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# The Swiss Observer

FOUNDED BY MR. P. F. BOEMRINGER.

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## HOME NEWS

(Compiled by courtesy of the following contemporaries: National Zeitung, Neue Zürcher Zeitung, St. Galler Tagblatt, Vaterland and Tribune de Genève).

### FEDERAL.

#### CHARGE D'AFFAIRE FOR SHANGHAI.

The Federal Council has decided to appoint a Chargé d'Affaire in Shanghai, instead of a General Consul as hitherto.

#### SLIGHT IMPROVEMENT IN THE SWISS WATCH INDUSTRY.

In consequence of an improvement in the watch industry, due to seasonal orders, unemployment in this particular trade has gone down during the last month. The number of unemployed at the end of July amounted to 11,022, whilst at the same period of last month, 9,241 persons were reported as out of work.

#### SWISS FEDERAL RAILWAYS.

Month by month it becomes more evident that the Swiss Federal Railways are seriously affected by the general crisis. During the first six months of 1932 only 56,116,427 passengers were carried, or 10 per cent. less than during the corresponding period in 1931, while goods traffic amounted to 7,395,632 tons and showed a decrease of 11.7 per cent. The receipts fell from Frs. 183,274,070f. to 162,948,850f., or 11.1 per cent. At the same time, if one compares their situation with that of the private railways or with that of the majority of railways in other countries, their losses would appear more than bearable. The principal railways in the United States show a decline in traffic amounting to 29.3 per cent., the receipts from passenger traffic on the German railways during the period under review register a drop of 22.4 per cent., the French "P.L.M." a decline of 18.7 per cent., the Belgian National Company 14.4 per cent., the Italian State Railways 12.1 per cent., and the Austrian Federal Railways 11.6 per cent.

In respect of goods traffic a decrease of 11.7 per cent. in receipts does not appear unsatisfactory when compared with 30.8 per cent. on the German railways, 23.9 per cent. on the Belgian railways, 23.7 per cent. on the French Nord Company, and 23.4 per cent. on the chief American railways. In fact, if one looked at the question merely from the point of view of receipts the situation of the Federal Railways would certainly appear to be privileged. But it is on the expenditure side that the Swiss railways are most seriously handicapped, as in spite of great efforts it has only proved possible to cut expenditure by 2.3 per cent. This cut is insignificant when compared with the 14.3 per cent. of the Germans, the 10.5 per cent. of the Belgians, and the 23.9 per cent. of the Americans.

The work of reorganizing and rationalizing the Federal Railways, which is now taking place, is revealing the difficulty of finding new possibilities of saving in either staff or mechanism. It will therefore be necessary for the Federal authorities to examine the financial position carefully, and it is expected that the whole question will be gone into next month during the Parliamentary Sessions. It is hoped that the Confederation will see its way to put the railways on a sounder financial basis by compensating them for various losses incurred in carrying out work for the Government both during the War and later.

### LOCAL.

#### ZURICH.

Thousands of dead fish have been found floating on the surface of the Greifensee near Zurich. On examination they were found to have been attacked by some epizootic complaint, caused, it was at first thought, by the drainage from factories.

This view has now been dismissed, since the discharge of the factories has, it seems, not been in excess of the average daily drainage for some years past, during which period the fish have never once been affected. The latest opinion put forward

by some scientists is that through some physical change, as yet unexplained the water became deficient in oxygen.

The liquidation account of the Engineering firm, Escher, Wyss & Cie, at Zurich, shows 12 million f. assets against 52 million f. liabilities. The commission which was appointed to verify the accounts, has reported, that for some considerable time, the balance sheet was not in conformity with the actual financial status of the firm.

A German commercial traveller made the acquaintance of two men, who proposed to sell him a bar of gold. Taking the offer to be a *bona fide* one, he handed over to them goods to the value of 16,300f. Later on he found that the bag contained some worthless metal, but by that time the sellers of the would be gold had disappeared.

The death is reported from Zurich of Mme. Lina Brenner-Sturzenegger, widow of the late Federal Councillor Dr. Ernest Brenner, at the age of 73.

Dr. Hans Schneider, Professor of History at the cantonal commercial school has retired from his post after concluding 43 years as a teacher. Dr. Schneider has written various books on Swiss History.

#### BERNE.

During the month of September, altogether 64 traffic accidents happened in the town of Berne, two of which proved fatal; whilst 27 persons were more or less seriously hurt. The damage on material is estimated at 15,000f.

Owing to the dismissal of a workman, who had 30 years of service with the Fire Work firm Hamberger at Oberrieden, 70 work hands went on strike.

