

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: - (1931)

Heft: 491

Rubrik: Notes and gleanings

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The Swiss Observer

FOUNDED BY MR. P. F. BOEHRINGER.

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. 11—No. 491

LONDON, MARCH 21, 1931.

PRICE 3d.

PREPAID SUBSCRIPTION RATES

UNITED KINGDOM AND COLONIES	3 Months (13 issues, post free)	Fr. 36
12 "	(26 "	66
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SWITZERLAND { 6 Months (28 issues, post free) Frs. 7.50
12 " (52 " 14.

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FEDERAL.

PARIS VISIT OF M. MOTTA.

The Federal Council has delegated M. Motta, Chief of the Federal Political Dept, to take part in the deliberations of the "Commission d'études pour l'Union Européenne" which will take place in Paris on the 24th of this month.

CHINESE OFFICERS IN THE SWISS ARMY.

The Chinese Government has sent a military mission, consisting of five officers to Switzerland in order to study the constitution of our conscript army.

NEW GOVERNMENT APPOINTMENT.

M. Paul Renggli, of Biel, has been appointed Chief of the Federal Office for Industry and Trade in succession to M. Pfister. The new head of this Department is a lawyer by profession and holds the rank of lieutenant-colonel in the army, being commander of the 14th regiment.

SWISS ALUMINIUM COMPANY.

Net profit of Société Suisse pour l'Industrie Aluminium in Neuhausen, Switzerland, for 1930, Frs.8,070,000 (against Frs.11,750,000) Div 15 p.c. (same) on share capital of Frs.60,000,000, special reserve of Frs.9,990,000 drawn upon to extent of Frs.1,800,000.

FRANCO-SWISS COMMERCIAL CONVENTION.

M. Briand and M. Durand, the Swiss Minister of France, signed last week, in Paris, the ratification of the Franco-Swiss Commercial Convention, drawn up at Berne on July 8, 1929.

LOCAL.

ZURICH.

Dr. Klöti (socialist) has been elected Maire (Stadtpräsident) of Zurich by a majority of 16179 votes.

The elections for the town council have resulted in a victory for the socialist party, the new council consists now of 63 socialists (formerly 59); 6 communists (formerly 5); 35 Liberals (formerly 41), 11 christian socialists (formerly 10), 9 democrats (formerly 10), 1 Evangelical Popular Party (formerly 0). The socialists have thus gained together with the communists a majority of 69 against 56. N.Z.Z.

* * *

On Wednesday last an operation was performed on the Italian General Consul Bianchi, who was shot at by a compatriot last January and severely wounded. The operation has been successful and the condition of the patient is satisfactory. N.Z.Z.

* * *

The police at Zurich have been lucky in laying hands on two notorious criminals. Both are Italians and brothers. They were caught on entering the municipal labour office with the intent to commit a felony. It is now established without a doubt that the brothers Baitieri were the authors of the Burglary at the Italian consulate a few days ago. N.Z.Z.

* * *

M. Otto Würger, Sub Manager of the Cantonal Bank in Berne, has been appointed Manager of this institution. N.Z.

BASLE.

Professor Dr. Alfred Labhardt, Surgeon-in-chief of the women's Hospital in Basle has celebrated his 25th jubilee in the service of the state. The Cantonal Government has, on this occasion, made a suitable present to Professor Labhardt. N.Z.

AARAU.

The Steel and Iron Works, Oehler and Co., in Aarau, have celebrated their 50th Anniversary of existence. On this occasion the firm has made a donation of 50,000f to the pension Fund of the staff. Another amount of 10,000f. has been given for distribution amongst the various charitable institutions of the town and a further sum of 42,000f has been expended on bonuses for the staff. N.Z.Z.

GRAUBUENDEN.

The Cantonal Bank in Chur has given 50,000f for creating a fund in aid of small farming land-owners N.Z.Z.

VALAIS.

A large avalanche has fallen in the Val d'Heremence, doing great damage to the works of the Dixence water-power plant and imprisoning nine workers in a tunnel. All were rescued except one, whose body has not been recovered. N.Z.Z.

