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To All Our Readers

A

Prosperous New Year



FEDERAL.

REDUCTION OF THE NATIONAL COUNCIL.

The reduction of the membership of the National Council as recommended by the Federal Council has been sanctioned, the voting being 104 for reduction and 74 against.

THE WELTI AFFAIR BEFORE THE NATIONAL COUNCIL.

National Councillor Farbstein interpellated the Federal Council regarding the arrest of National Councillor Welti on the occasion of some communistic disturbances which took place some time ago at Bâle. It was stated that M. Welti's arrest was illegal owing to the fact that Parliament was sitting at the time. Federal Councillor Haeberlin, chief of the Federal Department of Justice and Police, stated in his reply that the taking into custody of a member of Parliament during the session was indeed an infringement of the law, and he promised that necessary instructions would be given to the police authorities in order to avoid a recurrence.

SECRET AGENTS DEPORTED FROM SWITZERLAND.

The Government has decided to deport from Switzerland two French citizens belonging to the secret service of their country who tried to obtain from persons in Switzerland military information concerning a foreign power.

STATE HELP FOR THE EMBROIDERY INDUSTRY.

A grant of 1 million francs was voted by the National Council in order to support this industry which has suffered from a period of acute depression.

NEW CHRISTMAS STAMPS.

This year's Swiss series (in aid of child welfare work) continues the arms of the cantons from previous years. In the border of the stamp for the canton Uri, William Tell's famous apple is shown, with two arrows. The figure on the 30 centime stamp is the Swiss novelist who wrote under the pseudonym of Jeremias Gotthelf.

SWISS ELECTRICAL EXPORTS.

The value of the exports of electrical instruments and apparatus from Switzerland during the nine months ended with September last amounted to £1,266,200 as compared with £1,107,040 in the corresponding period of 1929. The nine months' exports of electrical machinery are returned as £1,092,400, and of electric locomotives at £102,680.

LOCAL.

ZURICH.

The international amateur figure-skating competitions organised by the Zurich Skating Club will be held at the Dolder Artificial Rink on February 7th and 8th, 1931. Full particulars of the contests, which are open to British amateur skaters, can be obtained from the Zürcher Schlittschuhclub, Dolder-Kunstebahn, Zürich 7. Entries close on January 29th.

BERNE.

A happy event at the Bear Pit is expected for Xmas. As the accommodation is somewhat limited, three of the inhabitants, one five years and two two years old, had to be shot.

SCHWYZ.

The death is reported from Einsiedeln of Colonel Karl Gyr. The deceased was in 1917 in command of the 29th mountain regiment and he has been Commandant of Schwyz since the year 1921.

LONDON, DECEMBER 27, 1930.

GLARUS.

A Frenchman living at St. Quentin who was interned at Linthal during the war, has written to the authorities that he would be willing to take care of some of the inhabitants of the village. It will be remembered that Linthal had to be evacuated on account of the landslide danger of the Kilchenstock.

ST.T.

BASLE.

M. Baumgartner, Professor of History at the University of Basle, has died at the age of 76.

N.Z.

NEUCHATEL.

The State Council has asked Hans Schmid, at present a member of the board of the Hypothekarkasse Berne, to make thorough investigations into the financial status of the Cantonal Bank. This institution has, as previously reported, suffered heavy losses.

T.G.

According to a report from the "Suisse Libérale," the Chocolate Works of Suchard S.A. are to be transferred to Liestal. Heavy taxation is said to be the cause of the removal.

V.

ST. GALL.

Professor Dr. Adolf Dick, for many years Headmaster of the Kantonsschule, St. Gallen, has died at Wallenstadt at the age of 71.

V.

THURGAU.

The citizens of Frauenfeld have decided by vote that maternity expenses shall be met by the town exchequer.

V.

VALAIS.

A terrible crime took place at Monthey, where M. Remy Berra, Manager of the branch of the Cantonal Bank, has been murdered. M. Berra was found lying on the floor of the bank premises with his head battered in; he was at once taken to the hospital, but soon after his arrival succumbed to his injuries. The police were able to arrest the murderer at Ollon on the same day; he is a Frenchman, called Albert Duboin. The motive of the crime seems to be robbery. It is reported that the assailant had an accomplice and the police are making frantic efforts to lay hands on him. M. Berra, the unfortunate victim, leaves a widow and eight children, the eldest of whom is 15 years old.

N.Z.

ST. MORITZ.