The number of unemployed of the town of Biel has been reduced by about 300. The register shows a number of 2,543 out of work.

#### BASLE-COUNTY.

The police of Allschwil has arrested a lady dressmaker, aged 38, for telling fortunes, a previous conviction for the same offence was proved.

#### BASLE.

The Federal Council has appointed M. Alfred Dietiker to the post of "Kreispostdirektor," in succession to M. Martin Jegge, who has resigned for reasons of health. M. Dietiker has 40 years experience in the Postal service.

On the occasion of the Gordon-Bennett Balloon race, 1637 toy balloons took the air, 440 of which have landed. One of them has travelled a distance of 976 km. from Basle to Jibasza-Chodecz (Poland) whilst two others have gone a distance of 660 and 570 km. respectively.

#### FRIBOURG.

The government of the canton of Fribourg has passed an act, that all public servants reaching the age of seventy, and having held office for 30 years, will have to retire under a pension scheme.

M. de Borcard, commissioner of the cantonal police, and M. M. Mauroux, prefect of Fribourg have resigned from their posts. These resignations are connected with the serious riots which occurred recently. The cantonal government has accepted these resignations. M. Brülhart, a police officer from Basle has been appointed head of the police, and M. Reney, a former prefect of Estavayer, has been nominated prefect of Fribourg..

## CITY SWISS CLUB.

PLEASE RESERVE  
FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 25th  
for the  
ANNUAL BANQUET AND BALL  
at the  
May Fair Hotel, Berkeley Square, W.1.

### GENEVA.

The death is reported of M. Henri Troesch, the doyen of the Geneva police. M. Troesch has been a member of the force since 1899, he was due to resign from his post by the 7th of next month.

### AARAU.

The cantonal budget for 1933 could be adjusted without having to resort to a reduction in the pay of public servants.

The delegates meeting of the Federal Gymnastic Society took place at Baden. With 106 against 103 votes, it was decided to hold the next Federal Gymnastic Festival in 1936 at Winterthur. The town of Zurich unsuccessfully competed against Winterthur.

### APPENZELL A.Rh.

A new institution has been founded under the name "Invalidenheim Ziel" with the aim of acquiring the former Embroidery works Ziel; it is proposed to use the buildings as a home for invalids.

### ST. GALLEN.

The inauguration of the newly erected agriculture school at Flawil took place last Saturday, in the presence of Federal Councillor Schultheiss. The building can accommodate 120 pupils, and the cost amounted to 1,040,000f., of which the community of Flawil subscribed an amount of 100,000f.

### SCHAFFHAUSEN.

The cantonal government consisting of the following members: Altörfer, Lieb, Ruh, Schärer and Sturzenegger has been confirmed for the period 1933-36.

### VAUD.

A motor-car driven by Mlle. Germaine Rod, carrying M. Henri Rod, Manager of the Fabrique de matériaux de construction à Remens, Mme. Henri Rod and two young girls, left the road near Bex and collided with a tree. Mme. Rod was killed instantly, whilst the other occupants were seriously injured.

### TICINO.

Colonel Karl Vorbrodt, a former member of the instruction corps, has died at Morcote after a long illness.

## SWISS FOREIGN TRADE AND INDUSTRY.

Foreign trade returns for the first half-year reflect the acuteness of the economic crisis now prevailing in Switzerland. Imports reached a value of 905,709,588 francs, compared with 1,108,779,539 francs in 1931. That drop of 203,069 951 francs — or about 18 per cent. — is due not only to reduced demand, but also to the import restrictions set with a view to protecting home industry. Exports totalled 416,465,240 francs, as against 709,823,978 francs in 1931, a decrease of 293,358,738 francs, or nearly 41 per cent. The adverse balance is therefore 489,244,348 francs, or about 54 per cent., while it was 398,955,541 francs, or nearly 36 per cent. in 1931. It will not be made good by invisible exports, as banking receipts are likely to be much lower, and the earnings of the hotel industry will be very poor owing to bad weather in July and the small number of tourists who visited the country.

In examining these figures, one should take into account the fact that prices have dropped considerably. Imports decreased much less than exports, a sign of resistance of the home market. While the value of imports dropped by, roughly, 203 million francs as compared with 1931, the quantities increased by about 200,000 tons. On the other hand, the drop in the value of exports was 293 millions and in quantity about 130,000 tons. The exports of the four chief industries — watchmaking, silk, cotton and machines — have been dwindling month after month, and the aggregate figures for the first half-year show a drop of nearly 50 per cent. from the corresponding period of last year.