MARTIGNY.

After moving down a forest on the mountain side an avalanche swept down on a summer resort near Martigny, razing a number of chalets to the ground. No loss of life is reported, as the chalets are inhabited only during summer. N.Z.Z.

APPENZELL A.Rh.

Landammann Altherr in Speicher will succeed Dr. Hofstetter as member of the National Council. N.Z.Z.

ENGELBERG.

Dr. P. Bonaventura Egger, fifty-fifth Abbot of the ancient Benedictine monastery at Engelberg, has died after a short illness. The deceased was only 52 years of age, and Abbot only since the beginning of 1930, after having been Rector of the Convent College for many years.

SWISS COTTON TARIFF.

Sir Kingsley Wood asked the President of the Board of Trade whether he could give any information as to the recent increase in the duty on all cotton goods imported into Switzerland. Mr. Graham said the recent Swiss decree provided for the increase from March 10th, of the duties on cotton issues weighing 6 kilogrammes or more per 100 square metres on unbleached, bleached, dyed, or printed, as well as certain other goods.

These increases will not affect the concessional rate for the cloth for the use of the Swiss embroidery industry, with which, he understood, the bulk of our trade in unbleached goods consisted.

He was given to understand that substantial quantities of our bleached, dyed, and printed goods would also be unaffected by being lighter than six kilogrammes per 100 square metres.

ICE HOCKEY.

ENGLAND BEAT SWITZERLAND.

England beat Switzerland at Brighton on Saturday night by three goals to two, and on Tuesday by two goals to one at Golders Green. On the two evenings play Switzerland were a little unfortunate not to draw, for their combination was better than that of England, but with Gardner in goal and Sexton in the defence, playing magnificently for England, our compatriots had to admit defeat. Magwood, Grace and Brown, made a very good first line in the English attack, all being at their best, and the most prominent of the Swiss attack were Breiter and Penchi, each of whom was very fast. Andreossi was outstanding in defence and Mathez, in goal, made many clever saves.

The Swiss team consisted of:—
M. Mathez, goal; O. Schmidt and M. Andreossi, defence; D. A. Penchi, R. Breiter and E. Meerkamp, attack; C. Zuber, M. Lamm and H. Klang, reserves.

We wish to draw the attention of our readers to an Ice Hockey Match to be played between Arosa, Switzerland, and Grosvenor House, Canadians, at the Park Lane Ice Club, Upper Grosvenor Street, Park Lane, London, W.I., on March 25th, at 9 p.m.

AN APPRECIATION.

We have received from one of our Liverpool readers the following letter:

Liverpool, March 11th, 1931.

To the Editor of the Swiss Observer,

Dear Sir,

I look forward each week for my Swiss Observer that it gives me great pleasure to send you my subscription 12/- for another year, also find enclosed £1 0. 0. with sincere congratulations on the occasion of its tenth Anniversary with very best wishes for a long and prosperous future.

Yours with many thanks.

sig.

NOTES AND GLEANINGS.

By KYBURG.

In *The Times* Literary Supplement of 29th January, I also find a review of a book describing the memories of

A Great Guide.

Christian Klucker. *Erinnerungen eines Bergführers. Herausgegeben und mit Lebensbild versehen von Ernst Jenny.* (Erlenbach-Zürich. Eugen Rentsch Verlag.)

This book has many claims on the attention. It must attract every mountaineer and every student of the history of mountaineering. But the author was not only a great guide. He was, within the limits of his opportunity, a great man. The book has a certain value as a curiosity. For, except in the asides provoked by the agony of the moment, we seldom hear the authentic opinion of the guide. But, as the reader proceeds, he soon loses the sense of surprise. What Klucker has to say demands attention, not because he speaks where others are inarticulate, but because, with an undoubted right of audience, he speaks with authority and with moderation.

