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The Swiss Observer

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FEDERAL.

MISS SWITZERLAND.

The election of a "Miss Switzerland" reported in our last number, has met with considerable opposition from all quarters in Switzerland. The selection committee, which is composed of many famous men, both in art, commerce and literature, has decided to postpone an election to next year.

UNIVERSITY APPOINTMENT.

The Federal Council has appointed Dr. Heinz Hopf from Gräbschen (Silesia) at present privat-docent at the University of Berlin, Professor of Mathematics at the Federal Polytechnic School in Zurich, in succession to M. H. Weil who retired from this post last September.

MEETING OF DIPLOMATS.

M. A. Briand, the French Foreign Minister, has arranged a meeting with M. G. Motta, federal councillor, in order to discuss matters relating to the Zone dispute.

SWISS FEDERAL RAILWAY LOAN.

The Swiss Federal Railways intend to issue this year a loan of 300,000,000 francs for the conversion of the 6 per cent. Loan of 210,000,000 francs falling due on June 15th, 1931. The new loan is likely to be issued on a 4 per cent. basis.

SWISS ADVERTISING TO BE RATIONALISED.

An important move to rationalise the efforts of the numerous organisations in Switzerland who advertise abroad is now being taken.

In a recent report Mr. Maurer Och, a member of the Committee of the Association Suisse de la Publicité, points out that the Swiss Federal Railways spend some Frs. 1,550,000 (£62,000) each year and the National Touring office another Frs. 473,000 (£18,920). He estimates the advertising undertaken by individual hotel keepers at five million francs (£200,000). If one adds to this the advertising of various cities, resorts and railways, other than Federal, one can estimate the total Swiss advertising appropriation to increase touring at some ten million francs (£400,000). This represents five per cent. on a total turnover of twenty million francs (£8,000,000) the organisations directly interested in the touring "trade," represent.

This money has been spent up to now without plan, without cohesion, overlapping here, non-existent there.

A central committee has now been set up to examine the position and attempt to lay down rules for coherent budgeting and planning. The press campaign, undertaken by Mr. Och, was largely responsible for this move.

A fusion of the publicity department of the Federal Railways and the Swiss Touring Offices would be the first move, and a central bureau would be set up composed as follows:—

Two representatives of the Federal Railways.

Two representatives of the Touring offices.

Two representatives of transport organisations other than the Federal Railways.

Two representatives of the Hotelkeeper's Society.

Two representatives of the Swiss Development Union.

One representative of the Rhetiques Railways.

This is, of course, only a proposal, and efforts will be made to include representatives of the Automobile Club, the Touring Club, and perhaps also—yet this is perhaps going a little too far—a representative of the advertising interests!

LOCAL.

ZURICH.

Owing to some irregularities in the accounts of the Cece Graphitwerke A.G. Stampfenbachstrasse Zurich, the directors had ordered a special audit, and whilst same was in progress the Manager, M. Walter Schaer, disappeared. A warrant was issued, and the fugitive was arrested in Austria. The amount of the deficiency is said to be between 150,000—200,000 francs. N.Z.Z.

The firm Gebr. Wernli, biscuit manufacturers

at Trimbach near Olten, celebrated their 25th anniversary of existence, on which occasion they initiated a fund for the benefit of their staff with an amount of 25,000 francs. N.Z.Z.

Mr. Gustav Holzer, an accountant from Winterthur, was on an excursion near Bludenz in the Vorarlberg, when in descending the Pic du Bluin, his right ski sank into a crevasse. He fell into the crevasse, but his skis remained fixed across, and he found himself hanging head downwards. M. Holzer maintained his presence of mind, and with his skiing stick, made holes in the walls of the crevasse. After several hours' work he succeeded in releasing himself by placing his head in a hole at one side of the crevasse and his left foot, which he had been able to disengage, into another. Then he attracted the attention of a guide, who rescued him. B.

GENEVA.

Professor Logoz, Member of the National Council, has tendered his resignation, his successor is M. David Revadier. N.Z.Z.

AARAU.

An employee of the Machin Works at Birsfelden arrived at the counter of the Staatskasse in order to pay the last instalment on his income tax, amounting to 800 francs. Much to the surprise and no doubt disgust of the cashier, the dutiful taxpayer lifted a bag weighing over 60 kg. on to the counter, its contents being the above-mentioned amount in 1, 2, and 5 centime pieces. The counting would have required a full day's work, the income tax authorities therefore decided to accept the money "under protest," handing it under seal over to the cantonal tribunal which is to decide whether a payment in such form is legal tender. (According to the Mint law of 1850, no person can be compelled to accept more than 2frs. in copper coins. Ed.)

A fire partially destroyed the paper works of the firm Knoblauch at Muhen. The damage done is estimated at well over 100,000 francs. N.Z.Z.

ST. GALL.

The death is reported of M. E. Stachelin, Manager of the St. Galler Feinweberien. N.Z.

WINTER SPORT IN SWITZERLAND

All the winter stations in Switzerland are in full swing and enjoy lovely sunshine and snow. Especially about Christmas and the New Year all the fashionable resorts in the Bernese Oberland and the Engadine in the Grisons could boast of having their hotels full up. Fairlylike winter landscapes attracted sport loving people from all over the world.