Conditions seem to be somewhat better at present, but it is too early to say whether the tide is turning, or whether this is only a temporary improvement. It is true that there is a renewed activity on the Bourses and in banking in general, that prices of raw materials are rising, that there is more work in the watchmaking industry, and passenger traffic on the railways has been increasing since the middle of August. The number of

unemployed has fallen from 41,441 in June and 45,448 in July, to nearly 41,000.

Profiting by the low money rates, many Cantonal Governments have issued conversion loans, most of them at 3½ per cent. instead of 5 and 5½ per cent., and the Confederation, which already issued two conversion loans of 150,000,000 francs, each at 3½ per cent., is now issuing a new one of 125,000,000 francs at 3½ per cent. for the Federal Railways. It is estimated that, by means of these different conversions, the Federal Government will be able to make a yearly economy of 5,000,000 francs in the service of the Public Debt.

*Economist.*

## UNE BELLE OEUVRE DUE A L'INITIATIVE CHARITABLE SUISSE.

### Le Home International d'Alexandrie.

Jusqu'à ces toutes dernières années, les efforts tentés en Egypte en faveur des déshérités du sort furent dûs à l'initiative privée. Hospices, Hôpitaux, Maternités, Secours d'Urgence, Dispensaires n'ont pu réaliser leur mission bienfaisante que grâce au dévouement charitable des particuliers. Les Suisses n'ont jamais cessé d'être parmi les promoteurs des diverses œuvres de bienfaisance créées, tant au Caire qu'à Alexandrie et ce n'est jamais en vain que fut appel à leur générosité.

Le Home International d'Alexandrie demeure comme l'une des plus belles manifestations de la philanthropie helvétique car c'est presque entièrement à cette dernière que le Home doit son existence. C'est pour cela que le Comité bien qu'international, doit être d'après les statuts, composé pour un tiers de dames suisses et que la Présidente doit être également de nationalité suisse.

Le Home International qui offre un foyer à la jeune fille étrangère isolée, que les nécessités de la vie ont contrainte à s'expatrier, est placé sous les auspices de l'Union Internationale des Amies de la Jeune Fille qui étend son activité dans le monde entier. On sait que cette Société fondée à Genève en 1877, a son siège à Neuchâtel et qu'à côté de la Croix Rouge et des Unions Chrétiniennes de Jeunes Gens elle figure au nombre de ces œuvres philanthropiques et sociales auxquelles notre pays est fier d'accorder l'hospitalité.

Les deux sections créées en Egypte n'ont cessé d'assumer un travail aussi important que nécessaire. A Alexandrie, le Groupe des Amies de la Jeune Fille présidé par Madame Franz de Planta ouvrirait le 6 avril 1905 un petit appartement au 3me étage d'un immeuble de la rue Gessy pacha. Ce premier Home, bien modeste, pouvait loger 8 à 10 pensionnaires. L'aménagement en était des plus modestes et la Salle à manger servait également de pièce de réception et de bureau de placement.

Les débuts furent difficiles, mais l'œuvre répondait à un tel besoin que le Comité dirigeant fut obligé d'agrandir sans cesse le champ de son activité. A quatre reprises le Home se vit obligé de se transférer dans des locaux de plus en plus vastes. Au Home proprement dit, avait été adjoint un bureau de placement puis et surtout "l'Œuvre des Arrivantes" créée le 15 oct. 1908 pour attendre, afin de leur venir en aide dès son arrivée au port, toute jeune fille ou femme débarquant en Egypte pour y chercher du travail. Grâce au dévouement de l'Agente, Mlle Staiger, qui avait la possibilité de monter à bord de tous les bateaux ayant le débarquement des passagers en même temps que les autorités du Service Quarantenaire, des centaines de jeunes femmes furent, à force d'énergie, de bonté compréhensive et de persévérance, soustraite à des dangers trop certains. Les trafiquants, la Traite des Blanches n'eurent pas d'adversaire plus redoutable que cette jeune femme au courant de toutes leurs rourées et qui, n'ayant pour elle que son courage et sa foi, parvint à leur disputer et leur arracher alors qu'ils se croyaient sûrs de la réussite, nombre de jeunes femmes qui par imprudence, faiblesse ou naïveté allaient devenir leurs victimes réignées. Le départ de Mlle Staiger et les mesures prises par le Gouvernement, tendant à empêcher l'accès en Egypte à toute personne ne possédant pas un contrat d'engagement et n'étant pas attendues, a décidé le Comité du Home de renoncer pour l'instant tout au moins à cette forme dans leur activité.