Klucker was born in 1853, out of due time to achieve the full measure of fame which might otherwise have been his due. Much still remained to be done, and, as will be seen, he took full advantage of what Fortune gave and of what he could wrest from her. But he was unfortunate not only in time but in circumstance. Born in what was then the lonely glen of Fex, he had to find his chance of employment in the first place among the visitors to Sils (and later Maloja)—comparatively few in themselves and including in their company very few likely to be devoted to serious climbing. Pontresina was not far off. But the guides of Pontresina were, towards competitors from outside their own commune, jealous and exclusive, and, towards tourists, domineering and exacting. When, as a boy, Klucker was apprenticed to a wheelwright at Samaden, he made a solitary ascent of Piz Tschiera; but years elapsed, apparently, before he climbed seriously in the Pontresina district. Guides in the past began their careers usually as chamois hunters, called in when some foreigner visited their native valley and required local help, or as *knecht* or tied guide at some inn, or as porter when a father or uncle or friend saw a chance of effecting an introduction. Klucker had no family connexion with the sport. He knew his native valley and the not very distinguished slopes which hem it in, because at the age of six he began to herd his father's cattle; and on occasion he accompanied his father on a chamois-shooting expedition, though he detested the taking of wild life. He was intended to follow the trade to which he was apprenticed, and he was for many years hampered by extreme poverty and the burden of his family—though he was himself disappointed in love in early life and remained unmarried. In those days there was no oversight over guides by the Swiss Government, the Cantonal authorities or the Swiss Alpine Club. So Klucker set up for himself. He was working in the summer of 1874 for the Alpenrose Inn at Sils Maria, and so obtained employment on occasion sometimes as guide, sometimes as porter. He notes that from 1874 to 1908 he worked as guide without any patent, and that his first patent as guide bears date March 28, 1908—by which time he had attained a European reputation and occupied in his own commune, his country and in the Alpine societies of many lands a position to which there is no exact parallel in the story of mountaineering.

Between these two dates he had had a hard struggle, and he achieved his triumph at a mature age. First Herr Paulcke, then Herr Theodor Curtius, must have the credit for discerning his worth. Then came the brilliant and desperate campaigns with Norman Neruda (1889, 1890, 1891); and then the long and painful companionship with Anton v. Rydzewski, during which Klucker fulfilled his Bregaglia chain. How much he paid for these successes those who read this book must estimate for themselves. In the intervals of this long and unpleasant association came the

great ascent of Mont Blanc by the Peuterey ridge with Gustfeldt and the beginning of his travels with Sir Edward Davidson. He had now achieved success in the fullest measure. He was sought out by the greatest climbers not only as a guide but as a friend, a counsellor and a collaborator in the elucidation of the problems of Alpine geography and history. He was Captain Farrar's close correspondent during Farrar's tenure of the editorship of the *Alpine Journal*. In his own valley and in Sils Maria he held the position of a seer or prophet. He was not free from misfortune. For many years from 1905 onwards he suffered from a disease of the skin of the face which greatly hampered him, and all the more because it was aggravated by exposure to the sun and snow. But he was perhaps not made for happiness. Inclined to introspection, he was conscious of an unfulfilled destiny. He loved nature, and flowers in particular; he had unusual intellectual gifts to match his courage, resolution and skill. He thought clearly and simply and, as many of these pages prove, had a certain grim humour. But, with all the respect, and indeed love, with which he was surrounded, he remained a lonely man. The book remains to some extent incomplete, Kluckner found the task of writing it uncongenial and never accomplished his original plan, according to which it would have contained a detailed account of his climbs with Davidson and Farrar. The editor has supplemented it with a short and sympathetic biography. It makes a worthy memorial of a strong and original personality.

Yes, a strong and original personality! Perhaps it is not strange that we often meet with strong and original personalities in our Swiss valleys. Often some obscure village produces one such outstanding personality. It is, as if the seclusion of the village, the daily contact of the man with Nature, the keen and everlasting fight he wages against the Elements, the close understanding he gradually gets of the natural laws which operate all around him and to the fulfilment of which he knows he owes the crops of all sorts on which he lives and prospers, combined, together with the absence of outside distractions which are forced on dwellers in towns, in making him grow strong, independent, fearless and just, until, among men, he stands like an oak towering above the lesser trees. We town dwellers, albeit we flatter ourselves, perhaps, that we live "in the country" get our senses flattened and dulled, not sharpened, by the everlasting, incessant flow of new sensations we are unable to escape, sensations, moreover, not of a natural kind, but mostly artificially produced and of an artificial nature. Alas and alack!

