable congratulations either verbally or by letter.

The foundation of the "Swiss Observer" ten years ago happily coincided with the taking up of the duties of Monsieur C. R. Paravicini, as Minister Plenipotentiary and Envoy Extraordinary at the Court of St. James, and we would like to put it on record, that if the "Swiss Observer" has been able to celebrate the 10th anniversary of its existence, it is principally due to the never failing interest the Minister has taken in the now official organ of the Swiss Colony. His efforts, his advice and support in the darkest hours of our publication have proved to be of immeasurable help, and a great deal of the congratulations showered on us, we gladly and respectfully pass on to one, who has proved to be a great and valued friend in need.

Hardly less essential is the co-operation enjoyed by us from the many faithful collaborators, from whom we wish to single out our old and untiring friend "Kyburg" whose ever stimulating articles have proved to be the main attraction of our paper. He has succeeded in giving the "S.O." a distinctive character, without which, as one of our cynical friends put it, we should have to offer sympathy and apologies to our subscribers for ten years of incessant sufferings.

Last, but not least, we wish to thank our advertisers for their never failing support which has enabled us to carry on the heavy task and bring us one step nearer to that ideal which we set before us ten years ago.

HOME NEWS

FEDERAL.

FINANCE COMMISSION OF THE NATIONAL COUNCIL.

The Finance Commission of the National Council held a meeting, under the presidency of National Councillor M. Keller (Argovie), at Berne. The meeting was addressed by M. Musy, President of the Swiss Confederation, and by Federal Councillor M. Minet, who gave an exposé on the increased costs for maintaining the army at the necessary strength.

INCREASE OF DUTIES.

In order to protect Swiss aluminium producers from the dumping which has manifested itself in Switzerland by an extraordinary increase in imports of pure aluminium from overseas (20,000 quintals during the current year, as compared with some 500 quintals in 1913), the Swiss Federal Council have decided to raise the import duty on raw aluminium, as from November 18th, by 60 frs.

The Federal Council has decided to increase the duty on typewriters and calculating machines. The increased duty will come into operation on December 10th.

RESIGNATION OF A FEDERAL JUDGE.

M. Albert Afolter, a member of the Federal Tribunal for the last 20 years, has tendered his resignation to the National Assembly. N.Z.Z.

BASSANESI TO GO.

The Federal Council has decided to expel the activist Bassanesi, recently sentenced to four months' imprisonment for dropping anti-Fascist propaganda over Milan. Tarchiani and Rosselli, his helpers, are also to be expelled.

SWITZERLAND IN 1929.

The Swiss Federation of Commerce and Industry has published its annual survey of Switzerland's trade and manufacturing activities during 1929. Included in the first part of the report is a statement on the question of import and export prohibitions which has been under examination by the League of Nations. Statistical tables regarding population, agricultural, water-power, factories, cost of living and foreign trade are also given, together with special

reports on the more important branches of trade and industry. The report may be obtained from the Secretariat of the Swiss Federation of Commerce and Industry, Börsenstrasse 17, Zurich, in either a French or German edition, price SF. plus postage.

AN ANNIVERSARY.

The Swiss Federal Railways propose to commemorate, in June 1931, the 25th anniversary of the construction of the Simplon tunnel. A bronze plate giving the name of the promoters, the engineers, and the workmen employed will be placed at the entrance of the tunnel. It was decided at a meeting of international delegates that the ceremony should be carried out in as simple a form as possible.

STORM HAVOC.

Damage, caused by heavy storms, is reported from all over Switzerland. The Canton of Berne has specially suffered heavily. In Bâle the tramway service was interrupted for a considerable time and the train service suffered much delay.

LOCAL.

The Choral Society Riesbach-Zurich has celebrated its centenary, having been founded on the 22nd of November, 1930. N.Z.Z.

LUCERNE.

The Cantonal budget for 1931 indicates a revenue of 10,563,730 Frs., and an expenditure of 11,076,961 Frs., leaving a deficit of 512,961 Frs. T.G.

GLARUS.

The Evangelical Church, the schools, the Communal building, and about 100 houses, shops, and hotels in Linthal, at the foot of the Klausen Pass, have been vacated, and all their contents carried to a place of safety, as the danger of the village being destroyed by a mountain slide becomes daily greater. The weather is wintry, and the continuously falling rain makes the situation still more distressing, while the poor people, many of whom have never been far from their homes, are inconsolable. The geologists who are studying the conditions are keeping a close watch, and they are of the opinion that the break will come in the body of the mountain, which will bring down a mass of about three million cubic metres. Men are stationed on watch day and night, and the news is telephoned from the heights to the waiting, frightened inhabitants in the doomed valley. M.P.

BASLE.

The death is reported of M. August Burchardt-Reutter, Managing Director of the Maschinenfabrik Bürkhardt A.G. in Bâle. N.Z.