L'extension prise par l'Œuvre rendit d'année en année plus désirable et plus nécessaire la création d'une maison bâtie spécialement à son intention, d'un "chez soi" où les jeunes filles puissent trouver à la fois, confort et réconfort. Ce fut la récompense de celle qui, membre du Comité du Home dès sa fondation et Présidente depuis 1914, annéée ou elle succéda à Mme F. de Planta : Mme Fred. W. Simond sut réaliser à force d'efforts persévérateurs, d'optimisme et de ferveur, le beau rêve si longtemps caressé, la construction d'un véritable Home.

Le 26 février, la Société du Home International d'Alexandrie acheta un terrain de 754 p.c. sis à Mazarita, rue Sultan Abdel Aziz en face de

la mer et du plus beau des paysages. Le 11 juillet par une radieuse journée, la 1re pierre de "Notre maison" était posée et le 6 août jour du 20me Anniversaire de la fondation de l'Œuvre des Amies de la Jeune Fille d'Alexandrie, le Home était solennellement inauguré, 5337 L. E. avaient été généreusement apportés par les généreux donateurs, de toute nationalité; mais plus des 3/4 de cette somme ont été souscrites par la Colonie Suisse. Ce n'est que grâce à la générosité de ces dons que le home a pu être si confortablement et si coquettement aménagé. Accueillante, la maison où flotte le drapeau suisse est baignée de soleil et de grand air. Largement dégagée de tous côtés elle possède au rez-de-chaussée, un hall communiquant avec la Salle à manger, qui peut se transformer, en une grande salle de fête et de réunion. L'eau courante a été installée dans toutes les chambres. Une grande terrasse est particulièrement appréciée par les pensionnaires durant les chaleurs de l'été et à visiter ce Home si parfaitement aménagé, dont le moindre détail révèle le souci de réaliser pour ses hôtes le maximum de bien-être et d'hygiène, sans s'écartez jamais de cette saine simplicité, qui est une de nos forces, on ne peut s'empêcher d'associer dans une même pensée de gratitude, les donateurs, le Comité, l'architecte Suisse Mr. Lincke, qui établit et réalisa les plans de cette maison et celle enfin dont le Home perpétue ici en Egypte les souvenir auréolé de reconnaissance et de respect. Mme Fred. W. Simond, qui, retirée en Suisse, ne cesse cependant de s'intéresser à l'Œuvre qui fut et demeure l'œuvre de sa vie.

Le Home International sous la présidence dévolue de Mme A. Allemann-Landerer continue son œuvre benie. Les jeunes filles y trouvent la sécurité matérielle, morale qui leur est nécessaire. Le Comité et la Directrice s'efforcent de leur assurer non seulement le repos après une journée de travail, l'atmosphère familiale chère au cœur des exilées mais encore de mettre à leur portée des ressources intellectuelles et des récréations variées.

Et c'est ainsi que réalisant pratiquement notre belle devise helvétique, un groupe de femmes de cœur et de foi, ont réussi à créer à Mazarita, ce havre de paix, ce Home accueillant, qui devient le centre de ralliement de toute une jeunesse travaillante, leur permet, comme l'écrivent une des dirigeantes, d'unir les forces, les intelligences, les aspirations des jeunes filles, sans lui, exposées à tous les dangers d'une grande ville cosmopolite et de donner un peu plus de beauté et de joie à des vies vonées aux durs combats qu'est la lutte pour l'existence en pays étranger.

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### SAGRA DELL'UVA.

Il lombardo Palazzo di Città, dall'alta torre con il solenne orologio, dalle volte con affreschi storici, quasi come per incanto si è mutato in un ridente... gustoso lembo di terra nostrana, di questa feconda terra che ricambia con generosi frutti l'aspro lavoro del contadino... Par di essere in un mercato agricolo in miniatura e si è tentati di comparare tutto ciò che gli occhi nostri ammirano, tutto ciò che forosette dal caratteristico costume paesano, contadinelle che san del profumo buono e sano di polenta e di fieno, offrono sotto i portici del Municipio. All'interno, nel cortile, in un angolo ben disposto, ridono tondi pomodori tirati lucidi come una palla di bigliardo, accanto grappoli d'uva par che ardimente ci faccian l'occhialino (o siamo noi che lo facciamo ad essi?), patate brune e promettenti, mele, pere... Oltre è l'esposizione dei latticini... a chi non viene l'acquolina in bocca? Dirimpetto quella dei salumi, più in là un ronzo chiama l'attenzione: sono le industriose api che generosamente dimostrano come il biondo miele vien preparato. Lassù, in alto, lungo il loggiato è un rincorrersi di pannocchie dorate, e tengon loro compagnia bonaccione zucche enormi... par quasi che da un momento all'altro una di esse si apra pian piano per lasciar uscire il cocchio fiammante di Cenerentola... E fiori ovunque, su per le scale, per i vani di finestra, sulle loggie... anzi un piano è dedicato solo ai fiori, e ciclamini, begonie, primule, bongaville formano una fantasmagoria di colori: cactus, felci, hilacee... Un vago senso m'assale mentre giro tra tanto verde, mi par di aver visitato prima questo luogo, d'averlo già visto così com'è ora... perché? ci sono: il pensiero mi ha trasportata in una delle serre di Kew, di Windsor Castle, per un momento ho creduto d'essere in uno di quei parchi, tanto l'assomiglianza è forte.

