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# The Swiss Observer

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### ZURICH.

The collection for the Zurich Radium Fund has, so far, brought in Frs. 315,000. This sum was received from Banks, Insurance Companies, Commerce, Industry and private donors. There are more contributions promised, and when this money has also been received, the fund will be used in the first instance to increase the radium so far in hand to one gram. There are now also means available to carry out research work, which will be directed mainly towards combating cancer.

St. G.T.

### BERNE.

Mrs. Margreth Lentholt-Ott in Meiringen, known in the neighbourhood as "Borter-Grittli," celebrated her 100th birthday on December 23rd. Still very active until a few years ago, she now suffers from the disabilities of her great age.

St. G.T.

### GLARUS.

Some skiers on an excursion into the Bächital found a tourist lying on the ground apparently lifeless and frozen to death. They removed him to the Cantonal Hospital at Glarus. He is named Heinrich Blumer, from Zurich, and was on a tramp from Braunwald to Oberblegi.

N.Z.Z.

### \*\*

Reports have appeared in the Continental press of the formation of a holding company in the Canton of Glarus, under the style of Seiga A.G. The new concern has a fully-paid capital of twenty million Swiss francs (F800,000), and its particular objects are to participate in manufacturing and trading concerns in the textile industry. The reports mention the belief that the company has been founded under the auspices of the British sewing cotton firm of J. & P. Coats, Ltd., with the co-operation of the Crédit Suisse in Zurich. It is now stated, however, on excellent authority that, so far as J. & P. Coats are concerned, it is only its special interests, quite outside its ordinary cotton interests, and in one country alone that will be associated with the new holding company.

D.

### BASEL.

The motorists from Switzerland and abroad who visit the Basle Zoo have become so numerous, that a special car park near the Zoo has become a necessity. The Executive Council proposes to the Grand Council to accord a credit of 50,000 Frs. for this purpose.

### \*\*

75 years ago the first railway line from Basle to Liestal was opened by the Schweiz. Centralbahn Gesellschaft. With what commendable foresight the leading men of those days worked, is proved by the fact that practically from the beginning most of the distance from Basle to Olten was laid down as a double track.

N.Z.Z.

### GRISONI.

The Second International University Winter Games will be held at Davos, from January 4 to 12. Students from all parts of Europe will represent their countries. The championship programme will include skiing, ski-jumping, skating, ice-hockey, bobsleigh, and skalom racing. The Swiss students will hold their own championship at the same time, and will therefore be strongly represented. The British team will probably consist mainly of members of the Oxford and Cambridge Skiing Clubs, who will be in Switzerland for the Universities match and other championships. There are, meantime, some half-dozen entrants from this country. France, Germany, Italy, Austria, Spain, Holland, Poland, Czechoslovakia, Hungary, and Yugoslavia, will also take part.

O.

Enterprising Swiss hotel managers have offered Oxford and Cambridge the most tempting terms in many cases to go en masse to their resorts in order that the social attractions of the place should be enhanced.

A large party are at St. Moritz indulging in the annual skating-cocktail orgy. I am told that

short drinks consumed per head of the population beat world's records in the Alps at this time of year.

D.M.

### FRIBOURG.

Under the patronage of Lt.-Col. von Diessbach a committee has been formed with the object of popularising flying and the establishing of an aerodrome.

N.

### GENEVA.

The municipal council of Geneva, following the example of other Swiss resorts, has decided to permit the game of La Boule at the local casino.

D.M.

### SWISS COLONY IN SOUTH AFRICA.

The establishment of a Swiss colony in South Africa is suggested by a Geneva newspaper as a solution for unemployment and over-population in Switzerland.

It is suggested that groups of Swiss band together and go to South Africa to organise the production of milk on a large scale. Flocks and herds would be taken to South Africa by the colonists, and an arrangement by which the Swiss should be allowed to develop the unoccupied areas is suggested to the union of South Africa.

The South African authorities are said to be favourably impressed by the plan, but nothing definite has been agreed.

### FROM THE TICINO.

#### ASSOCIAZIONE "ROMEO MANZONI."

This educational association, which was formed in the early part of last summer, has now started its practical activities with a fine array of lecturers, including a number of professors from Swiss and foreign universities and other outstanding personalities. Among the Ticinesi are included Signor Carlo Maggini, leader of the liberal-radical party, and Signor Brenno Bertoni, a prominent member of the Federal States Council, who will speak on a subject of constitutional law. The lectures will deal with a great variety of subjects and will be given in Lugano, as well as in the principal centres of the Canton.

The formation of this association, with such suddenness and initial success, is the result of one of those "discordant voices," which are to be heard now and again in the Ticino and are "discordant" only in so far as they may not be pleasing in official federal circles, but do in effect represent the greater volume of Ticinese opinion.