GENEVA.

The result of the Election for the Geneva Cantonal Government is as follows:

Elected: Desbaillets (radical) with 16,376 votes; Frédéric Martin (democrat, new) with 16,007 votes; Paul Lachenal (radical, new) with 15,801 votes; Martin Naef (U.D.E.) with 13,716 votes; Antoine Brown (radical, new) with 13,615 votes; Albert Naine (socialist) with 11,908 votes.

Not elected: Léon Nicole (socialist) who received 11,357 votes; Georges Oltramare, who received 10,807 votes, and Alexandre Moriaud (radical), late Head of the Financial Dept. and President of the Geneva Government. Approximately 63 per cent. of the voters went to the poll. The majority of the Geneva papers express great regret that M. Moriaud has not been re-elected. As the socialist party intimated, before the election, that they would not take part in the Government unless both their candidates (Naine and Nicole) were elected, M. Naine, the only socialist who found favour with the electors, has tendered his resignation and it is therefore hoped that M. Moriaud will come again into the foreground as a candidate, if he consents to stand. T.G.

**

M. Francois Mora, secretary of the Geneva Printers' Union, has been arrested on a charge of having embezzled an amount of 24,000 Frs. belonging to the Union. T.G.

SURSEE.

Stadtammann Irené Zust has died at the early age of 36 after a short illness. The deceased rendered great services to his native town and was very popular. V.

TICINO.

The famous motor cycle rider, Alfred Carmine, was killed last Sunday at Bellinzona, when attempting a car record. One of the rear wheels came off when the car was travelling at high speed and the vehicle overturned. Carmine died on the way to hospital, but his mechanic, Austino, was killed outright. M.C.

NOTES AND GLEANINGS.

By KYBURG.

Congratulations.

Some of our staunch supporters, those readers who have paid their subscriptions to the *Swiss Observer* year after year, and some of those among us who now and then put in a bit of work towards making the Swiss Paper in London readable, may have felt rather important and not a little flattered, when we read all the nice things which appeared in our birthday number last week under the above heading.

I have not seen the Editor meanwhile, but I trust that the number of *New Readers*, i.e., of Swiss Patriots who have decided to take out subscriptions is sufficient to inspire him with renewed hope and a renewed enthusiasm, without which it would be impossible to carry on his arduous duties.

But I wish to write about something else. I think we ought to publish a full page of

CRITICISMS

for various reasons. First for the very excellent and sufficiently good reason that every Swiss worthy of the name is a born *Critic*. Give him scope to ventilate his views, let him have his say, let him give it us hard and good! Then there is another reason and that is that criticism of our work in the *Swiss Observer* would give us new zest, would stimulate and make us fight back where necessary. I have tried over and over again to make our readers take a more personal interest in our weekly Swiss Newspaper. Now is the time! They need not be afraid, we have thick skins! All we ask them to do is to write to us, criticising this and that, according to their views and in doing so remembering that fair criticism will help us to build better still.

The other day a prominent member of the Swiss Colony, one whose patriotism is staunch and tested and one who still loves to feel himself not only a Swiss but a native of his own hometown, referred me to the letter which Mr. Consul A. Schedler wrote and which was published in our birthday issue last week. The question whether we could not print more of our text in our various languages was my friend's query too. Now this is, as I have had to remind my friend, a problem which has had the serious consideration of the *Swiss Observer* before. The answer so far has been the number of subscribers who do not speak or read easily any other language than their own and *English* and who would, therefore, miss a good deal of the contents if printed in one of our other two or three languages.

I dare say this argument is not as important really now as it seemed, perhaps, *Ten* years ago. At that time I know, it was considered in some of our latin-affinited—I really do not know whether this is a good and correct word, but my readers will see what is meant by it—circles, almost not quite Swiss to print, speak or even read anything printed in, say for instance, German, *Schwyzer Dütsch* perhaps, yes, but *German*, certainly not!

I even remember the time when in one club in London some of us had to make an effort to speak German, just for the sake of principle! Anyhow, that feeling, due to war-psychology, has now disappeared to a great extent I should think, and I have not heard any complaints re German appearing in our columns.

There may be other reasons which make it not easy to write more fully in our three languages and, which is what it really amounts to, to eliminate English as much as possible.

Some of us, of course, have friends and relations of English extraction who do not read anything but English and who yet enjoy reading the *Swiss Observer*.

Then there is the fact that while some of us may write English fairly well, it might be more difficult—while, of course, being more entertaining perhaps to some!—for us to write in French and Italian.

In other words, we want some of our French-Swiss and Ticinesi to come along and help us!

In writing all this, I wish to give an example only of how criticism can be levied, and how it can be discussed, and how it may lead to making the *Swiss Observer* really interesting to most of its readers, and in inviting all our readers to send in their criticisms, sans peur et sans reproche, I feel that they would be doing us a really good turn.