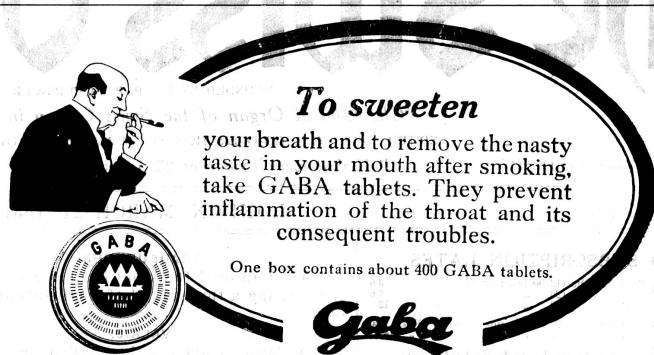
Following such trains of thought, we become slightly morbid, slightly introspective, and that old Ciceronian query of "quousque tandem," as applied to life, begins to loom largely on our horizon and to fill us with uneasy forebodings, especially if we have indulged in Professor James Jean's articles in the *Sunday Express* and have let ourselves be convinced of the insignificance of our existence, nay, the uselessness of it, although that last conclusion is probably wrong. However, we need an antidote, a refresher, something pure and clean to wipe off all these morbid ideas, to sweeten our mind again, to instil fresh courage, fresh "joie de vivre" into our hearts. And, what could be better for such a purpose than to read, slowly and savouringly—if that is the equivalent of "savourusement" which is in my mind—the following article about

Midst the Eternal Snow

Red Tape, February, 1931:

We rise early, for this is to be a day of days, and over our breakfast of coffee, rolls and butter we speculate on the trip before us. The picturesque little village of Grindelwald is just waking up as we wend our way down the narrow main street to the tiny railway station. Soon we have taken our seats in the little Mountain Railway train, and everybody carries the "packed lunch" which is such a feature of these mountain trips. Many of the party, one notices, are careful of these parcels—they have had previous experience and know that their eggs are not always boiled as hard as they might be.

The seats are quickly filled up, and with a short, sharp whistle our train starts off. We are quickly out of the village and immediately start to climb out of the valley up the steep mountain track. Perhaps the most striking feature at first is the wealth of wild flowers growing in the fields on either side of the railway line. Many are familiar, perhaps the one best known to us English being the clover, which in Switzerland grows much larger than in England. Our admiration is called forth most, however, by the little blue gentian—similar in type and growth to our violet, but of a most wonderful, vivid blue.



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We rise higher and higher and nearer and nearer to the snow-covered peaks which are our goal. As we look back the fields are rolling away into the valley below—the cows are beginning to look like small black dots on the green, and the charming Swiss chalets like nothing so much as little dolls' houses. At last we arrive at the Scheidegg, where we change from our Mountain Railway train into the train of the Rack and Pinion Railway. Proceeding on our way, we soon pass a mighty field of ice, and then we enter a tunnel which takes us through the centre of the mountains. It took fourteen years to cut, is a wonderful piece of engineering, and was the work of an Englishman. The going is exceedingly steep, and twice during this part of the journey we are allowed to get out of the train, pass through an archway to the left, and view the snow-covered peaks, which now seem very, very close.

After riding for about half-an-hour we reach our destination, leave the train, and pass straight into the Jungfrau Joch Hotel. This is a really Continental affair—long tables and stools filling a room where we sit and eat our lunch and order coffee, tea, etc. What a cosmopolitan assembly it is, and what a variety of tongues! Along the side of this room is a verandah, and, lunch finished, we proceed to make our way out here as a beginning. But we are immediately driven back into our hotel to buy smoked spectacles. The intense whiteness causes such a glare that it is impossible to view the scenery with the naked eye. We are now conducted through the hotel and emerge on to a long snow ridge. We proceed to make our way, with much slipping and sliding on the part of some members of the party, along this snow path until we reach a flagstaff which marks the limit of distance for walking. As we stand and look round a marvellous vista unfolds. Miles and miles in fact, everywhere—fields, ridges, and peaks of eternal snow. In some places far below us we can see the clouds scudding by, and we realise that we are 11,000ft. above the level of the sea. And yet—the wonderful warmth! The sun pours down and we find that even among the eternal snows it is possible to feel perfectly comfortable and warm. We feast our eyes on the beauty and the grandeur for some time, and then comes the joy and thrill of a short toboggan. Not far for our one frame, but sufficient to make us feel how joyous a thing must be Winter Sports.

