

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: 492

Rubrik: Prepaid subscription rates

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The Swiss Observer

FOUNDED BY MR. P. P. 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. 492

LONDON, MARCH 28, 1931.

PRICE 3d.

PREPAID SUBSCRIPTION RATES

UNITED KINGDOM AND COLONIES	3 Months (13 issues, post free) -	3s
	6 Months (26 issues, post free) -	6s
SWITZERLAND	3 Months (13 issues, post free) -	3s
	6 Months (26 issues, post free) -	6s

(Swiss subscriptions may be paid into Postcheck-Konto Basle V 5718).



HOME NEWS



FEDERAL.

NEW RADIO STATION.

The new Sottens station has been testing on 403 metres during the past two weeks, and results, especially in this country, surpass expectations. The Swiss Obertelegaphen-direktion, who furnished information regarding this, hopes that the new station will be ready to be taken over from the constructors sometime during April. Sottens is situated 17 km. north of Lausanne, and is 775 metres above sea level. The aerial masts are 125 metres in height and 200 metres apart. The aerial power used is 25 kW. unmodulated, which means something like 40 kW. according to the new formula used. The station is British-built. It is interesting, and gratifying, to note that the second Swiss high-power station, 60 kW. in aerial, at Beromünster, which will be testing by the time these lines appear in print, is also British made. Sottens is testing on 403.8 metres, the present Berne wave, after Berne has closed down. But this arrangement will only last till Beromünster begins tests, probably during the second week in March, on Zürich's wave 459.6 metres.

NESTLE'S TRADING REPORT FOR 1930.

Although the trading results of that important enterprise, the Nestle and Anglow-Swiss Condensed Milk Company, for 1930 were practically equivalent to those of the preceding year, special provision for depreciation has had to be made on account of the exchange crisis, notably in Australia and Spain. Consequently the net profit is nearly 4 million Swiss francs lower than that for 1929 at 26,382,777 francs, though this figure is well above that for 1928. The Directors maintain the dividend on the Ordinary shares at 16 per cent., but cut down the reserve allocations by four million francs, the appropriations this time being 1,100,000 francs to the statutory reserve and 4,000,000 francs to special reserve. Last year's transfer to pension and provident funds of 1,500,000 francs is repeated, but the carry-forward is reduced from 5,697,021 francs to 5,327,570 francs. British capital is interested in the company to the extent of £2,000,000 in 8 per Cent. £1 Preference shares. The dividend on these shares is covered more than six times, and the price stands in the neighbourhood of 30s.

SWISS COINAGE.

The National Council adopted last week unanimously the new fiduciary law, which follows practically identically the decisions of the States Council. The principal feature of the Bill is the introduction of a new standard piece of five francs, the diameter of which will be 31 millimeters, instead of 37mm., while two-franc, one-franc, and fifty centimes coins will also be minted in silver. Twenty and ten-centime pieces in nickel, and one and two-centime pieces in copper. The monetary unit will be the franc, containing theoretically 9/31 grammes of fine gold.

M. MOTTA IN PARIS.

On March the 23rd, M. Dunant, Swiss Minister in Paris, gave a tea party at the Legation in honour of M. Motta, Federal Councillor, who is at present in Paris, attending the "Commission d'études pour l'Union Européenne. Amongst the numerous attendance were a large number of Press representatives.

In the evening a splendid banquet was held at the Hotel Astor, which was offered by the various Swiss Societies, and over which Monsieur Dunant, Swiss Minister, presided.

ARMY PROMOTION.

National Councillor, Dr. Rud. Miescher, of Basle, has been appointed Commander of the 4th Division, in succession to Colonel Favre, who has resigned his command for reasons of health. It is reported that M. Miescher will resign as Member of Parliament.

LOCAL.

LAUSANNE.

M. Auguste Roux, Professor at the University in Lausanne, died at the age of 60. T.G.

BASLE.

Prof. Dr. Villiger, a well-known medical practitioner has died in Basle at the age of 61. The deceased was for many years "Schularzt."

LUCERNE.

Mrs. Marie Treichler-Huber, who died in Lucerne, has left an amount of 545,000fr. to various hospitals and institutions situated in the canton of Lucerne.

BERNE.

A fire destroyed the Park Hotel Bellevue, in Abelboden. Fortunately there were but few residents staying. The damage caused is considerable. N.Z.

Legacies to charitable institutions amounting to over 300,000fr. have been made by Mrs. Elisa Schwab who died in Berne recently. N.Z.Z.

A landslide is reported from Rüschegg, near Schwarzenburg, where part of the mountain is sliding down and menacing a village. Large cracks opened in the pastures and in the forests, underground rumblings were heard, and about eight acres of forest began to slide down. Two chalets have already been destroyed, and the mass of earth is beginning to block up the Schwarzwasser brook. Many houses which are in danger were evacuated. T.

ZURICH.

The Italian General Consul, Signor Biancchi, who, as reported previously was shot at by an Italian subject, has left the cantonal hospital. N.Z.Z.

FRIBOURG.

A group of children were enjoying themselves by throwing snow-balls at each other at Corserey, when the twelve-year-old boy Winiger arrived. He had just left the stationary shop where he had purchased three pen nibs; eager to join in the battle, he put the nibs, which he was holding in his hand into his mouth. In the excitement he swallowed the nibs. He was taken at once to the hospital where it was found that one of the nibs had got stuck in his lung, whilst the other two had found their way to his stomach. A specialist was called in who succeeded in extracting the nib from the lung, but the two others could not yet be got at. V.

