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# The Swiss Observer

FOUNDED BY MR. P. P. BOEHRINGER.

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## FEDERAL.

### SENTENCES ON GENEVA RIOTERS.

The trial before the Federal Assize Court of National Councillor Nicole, editor of the "Travail," and sixteen others in connection with the shooting at Geneva on November 9th, when troops were forced to fire on demonstrators, killing three of them and ten of the lookers-on, came to an end on June 6th after a hearing which had lasted since May 15th. The jury, after consulting for nearly two hours, returned a verdict of guilty against Nicole and six of the accused and acquitted the ten others.

The sentences were as follows: Nicole, 6 months imprisonment, less 2 months, which he already spent in prison, and a fine of 100 frs.

Lebet, 4 months imprisonment and a fine of 50 frs.

Daviet, 4 months imprisonment, less 102 days, and a fine of 50 frs.

Wuthrich, 4 months imprisonment, less 38 days, and a fine of 50 frs.

Isaac, 2 months imprisonment, less 35 days, and a fine of 30 frs.

Bariswyl, 2 months imprisonment, less 30 days, and a fine of 30 frs.

After the sentences were pronounced communists tried to demonstrate in the streets, but were dispersed by police.

## NATIONAL ECONOMY IN SWITZERLAND.

The unexpected rejection, by the Swiss electorate, of the Government's proposal for a reduction of 7½ per cent. in the salaries of State officials has not modified the policy of the Federal Council, which is firmly resolved to take the necessary measures for coping with the situation. Three days after the vote the Government approved and made public a financial programme which is likely to meet with strong opposition, but which will nevertheless be carried out.

The plan provides for a general reduction of about 30,000,000f. in all State subsidies, except subsidies for unemployment relief and public works intended for occupying the unemployed; and for an extension of the tax on coupons to various classes of securities and shares that were so far free of any tax. At the same time a tax is to be placed on non-alcoholic drinks, while the existing taxes on wines, spirits, and tobacco will be raised. But the main point in the plan is the setting up of a provisional Federal income-tax on all incomes exceeding probably 10,000f. a year. The Federal Government cannot levy direct taxes without an amendment of the Constitution, or unless special powers are granted by Parliament. Direct taxation has occasionally been imposed, for instance, the Extraordinary War Tax levied during the War and until three years ago, which provided the means of paying for the upkeep of the Army during the War and for reducing the public debt. The new taxes are estimated to produce nearly 100,000,000f. At the same time, the Federal Council announces that it will examine some other means for reducing the salaries of State officials, or, at least, for stopping temporarily the increases in those salaries.

As time is pressing, the Federal Council intends to ask Parliament either to grant the Government full powers for enforcing the proposed measures, or to vote a Federal Bill containing an urgency clause. That would enable the Federal Council to apply the financial plan before the end of July.

## FRANCO-SWISS TRADE.

The French Government has denounced as from June 1st the Franco-Swiss Commercial Convention concluded on July 8th, 1919.

Switzerland will not be able to import so many French goods if Swiss exports to France fall owing to the denunciation of the Franco-Swiss trade agreement.

In recent years Switzerland has been importing French goods to a value of two and a half times that of the Swiss exports to France.

## PROFESSOR ROBERT CHODAT HONOURED.

The recipient of this year's Linnean Medal awarded by the Linnean Society of London is Prof. Robert Chodat of Geneva. Unfortunately, he was unable to be present at the anniversary meeting held on May 24th and the medal was received on his behalf by the Swiss Minister. In the present state of specialisation, it is difficult to cover much of the field of botany and Prof. Chodat is one of the very few who can be considered a master in most branches. His work on the systematics of Polygalaceae and their geographical distribution, and his ecological accounts of the vegetation of Paraguay explored by him in 1914 and of Portugal, Spain and Majorca which he visited with his students, are of great merit. In his laboratory at Geneva he elaborated the methods of obtaining pure cultures of Algae now in general use, and his papers on Algae, culminating in his monograph on polymorphism, have made him a recognised authority on the subject. More recently he has turned his attention to Fungi, particularly the organisms of fermentation, where his knowledge of chemistry and physiology has enabled him to make important advances. It is not so much the minutiae of a subject as the broad principles that have attracted him, as is seen in his critical study of the palaeozoic Pteropoda and in his address on the conception of species in modern botany. In genetics his contributions, though not numerous, have been fundamental. It is natural that he should be a successful teacher and his admirable "Principes de Botanique" reveal his wide and philosophic outlook. Geneva has always been famous for its botanists and Robert Chodat is a worthy successor to de Saussure and the de Candolles.

## ZURICH.

The death is reported from Zurich of M. G. F. Autenrieth, late General Manager of the Crédit Suisse, at the age of 64.

## BERNE.

The Swiss Young Socialist party invited their members to a Meeting at Biel on Whitsun. The cantonal government put a ban on all public demonstrations, and in order to safeguard public order, the "Landwehr" regiment 45 was called up, no troubles however occurred.