Everywhere sport festivals are going on. Along the streets hundreds of sledges drawn by horses with their tinkling bells take people up to the snowy heights. The snowfields up in the mountains are covered with skiers, a gay picture, in spite of the disappearance of the coloured sport attire, which has been replaced by dark coloured suits. It is a pretty and amusing sight especially when the skier is taught how to get on his skis again after having tumbled head foremost into the deep snow. As long as it has not done harm it is most amusing to watch. But unfortunately the doctors in these places are very busy in setting right broken limbs and terrible fractures.

Up to now several dreadful accidents have happened, owing to avalanches which are always a great danger in that season. On New Year's Day a young girl from Berne was buried by an avalanche on the Männlichen above Wengen. All efforts to get her out alive were in vain. In the Grisons a party of twelve skiers were caught by the same disaster and became victims of the white death.

Different well-known stations have amongst their guests also royalties. For instance Mürren was again honoured by the King and the Queen of Belgium, who spent some time up there and were daily seen on the snow fields and skating rinks, mixing with other people and enjoying their time in that beautiful Swiss village.

Berne.

MISS E. DACHSELT.

CITY SWISS CLUB.

PLEASE RESERVE
SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 21st
for the

LAST DINNER AND DANCE
of the Season at the
MAY FAIR HOTEL, Berkeley Square, W.1.

NOTES AND GLEANINGS.

By KYBURG.

A Campaign in the Alps in 1799

Army Quarterly, January, 1931.

It is not often that I am fortunate enough to find such an interesting article as the following among my weekly press-cuttings and I feel sure our Readers will enjoy reading it. Most of us have a more or less hazy recollection of having read or heard about those terrible wanderings of foreign hosts on our native soil during the Napoleonic wars, and those among us who have visited f.i. Muotta will remember that nearly every house in that valley still boasts a portrait of Suvorov, and tales of the sufferings and mighty doings of his little army can still be heard told and retold in those valleys.

At the beginning of August, 1799, Europe was in the throes of the war of the Second Coalition against the French. Napoleon was still in Egypt. During the previous year the French had overrun Switzerland and forced a revolutionary constitution on that country, which was in 1799 occupied by an Army under Masséna's command. Another French Army stood in southern Germany under Jourdan, while a third under Scherer defended the results of Napoleon's conquests in 1796 in northern Italy.

At the outset of the campaign fortune seemed to be about to favour the French, for the right wing of Masséna's Army under Lecourbe captured the Grisons; and after the victories of Nauders and Tanfers on the 25th of March, Lecourbe held the key to Tyrol. Elsewhere, however, the French suffered severe reverses. On that same day (25th of March) Jourdan was completely defeated at Stockach in Swabia by the Archduke Charles of Austria, and had to fall back to the Rhine. On the 5th of April Kray defeated the French under Scherer at Magnano, and this was followed, on the 28th, by the defeat of Moreau at Cassano, at the hands of Suvorov and his Russians. The entrance from the Vorarlberg into Switzerland at the Luzenstein was seized from the French on the 14th of May by Hotze, and the French Army of Helvetia had to fall back, abandoning the Grisons and most of Eastern Switzerland. On the 6th of June Masséna evacuated Zürich before the Archduke Charles, who had effected a junction with Hotze. Worse still was in store for the French, for on the 19th of June Suvorov inflicted a heavy defeat at La Trebbia on Macdonald, who was returning to the north with a French Army from Naples. Then, in the early days of August, another Russian Army under Korsakoff appeared near Zürich.

The lines held by the contending forces in Switzerland were then approximately as follows. The Austrians held the Simplon pass, the Rhone valley from Brig to the Grimsel pass, the Ursental and the Reuss valley to the Urner See (as the southern arm of the lake of Lucerne is called) at Flüelen, and then a line from Brunnen (at the mouth of the Urner See) into the remainder of the lake of Lucerne to the lake of Zürich, and on to the north along the river Limmat, the Aar, and the Rhine, to Basle. It will be noticed, therefore, that the cross roads of the Ursental, with the possibility of getting easily from the plain of Switzerland into that of Italy or from the Valais into the Grisons, were in the hands of the Austrians.

It was at this moment, when Masséna was hard put to it to hold his own, that the French Directory assailed him with demands for great deeds, which would do something to re-establish the prestige of the French arms abroad and the credit of the Government at home. Masséna accordingly directed Lecourbe to recapture the St. Gotthard.

Lecourbe's Division occupied a line from Arth on the lake of Zug, through Gersau and Beckenried on the lake of Lucerne, and Stans, to Meiringen and the lake of Brienz, and his headquarters were in Lucerne. It is the plan of operations which he now drew up, together with the remarkable way in which it was carried out, which form the subject of this study. His object was to clear the Austrians out of the valley of the Reuss and its approaches, out of the Ursental, and out of the Rhone valley. To achieve this, Lecourbe split up his division into no fewer than seven columns, the task allotted to each of which will shortly be dealt with in turn. At the same