Che diranno di questa trasformazione i severi stemmi che tappezzano l'imponente sala del Patriziato? Non saranno tentati anch'essi di staccarsi dalla pareté per scendere un istante a fare un giro tondo intorno al tavolo, vero gioiello d'intaglio, dimenticando anch'essi le vicissitudini gravi della vita... le famiglie patrizie e relativa storia che ognuno rappresenta? Ma, l'allegoria danza è riservata alla sera, sul palco improvvisato, dove graziose fanciulle son mutate in altrettanti bacchanti...!

Ed uva, uva ovunque...

Solo la vite è spoglia: i filari offrono al sole autunnale le loro foglie dal color di ruggine, alcune già accartocciate per il primo freddo, i loro mozzi rami nodosi. Ancora una volta ha generosamente dato i suoi grappoli, il suo frutto, al torchio che li prende e travolge... così proprio come una madre che altruisticamente da i suoi figli al torchio dell'esistenza che pure li separa da lei, li prende, li travolge...

Elena Lunghi.

## LITERARY EVENING ALFRED HUGGENBERGER.

The London Group of the Nouvelle Société Helvétique and the Swiss Orchestra have arranged a combined literary and musical evening for November the 4th, at Conway Hall, Red Lion Square.

The all too small audience present at the Jean Bard evening held at the same Hall in February last, were so charmed with the success of the recital that it was decided to repeat the venture.

The coming recital will be given by our famous poet and literateur Alfred Huggenberger; it will therefore particularly attract the German speaking section of the Colony, but we are sure that all Swiss, without distinction of speech, will find pleasure in the readings of our poet. He who has not read "The Bauern von Steig" has missed something very definite in life; for the Swiss abroad in particular this book is of great cultural value. In its pages we meet our forebears, simple, direct, stubborn, yet lovable men and women, so that we know instinctively where "we belong." We do not know as yet from which book or selection of books Mr. Huggenberger is going to read to us, but it does not matter; we can leave the selection to him and remain satisfied that we are going to have a "worth while" evening in his company on November 4th.

If Mr. Huggenberger finds it worth while himself and takes the trouble to come to London in order to entertain and instruct us, may we appeal to the Colony to pay him the compliment of their presence? We ought to fill the pleasant and homely Conway Hall to do his patriotic offer justice. We shall not only enjoy his readings; our friends of the Swiss Orchestra will see to it that the recital is suitably framed in music.

Furthermore, our Minister, who takes a keen personal interest in these ventures, has been kind enough to agree to introduce the Speaker to the audience. November the 4th is a Friday, and there is ample time to earmark that evening on the "Pro Helvetica."

### WELCOME XMAS PRESENTS.

The choosing of Xmas presents is often a difficult problem, and a hint here and there may prove most helpful. We therefore wish to draw the attention of our readers and their friends to the firm of Ann Scory & Co., of 181, King's Road, Chelsea, S.W.3.

We have had the pleasure to visit the premises of this firm. They do ornamental trees truly realistic in effect, also conventional ones — flowers of any description in bowls, baskets and sprays for table and house decoration, to suit any colour scheme.

You will find also posies, garlands, shoulder straps for evening wear, and hat trimmings of great variety. — The most choice flowers are made of feather — a wonderful medium to produce realistic effects owing to its softness and lustre, also many other materials are used to suit requirements. Everything is designed and hand made at their own studios, by skilled artists and craftsmen.

Those of our readers who are in a dilemma about their Christmas shopping should pay a visit to 181, King's Road, Chelsea, where, we feel sure, they will have a most suitable collection to choose from.

### NOVEL XMAS GIFTS. SWISS ALPINE PLANTS.

*Field and garden flowers in bowls and baskets for table and house decoration.*

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skilled artists and  
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