Reluctantly we turn again towards the hotel to entrain and begin our homeward journey. At the Scheidegg we hunt for Alpine roses—lovely red flowers resembling English wild roses which grow on the higher slopes of the mountains. On taking train here for the final lap of the journey we note one casualty. A young girl has evidently fallen in the snow and broken her leg. It seems marvellous that with such a dearth of habitation it should be possible to render her the wonderful first aid that has apparently been given. The leg is swathed in cotton wool, and pieces of an old tub form the splints.

As the train winds slowly down the mountain side the cow bells worn by all Swiss cattle make sweet music for our ears, and as we turn our eyes upwards to the snow-covered hills the setting sun is tingeing them with a warm red gold. We detrain tired, but with a great love for the heights which hitherto seemed to us so distant, and which we have to-day been privileged to see so closely.

SWISS MERCANTILE SOCIETY EDUCATION DEPARTMENT.

In connection with the scholastic programme the following lectures were given by the students during the last two weeks:—

Miss H. DERRER, Winterthur: "Something about a cheque that doesn't arrive in time." Mr. J. LUETHY, Wohlen (Argovie) "Newspaper advertising."

Miss A. OBERHOLZER, Horgen: "Shopping in London"

Miss H. STRAHM, Wichtach: "Esperanto."

Mr. L. THOMASIN, St. Gall: "Police Work."

Mr. E. LANDSRATH, Basle: "Technical Inventions."

Mr. F. NEIDHART, Zurich: "The International position of Switzerland."

On Friday, March 13th, 1931, an instructive and interesting lecture was given at Swiss House by Mr. J. H. Humphreys, J.P., on the "Three Party System and Parliamentary Government."

The lecturer asserted that Parliamentary Government must be maintained in spite of the fact, that lately several countries have departed from it in favour of dictatorships. The English system of voting was described as being very unjust, in that the minorities are not adequately represented. By the introduction of the system of Proportional Representation which the lecturer explained in great detail, the present anomalies and chances of General Elections would be mostly avoided. At the end of the lecture leaflets describing more fully this system of Electoral Reform were distributed among the students. A vote of thanks was then proposed by the Chairman and a magnificent response was received. Altogether a most enlightening lecture well given.

Afterwards the usual students' concert took place in which the following distinguished themselves:—the Misses Kaufmann, Christen and Derrer, and Messieurs Kern, Gmuer, Neidhart and Thomasin—the latter at the piano.

The evening came to a close at 10.45 p.m. with the singing of the National Anthem, and we all felt we had enjoyed ourselves.

On Saturday, March 14th, the students visited the Wallace's Collection.

SWISS Y.M.C.A.

A social entertainment will be given by the above Society on Saturday next, March the 21st, at 5 o'clock, at 15, Upper Bedford Place, Russell Square, W.C. Tea will be served, games and music will be played. This gathering is to be meant as a farewell party to the worthy member Mr. Huber, who is leaving for Switzerland. Friends and Gentlemen students are heartily invited to this party which will be carried out in English.

SCHOLARSHIPS IN DALCROZE EURHYTHMICS.

On another page will be seen an advertisement of the London School of Dalcroze Eurhythmics drawing attention to one full Scholarship and two half Scholarships that are being offered in the Training Department. This is an opportunity to obtain free training or training at half fees for girls with musical gifts, who desire an interesting career which gives scope for creative and imaginative ability. Full particulars may be obtained from the Secretary, The Dalcroze School, 23, Store Street, W.C.1.