## NEUCHATEL.

The board of directors of the Cantonal Bank of Neuchâtel have announced the following reductions of salaries: 5% for salaries amounting to 7,500 frs., 10% for salaries exceeding 7,500 frs.

## FRIBOURG.

M. B. Erne, Manager of the "Banque d'Etat de Fribourg," has died after a short illness, at the age of 47.

## VAUD.

The International Federation of League of Nations Societies opened its seventeenth plenary conference at Montreux. M. Motta, Federal Councillor, welcomed the Federation on behalf of Switzerland.

\* \* \*

The old Theatre Bel-Air at Lausanne has been transformed into a cinema.

At the inauguration, with the film "Danton," representatives of the Federal Government, county and municipal authorities, the Diplomatic Corps and local personages were present. The cinema has been entirely reconstructed. A reception was held after the show.

\* \* \*

Dr. F. Simond, has been nominated clerk to the Federal Tribunal at Lausanne, in succession to Dr. Naegeli, who has recently been made a Federal judge. M. Hans Ruegg from Zurich, will act as secretary to the supreme Court.

## TICINO.

Seven villagers were killed in Val Chironico, when a cable which they were using to lower logs of wood from Monte Chiapp came into contact with a high-tension electric wire. Five others were seriously injured, three of whom are not expected to live.

## FOOTBALL.

### WHITSUNITE.

What a glorious weekend for a run to the seaside, or an outing on the river, loafing about in your garden, or lounging in the Pavilion at Lords, in fact, for anything except what the title of these notes refers to. I ask your indulgence, but I do not care rap whether they were foolish enough in Switzerland to kick a football or not. To-day, je m'en fiche! — That "parleur inconnu" was at it again, reporting a tournament in Luxembourg between teams representing Holland, France, Luxembourg and Belgium and, by the way, who finished in that order. The two finalists Holland and France played two matches on Whit-Monday. Jedem Tierchen sein Plässerchen!

Still, there are a few things of interest to report. Firstly, Young Boys by beating Grasshoppers in Berne did not as reported, win the National League Final (there is no such thing) but the "Challenge National" Final. Secondly, the League programme has come to an end, the outstanding deciding match between Bözingen and Montreux becoming unnecessary by a decision of the Football Committee whereby Montreux forfeit 2 points gained against Olten, on account of their having played a suspended player. The club had appealed against the suspension but omitted to send at the same time the guarantee sum of frs. 300.— and so lost their place in the First League. Very unfortunate for that old Serie A Club.

## SWISS CHAMPIONSHIP FINALS.

The draw has now been made and the club with choice of ground is mentioned first. It will be obvious that Grasshoppers and Servette are favoured by Dame Fortune, both being at home twice and Grasshoppers against the strongest opponents. Six more matches and we shall see another season completed, but why all these Finals? Revenue, of course.

June 11th:	Berne v Grasshoppers
	Servette v Young Boys
June 18th:	Grasshoppers v Servette
	Young Boys v Bern
June 25th:	Grasshoppers v Young Boys
	Servette v Bern.

These finals are decided by points, 2 for a win, 1 for a draw, and if a tie, goal average will count. So now you may amuse yourselves in working out the chances of the four clubs. Take F.C. Bern, the First League Champions. Can you see them getting one point? I doubt it. That would give the other three two points each. Grasshoppers should then win their home matches Servette and Young Boys and become champions with 6 points. Quite easy on paper, but you see, it won't work out like that in practice!

M.G.

## LA SUISSE, TERRE D'ASILE DE L'EUROPE.

par Fernand HAYWARD.

—Quel pays singulier que la Suisse, m'a dit un ami plus porté à la critique qu'à l'éloge, si la Société des Nations ne délibérait à Genève, il ne s'y passerait jamais rien!

Il ne me fut pas difficile de rappeler à cet interlocuteur légèrement atrabilaire, que les peuples heureux n'ont pas d'histoire et surtout pas d'histoires au pluriel, que des peuples comme ceux de la Scandinavie, Danemark, Suède, Norvège, coulent des jours paisibles, gèrent leurs affaires aussi bien que la durée des temps le permet sans faire beaucoup plus parler d'eux si ce n'est pour la magnifique contribution qu'ils apportent aux lettres et aux arts, avec la pléiade d'artistes et d'écrivains dont ils s'honorent.

Pourquoi diable la violence des luttes, l'apréte des querelles, un perpétuel esprit de contention devraient-ils être un sûr indice de supériorité? On a dit et répété sur tous les tons que la Suisse était la plaque tournante de l'Europe et le lieu géométrique où deux civilisations, deux cultures, le monde latin et le monde germanique, se rencontrent et se fondent en une harmonieuse synthèse. Il est de hautes vérités qu'on ne doit pas se lasser de répéter, non seulement parce que rien ne serait plus injuste que d'en négliger les évidences, mais aussi parce qu'il s'en dégagé un enseignement qui permet de présager pour l'Europe tout entière un avenir plus harmonieux le jour où tous auront compris la nécessité d'appliquer des principes auxquels les citoyens de la Confédération doivent le secret de leur félicité et dans lesquels ils puisent leur véritable grandeur.