ICE HOCKEY.

GROSVENOR HOUSE CANADIANS BEAT AROSA.

The Arosa team was beaten last Wednesday at the Park Lane Ice Club, by three goals to two. Arosa scored first and had decidedly the better of the play which was remarkably fast. After the first twenty minutes the Swiss team led by two goals and hopes ran high amongst the small but enthusiastic supporters of the Arosa team. At the end of the second twenty minutes the Canadians drew level, this success was due to rush tactics adopted by the Canadian's first line and which seemed to have taken the defence of the Swiss team by complete surprise.

During the third period of play our compatriots made frantic efforts to win the match and the Swiss attack played magnificently, but shortly before the end the Swiss team had to concede another goal. Lintner and Torriani were outstanding in the attack, and Fringer in goal made many clever saves.

Clode, Brown and Mr. Ewen were the star players in the Canadian team. Unfortunately, it was a game of many fouls and rather on the rough side and without wishing to find an excuse for the defeat of the Swiss team, we cannot but mention that the Canadians were none too anxious to strictly adhere to the rules of the game. The Referee, Mr. Kellough dealt very leniently with the offences of the Canadian team and at least one flagrant foul, on one of the Swiss defenders was totally ignored, whilst the slightest break of rule by the Swiss team was penalised. We should have thought that the organisers of this match would have been able to find a referee who has no direct connection with the team which opposed our compatriots, as we understand that Mr. Kellough is playing for the very same team which defeated the Swiss team. There were quite a number of Swiss amongst the spectators, who heartily cheered the Arosa six. Monsieur C. R. Paravicini, the Swiss Minister, was amongst the onlookers and was seen to congratulate the Swiss team on their plucky fight. The Swiss team consisted of:

E. Fringer, goal; A. Rudolf, E. Sprecher, defence; A. Kuhn, O. Linter, H. Torriani, forwards; B. Mettier, B. Fuhrer, alternative forwards. Team Manager, Mr. Buchli.

NOTES AND GLEANINGS.

By KYBURG.

Les Décorations:

A Storm in a Tea-cup.

The Swiss people have decided that the acceptance of foreign decorations of any sort shall not be permitted by any one engaged in politics in Switzerland. That is the short and long of the recent plebiscite and the only interesting thing to note besides is that only about 38% of the total electorate took the trouble to vote and that even so, 17 Cantons were for the interdiction and five against.

In the Bulletin Suisse d'Egypte, 18th February, 1931, are published a series of press-views of the Swiss press ament the above decision and I refer here especially to the one by the President of the Swiss Press, M. Bourquin who writes in the L'Impartial de la Chaux de Fonds, as follows:—

"Ce qu'on aurait voulu éviter à tout prix est arrivé. La Suisse allemande a voté en bloc contre la Suisse romande et elle l'a majorisée. L'isolement de Genève, Neuchâtel, Fribourg, Valais et Vaud en présence du bloc confédéré est caractéristique. Il est même trop impressionnant pour qu'on songe à attacher désormais le moindre doute au sens profond du scrutin....

Le scrutin du 8 février est une taloche sur les doigts des Romands. C'est une leçon des Suisses de première cuvée aux "Welches" qui ne sont que des Suisses de seconde cuvée. Malgré un siècle de vie en commun, et certaines combourgeoises plus vieilles, la confiance ne règne pas encore.

Personnellement, nous doutons fort que le scrutin du 8 février, qui est une atteinte au fédéralisme et à la liberté individuelle, renforce l'unité suisse, fait de compréhension mutuelle et de tolérance. Au contraire."

Mr. Bourquin forgets a few things. He forgets, for instance, that Switzerland is a family of various brothers with various inclinations and temperaments. In such a family UNITY can never exist on all matters. There can only be unity of ATTACHMENT to the MOTHER, in this case to Helvetia. But, among the brothers with their different outlook on life, their different aspirations, their different ideas as to how to fulfil their ambitions, there must necessarily be clashes.

It is idle talk therefore, to write about the reinforcement of a UNITY which is plainly not only impossible of attainment but even undesirable. Switzerland would lose tremendously if ever unity was achieved among her many and variously gifted children.

Mr. Bourquin considers that the Welches have been isolated and "majorisés." Does he not remember the Absinth prohibition, which became possible only by a similar process or is he still sorry that that "atteinte à la liberté individuelle" should have come to pass?

In a family of many children occasions arise now and then which make it necessary for the majority rule to operate. It is clearly easy to understand that there must be a few children whose temperament, etc., make them natural allies against their brothers. It is not always the most gifted of the children which are the best. It does not follow that, because the Teutonic element in Switzerland can and does at times "majoriser" our Latin brothers, that the Teutonic element is the best, or the most gifted. On the contrary, in many respects I think we all agree that our "Welches" are much more gifted than we Teutons. Besides, they are quicker and much more polished, as a rule, but we get it.

But, our "Welches" will also agree I think, that we Teutons, as a rule, are more robust in our outlook, more tenacious and, if we are slower, we are more persevering and have a habit of finally getting what we want. It takes us longer, but we get it.

These are fundamental differences and, as I wrote above, it would be a calamity, if these fundamental differences were to disappear. Why do we love our Latin brothers so? Is it not because of their sprightliness, their quick wit, their ability of doing and saying things ever so much nicer than we can?

And, if you asked one of them, one of our Romans why he likes us, would he not answer, because we are simple and because he always knows exactly where he is with us?