In order to make up, at least to a limited extent, for the lack of a university in the Ticino lectures have been arranged for a number of years by the "School of Italian Culture," attached to the Lycée of Lugano, of which Signor Francesco Chiesa is the Headmaster. The organisers of such lecturers had invited last spring Signor Gaetano Salvemini, a well-known Italian historian, who has been teaching in colleges in this country and has been an active contributor to the "Manchester Guardian."

This lecture was, however, vetoed by Francesco Chiesa, apparently on the ground of Salvemini's well-known anti-fascist sentiments. The veto was upheld by the Cantonal Education Department and the Federal Council promptly communicated their refusal to allow the lecture to be given. A wave of indignation spread over the Ticino immediately the facts became known and steps were taken at once, by leaders of public opinion, to form the "Associazione Romeo Manzoni" so as to be altogether free from the pro-fascist tendencies of Signor Francesco Chiesa and in order also to be independent of the authorities.

When the Grand Council assembled in June the matter was the subject of lengthy discussion. The Cantonal Government pointed out that they had not been consulted in the matter, but that if they had been they would have allowed the lecture by Salvemini to be given. In view of the sharp criticism voiced by all sections of the Grand Council, particularly directed against the meddling of the Federal Council in such a matter and the undue consideration it showed to foreign influence, the Cantonal Government further undertook to protest severely to the Federal Council for what had been done from Berne.

It is perhaps as a reminder and as a mark of triumph that the programme of the "Associazione Romeo Manzoni" opens with the lecture by Gaetano Salvemini on "Currents of liberal thought during the Italian Renaissance," which had been vetoed before.

(continued on back page)

## NOTES AND GLEANINGS.

By KYBURG.

### Sylvester-Day.

How peacefully I nearly overslept this Sylvester-Day morning! No awful noises produced by saucepan-lids violently used as cymbals, no raucous shouts of "Sylvester stand uuf, hebs Bei zum Bett uns" at four o'clock in the morning, no, nothing but peace and quietude!

You will gather, dear Reader, that these notes are written on the morning of the last day of the departing year. It is not an easy job this morning. Last week I gave you my little sermon suitable to the occasion and my best wishes for the new year and this morning, when I feel much more in that "wishing" mood, I am at my feeble wits ends to think of something appropriate to write about. It's just like those poor fellows who, in the most appalling heat of summer, have to design snow-clad pictures suitable for Xmas cards! Verily, we scribes are oft to be pitied!

However, "on with the motley" and other brave words to that effect:

The first item I will quote in the New Year is from *Truth*, 18th Dec., and I hope that this will be symbolic for all my writings:

### Struwpeter in Switzerland.

Struwpeter has been parodied often enough before now, but never, I should say, with more richly comical effects than in "Winter Sportings," by Reginald Arkell, illustrated by Lewis Baumer (Jenkins 7s. 6d.). Mr. Arkell's verse has just the right quality for the occasion—the pretentious, not to say portentous, gravity of manner that distinguished his model, and, side by side with this, an infinite drollery of matter, delicious in itself, but rendered doubly delicious by the incongruous austerity of its phrasing.

Take, for example, the case of "The Girl who Was Torn to Pieces by Wild Scotsmen":

Clarissa, one December day,  
Had just arrived at Château d'Oex,  
When she espied a sheet of ice  
That looked particularly nice.  
Its surface was beyond compare,  
No single skater skated there—  
Clarissa didn't stop to think,  
She skated on the Curling Rink.  
Oh me! Oh my! Oh us! Oh you!  
There was a Bonspiel overdu,  
And fifty lairds had taken pains  
To polish up their granite stanes;  
And fifty lairds were lurking round  
The Curling Rink—that holy ground.  
etc., etc.

But there! *Crimine ab uno Discit omnes.* (Not all the "crimes," of course, as ungrammatical quoter of Virgil sometimes think), but all the "criminals." There are many such criminals in "Winter Sportings," and each in his, or her, way is equally funny. And if Mr. Arkell expresses them with a mischievously graphic pen, no less does Mr. Baumer portray them with a wickedly vivid brush. Theirs is an ideal alliance, and the result of it is a veritable little comic triumph.

Then, to follow, we will have a wee little bit about

### Skiing in Volumes and Volumes.

*The Star*, 20th Dec.

The troubles of the novice about winter sports are never ending.

One has to find out, for instance, just what winter sports are practised in Switzerland. The Swiss expert I met at the store where I purchased my outfit said I could learn a lot about winter sports before going out there.

I have had some experience of sport in winter in a modest English way. In my youth I often took a tea-tray to Hampstead Heath when it snowed, and at school I could slide farther on a frozen pavement than any boy in the class.

With all this previous experience, I imagined that a good text book on the subject was all I would require. So I went to a bookseller, and asked if he had anything on winter sports.

"Yes sir," he said, "We have 'Alpine Skiing,' 'How to Ski,' 'Skiing Turns,' 'Skiing for Beginners,' 'Knee Action in Skiing,' 'Ski Running,' in two volumes. . . ."