While the Leaning Tower of Pisa is the most famous "monument" of its kind in the world, it isn't the only one. St. Moritz, where devotees of winter sports are now gathering for an athletic Christmas, can boast of a leaning tower of its own.

One of the sights of this beautifully situated village, now celebrated all over the globe, is the tower of the old church, which has a very pronounced slant. It dates from 1573, and is the only part of the old church that is now standing.

F.

BADEN.

The police have been able to lay hands on two notorious burglars. They were caught red-handed whilst breaking into the house of the contracting firm of Heimgartner in Baden. The two criminals, Karl Woodtli and Eugen Biland, fired on the police when trying to escape, but fortunately without inflicting any injury. It is believed that various burglaries which were committed lately at the station buildings at Villmergen and Bremgarten were the work of the prisoners.

V.

LAUSANNE.

A bookkeeper employed by the Municipal Tramway Corporation has been arrested on a charge of embezzlement. The amount in question exceeds 100,000 francs.

L'ESCALADE

Les Genevois de Londres se sont réunis Samedi, 13 Décembre, au restaurant Pagani pour fêter l'Escalade sous la présidence de Monsieur R. de Cintra. Soirée pleine de gaieté et de patriotisme. Au dessert, la marmite traditionnelle ayant été brisée, Monsieur le Pasteur Hoffmann de Visme donna lecture des noms des citoyens tombés dans la lutte contre les Savoyards.

Monsieur Ed. Aubert parla de l'Epoque qui suivit l'Escalade jusqu'à la Paix de St. Julien.

Monsieur L. Michel, 1er Secrétaire de notre Légation, conta quelques souvenirs militaires. On entendit encore Messieurs Charnaux et Savoie.

Nous notons aussi la présence de Messieurs Oltramar, Piaget, Ferrière et Dujendil.

Cette soirée empreinte de patriotisme et de gaieté prouve la solidité de l'attachement des Genevois à leur petite République.

E.A.

NOTES AND GLEANINGS.

By KYBURG.

The Talkies in Switzerland.

I daresay most of our readers are ardent Talkie-Fans by now and they will be interested to read what is happening in Switzerland in this matter. *Bioscope*, 26th November, says:

In the days of silent films the renter solved the Swiss problem by having German, Italian and French titles and thus covered the multilingual population of this small country. The greater part of the population is German, with French next, and only the southern portions of the country Italian speaking.

Sound, however, increased the troubles of the renter and also of the exhibitor. It is much more expensive to introduce German, French and Italian "talkies" into the comparatively small sections of the country available as a market for each of these languages.

However, the demand for entertainment in Switzerland is increasing rapidly and three distinct classes of entertainment are well patronised—plays, films and music.

The Swiss are of an artistic temperament and extremely fond of theatrical representations. The price of seats, which to the British public would seem unbelievably high, does not deter the Swiss public from attending the theatre and cinema regularly. A good play or a good film is always a success, and, apparently, talking pictures have not greatly prejudiced the theatre-going public. French-speaking touring companies come from Paris to present French plays and the result is invariably successful. Italian touring companies are likewise a success.

A problem the cinema owner must meet in Switzerland is one which confronts the exhibitor in practically every European country. Musical evenings in cafés where classical or light music is presented are always popular. The young people who, in England or America, would attend the cinemas, are, in many cases, tempted to remain in the cafés for their coffee and listen to the music.

Eighty-two theatres are wired for the showing of talking pictures, of which 45 are Western Electric. Tests indicate clearly that the public are now critical of sound reproduction and, in most cases, blame the apparatus rather than the film. Swiss audiences are, perhaps, the most critical in Europe.

When the first talking picture theatres opened in Switzerland in August of 1929, they met with considerable criticism from the leading newspapers, but despite this fact, did good business with well-known dialogue films in English. In the spring of 1930, German sound films began to appear and met with great success. This marked the end of the dialogue picture in English. To-day they are almost impossible product for renter or exhibitor.

Following on the installations in the bigger towns, smaller centres even down to municipalities of under 10,000 people now have their sound movies.

While in the German-speaking part of Switzerland, German sound pictures are running almost exclusively, the French part has been badly handicapped by the lack of pictures in the French dialogue. This situation is being rapidly altered by the increasing production of the studios in Paris.

In the Italian-speaking centres either German or French pictures are being shown, and during the past year it was noted that most of the visitors to the summer and winter resorts of this section were Germans.

Films of the operetta type with pleasant music are usually the most successful with the Swiss public, but subjects of great dramatic value, crime and detective stories, are also much sought after.

That German producers have fully understood this situation is proven by the type of productions they have placed in Switzerland, such as "The Dreyfus Affair," based on the notorious French trial of some years ago, and "The Tiger," a production of the Edgar Wallace type.

It is interesting to note in those cases where silent cinemas are still running, pictures of the most lurid and melodramatic type are successful.

While it has been indicated above that there are three distinct language sections to Switzerland, this is not exactly true. The German language predominates and the majority of the population speaks three languages. In the French Cantons pure French is spoken, but in the German Cantons a dialect known as German-Swiss is prevalent. This dialect is difficult for the German to understand, and, compared to pure German, is as broad Scotch to English.

Up to date, no French dialogue pictures have been shown in the German sections, nor have any pictures in the German dialogue made in France been shown. On the other hand, several pictures in the French language produced in Germany have been shown in the French sections with considerable success. It is obvious that Switzerland presents to the British producer a good market for his French and German versions provided that he can make them of the same quality as those coming from France and Germany.

You will have noticed, I hope, that little side-light in the above article "Swiss audiences are, perhaps, the most critical in Europe" and, if you remember what I wrote the other week, under the heading "Criticism" you will feel that you are hardly a good Swiss anymore if you do not exercise that faculty of criticism when you have the chance of doing so!

The other rather good thing I found in my Gleanings this week, is the following sparkling

Notes from Geneva
in the *Christian Science Monitor*, 14th Nov.:

"La Grande Saison" of Geneva, which falls during the annual session of the Assembly, was thought to have been a little less "grand" than usual this year because of its lateness. There were not, it is remarked, so many charming ladies who took villas in the neighbourhood and conducted salons after the manner of Mme. de Staél, who lived, it should be recalled, at Coppet, a few miles away. But there were distinguished visitors in plenty before and during the Assembly. Several American senators attended one of the series of summer courses on international affairs. King Feisul of Irak looked in. Emil Ludwig came to lunch with Aristide Briand, and exchanged aphorisms on the Assembly with his fellow biographer, André Maurois. Thomas Mann, the German novelist, talked about his work to an audience containing many Assembly delegates. Jules Cambon upheld the dignity of the Académie Française, Edouard Herriot came to inspect progress of Pan-Europe, and Paul Morand arrived, perhaps in search of new "world champions" along the lines of his latest popular book by that name, in which the United States plays an important part.

Not content with being the seat of the League of Nations, Geneva is agitating for a zoo. A few years ago, someone looked down upon the Assembly during one of its more unintelligible moments, and said, "It's a pack of monkeys." But Geneva appears to be divided upon the merits of acquiring a more conventional zoo. The promoters of the scheme zealously point out how much zoos add to the juvenile well-being of London, Berlin and Hamburg, and so forth. But majority opinion on the subject is convinced that if zoos must exist a small zoo is much worse than no zoo at all, for the animals should, of course, receive the greatest possible freedom. Finally, it is pointed out that a zoo would cost much more than Geneva taxpayers are prepared to pay.

Geneva has recently had the privilege of seeing the Comédie Française in two classic performances: "Le Bourgeois Gentilhomme," a delightful comedy known to most American schoolboys who take "second-year French," and "What Do Young Girls Dream About?" by Alfred de Musset. The company came to Geneva only with the help of a heavy subsidy from the French Government, naturally to demonstrate French culture before the Assembly then in session. At the same time the Graf Zeppelin, also travelling on governmental funds, flew to Geneva and landed at Cointrin, where tens of thousands of enthusiastic Genevans swarmed to meet it. A caustic Parisian journalist referred scathingly to the French presentation of the idyllically romantic "What Do Young Girls Dream About?" and asked "What Do Zeppelins Dream About?"

At Cointrin an amusing scene revealed the real Swiss democracy. Youths who were entering upon the first weeks of their compulsory military training had been stationed to see that all visitors carried their two-franc tickets. But they had been told only to guard gates, that is, apertures between stone pillars, on either side of which there was no wall whatever. Therefore the citizenry, heartily amused, ignored the soldiers and trooped across fields at the soldier's elbows, but not within the gates. Firm in carrying out their strict assignment, the soldiers stopped nobody who did not attempt passage between the gates, and laughed as heartily as the townsfolk. Nobody

minded and everybody saw the Graf Zeppelin.

When gambling was banished from casinos in the canton of Geneva it was freely predicted that these places of amusement would shortly go bankrupt. But during the season which has just closed the Geneva Kursaal found itself more prosperous than ever. At a banquet organised to celebrate its success, it was especially pointed out that the absence of gambling, instead of being a handicap, had permitted an entirely different class of patrons to come to the Kursaal. Variety performances of a high artistic standard, including dancers and singers of more than average excellence, were given. The climax of the season was the Japanese Theater, which won the extravagant praise of Geneva, as it did in other European capitals. This year the Kursaal had new managers, who expect to continue next season, also without gambling, to build up a light theater of genuine merit.

Can't we just see the good people of Geneva invading that field, and can't we just hear the Colonel's comments when the matter was reported to him?

SWITZERLAND'S POPULATION over 4 MILLION?

The Observer, 30th November:

A census will be made in Switzerland on Monday as from the preceding midnight. The method of counting has been improved, and a widespread propaganda is at work to emphasise the importance of filling in the forms as conscientiously as possible. Forms have been distributed in all the schools, and the children are being instructed how to fill them in, so that they can advise their parents if need be. There are only thirteen questions to be answered.

According to the census of 1920 the population of Switzerland was 3.88 millions; this time there will be approximately 4.1 millions. As there were two millions in 1830, the population has just been doubled in the hundred years.

A serious feature of the present census will be the rapid decline of the agricultural population. The "nation of shepherds," as it was once called, has long since become an industrial nation. In 1889 40 per cent. of the population were occupied in agriculture, in 1900 31.3 per cent., in 1920 only 26.3 per cent.

And those among us who, like Kyburg, spring from peasant stock, we do envy our cousins who are still farmers and are doing well and know how good it still is to rise early and to go to bed early. H'm, yes, there is a lot to be said for that life!

A NEW SWISS ROAD.

Autocar, 21st November:

A committee has been formed in Lucerne to study the construction of a road along the left bank of the Lake of Lucerne. The road, which will be about 28 miles in length, will facilitate access to the St. Gotthard Pass, and will relieve traffic congestion on the Axenstrasse, which winds along the other shore of the lake.

But, it will be a great pity, because so far, that side of the lake has been free from petrol fumes and dust and ideal for walking. One has only to think of the terrible conditions, as far as pedestrians are concerned, of the Alpnachstad-Standstaad Road!

NOTZEIT IST ZEIT DER DANKBARKEIT

Liebe Landsleute! Ihr habt schon viel von den Bedürfnissen unserer Schweizerischen Hülfsgesellschaft gehört. Mit diesen paar Zeilen wollen wir durchaus nicht betteln gehen, sondern Euch zeigen, dass man immer Grund zur Dankbarkeit hat, auch dann wenn die Geschäfte schlecht gehen. Der Blick auf diejenigen, die wir alle Montage betreuen dürfen lehrt uns das. Und deswegen dachten wir, sei es gut, wenn wir anstatt nur den Jahresbericht auszusenden auch hier und da etwas von unseren Erlebnissen mitteilen würden. Wir haben rund 40 Pensionäre, die teilweise oder ganz auf unsere Unterstützung angewiesen sind. Es sind dies beinahe ausnahmslos Alte oder dauernd Invalide. Da haben wir einen lieben Landsmann, der schon seit 3 Jahren gelähmt in seiner Kammer liegt und aufopfernd von seiner Frau gepflegt wird. Die ärztliche Kunst scheint machtlos gegenüber diesem Leiden, das auch den Mutigsten nach einiger Zeit matt machen muss. Wir gehen aber immer wieder gerne zu unserem Landsmann, weil sein Krankenlager so viel Heldenhaftes offenbart. Und wie dankbar ist er für die kleinste Aufmerksamkeit! — Da haben wir ferner eine noch junge Frau, Mutter von 5 Kindern, die einzige Zeit nach dem Tod ihres Mannes vom Schlag gerührert wurde, lange Zeit in einem Spital verbrachte und nun daheim ist, kaum fähig von ihrem Bett auf den danebenstehenden Stuhl sich zu bewegen. Das lange Warten, als ihr Mann am Halskrebs leidend im Spital dahinsiechle, die langen Nächte, haben der armen Frau Kraft vorzeitig verbraucht. Aber wenn man zu ihr kommt, grüßt einen immer ein dankbares Lächeln aus ihrem bleichen Gesicht. Gegenüber der Wohnungfrage sind wir einfach

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